impression on entering the gallery is very good. The general tone of color is rich, subdued, and much more pleasing than in many of the other rooms, and the pictures on the line will bear favorable comparison, in general excellence, with any line in the Exposition, although, of course, there are many works in the other galleries much finer than anything that we have.

Our collection is certainly superior to those of several countries, and equal to some others, and, whatever may have been said to the contrary, shows a good deal of independence and originality, and perhaps more variety than any other, and altogether much first-rate work.

In one branch of art,—that of wood-engraving,—although the number of examples shown by America is small, in quality we equal, if we do not excel, most others. It has been pronounced, by some of the best artists and engravers here, to be among the best work of the kind in the Exposition.

As a whole, our gallery, viewed by any standard, is very good, and no one, on seeing it, need be otherwise than hopeful as to the future of American art.

UNDERGRADUATE LIFE AT OXFORD.

For most Americans the subject of English college life is invested with an amount of romance which our ultra-iconoclastic disposition seldom allows to cling to anything. The venerable beauty of their two great universities, the traditions of famous men and incidents which cluster around them, and the medium of poetry and fiction through which come most of our ideas on the subject, have been chief factors in producing this result. Whatever we may think of the English universities as seats of learning and places for study, our impressions of the life of their residents are taken from such sources that they could scarcely be otherwise than somewhat idealized. The late Mr. Bristed attempted, some twenty-five years ago, to give us a quite minute description of Cambridge, from what he undoubtedly thought an American stand-point. But his book—"Five Years at an English University"—contained little familiar information about undergraduate life, and was never widely enough read to have much influence in forming popular impressions. The same is true, also, of several other works, which have been published of late years, on kindred topics. We still go to "Tom Brown" and "Verdant Green," "Pendennis" and "Ravenshoe," as authoritative sources of information.

There are description and information of this kind scattered very freely through English literature. The two old universities have always been favorite scenes with poets and novelists,—sources of some of their happiest inspirations. The Clerk of Oxenford, who rode with Chaucer's pilgrims, has been followed by a host of successors, who have not always, in later times, excelled in his particular direction. Yet the details, which are thus to be gathered, do not make a very complete picture for one who has no supply of plain facts with which to supplement them. And it is a question whether the suggestions which an American reader finds in English fiction, and to which he usually applies his imagination, inventing material to fill blank spaces, are not frequently misleading. The English have such an intense admiration for their famous old academies, and fondness for the life at them, that it would be strange if their fiction did not tend to represent them in a partial and idealizing light. A foreigner, therefore, who simply takes these descriptions, which he meets in the familiar English novels, and forms from them his notions of undergraduate life at Oxford and Cambridge,—subtracting nothing, and supplying whatever is not fully explained, in the spirit of the original,—will be certain to have ultimately a conception of a manner of existence vastly attractive to the romantic side of human nature; but it will be not very accurate, and extremely incomplete.

Still, there is much truth in such an ideal. One who seeks to realize it, if he brings to the task the right spirit and qualifications, need not be disappointed. An Englishman, leaving behind him the boyish restraints of his school,—probably long since outgrown,—finds most of the elements of an earthly paradise in the admirable surroundings, the more mature and worldly atmosphere, and the relatively free life of the university, while an

American, who goes into residence at Oxford, is even better fitted to appreciate, in the long run, the attractions of the life which lies before him. Instead of reveling in freedom, like the English freshman, an American is apt to find himself, at first, running against curious and somewhat irksome restrictions. It will amuse and occasionally annoy him, to think that he is forbidden to pass the college gates after they are closed at nine o'clock. If he feels inclined for a stroll by the river in the forenoon, he may object to being told that such amusements are allotted to the latter part of the day, and that the morning is supposed to be devoted to work. But it will soon appear that the worst of these old regulations of university police are thoroughly a dead letter. One is relieved at discovering a slight fine to be the severest penalty for the breach of such as are enforced. The new-comer learns with amazing quickness that, in spite of Latin rules to the contrary, he can parade "The High," capless and gownless, in study hours with perfect impunity; and even after dark, the chances of meeting an alert proctor will scarcely warrant his wearing the academic uniform, if it happens to be undesirable. Such relics of the ancient sumptuary and police system as do demand his obedience, interfere scarcely at all with anything which one could do if they were altered, while they are so recommended by long usage, and so identified with the tone and habits of the place, that it is impossible not to acquiesce in them. Perhaps they even add to the charm of the life which, in their days of more active usefulness, they have done so much to form.

Aside from this one circumstance, in which an Englishman is less likely to feel himself abused than an American, the latter is in much the better position to get from his university life—in distinction from the studies of the curriculum—all of the pleasure which it is capable of affording. His antecedents fit him admirably for doing so. Not that he can hope to escape the first disappointment, which every one must go through who enters upon life at Oxford with grandly preconceived notions of what his experience will be. Nothing, however perfect, can satisfy an elaborate ideal, completely and at once. The Gothic structure which his imagination may have reared out of the somewhat scant materials at its command, will have to be reconstructed on a smaller scale, with some loss of fanciful ornamentation. The details connected with entrance into this strange college life will be harsh, almost, in their newness to him. But, when this disillusionating process is over, his ideal, so far from being abandoned, will grow again into more vigorous life, based on a better knowledge of actual facts. The beauties of Oxford and of Oxford life are not a myth, and such of them as do not appear at once to a stranger are made more attractive by their coyness. An American never wholly loses his first feeling of strangeness amid these surroundings, and, as it mingles with the familiar attachment which soon grows up, it gives him a power of enjoying the whole situation unknown to the Englishman, for whom there was never anything startlingly new in it. Comparison and contrast with all that has gone before in his experience constantly reveal fresh objects of admiration. But, after all, his greatest source of pleasure and of profit will be in studying the Englishman himself.

Certainly there is an excellent opportunity offered to Americans for gaining an acquaintance with English character and social life, through the medium of their universities. It is rather a matter of surprise that they are not frequented more for this express purpose. The English universities, Oxford and Cambridge, are epitomes of English society. Instead of being local institutions, as are most, if not all, of the seminaries of this country and Germany, they are truly national. Instead of constituting, in themselves, peculiar and distinct features of the social systems in which they exist, they embody and represent society at large in a remarkably complete manner. The men are somewhat older than our students, and after the first schoolboyishness has worn off, they discover more maturity. They have a recognized and respected place in general society, and introduce into their life all of its ideas and habits which their circumstances will admit. Their clubs are copies, on a limited scale, of the clubs in London. They even, as undergraduates, exert a perceptible influence, in some matters, on national affairs; while the contempt with which our so-called practical men would regard any serious effort at influencing extra-collegiate opinion, which might emanate from a body of American students, can be easily imagined. The English universities reflect readily, when they do not help to form, public opinion. They are the more intensely English, in that they exert, on the whole, a conservative force upon social and political progress. But not one of the liberalizing movements of the present century—to which English society has itself yielded—has failed to penetrate to the very shrines of these temples which it has erected to its ideal of culture, or to be welcomed ultimately by their high-priests.

The advantages which such places offer for the study of national character and manners are unquestionable. One may wander indefinitely through the streets and museums and show places of London, and spend months in seeking out the hidden beauties of unfrequented villages and cathedral cities, and, after all, he will not have that valuable insight into life and thought among the English educated classes, which even a brief intimacy with Oxford or Cambridge can give him.

An American is always enough of a *rara avis* at Oxford to be sure of admission into almost any set. Only native gentlemanliness is necessary to insure him a good position. One of the smaller colleges, where the clique divisions are not marked, and can be easily overleaped, and where an intimacy like that of a large family pervades the whole body, from the master down to the latest arrival, is the best for the purpose I have pointed out. The senior men make it a duty, at such colleges, to give new-comers a chance to show what stuff they are made of, often religiously extending the principle to specimens so unattractive that there would seem to be no hope of them. Out of the confusion which this series of experiments creates, especially in the Michaelmas term, when the largest number of freshmen "goes up," there gradually arises an orderly condition of things, where each one has assumed pretty nearly his true position. A school reputation for promise in boating or cricket, or for scholarship, desirable acquaintances among the senior men, or any distinctive mark, like that of coming from abroad, gives a new man a send-off, no doubt. It is not very long since something of the kind was necessary to secure recognition and influence, and perhaps it still is so at Christ Church, Balliol, Exeter, and the colleges which are too large to have been thoroughly leavened by the modern spirit of democracy. But democracy has been working very potently in these undergraduate societies. There has been a vigorous attempt to soften down and remove the sharp lines of the aristocratical cliques, which we read of as forming such marked features of the university systems of only a few years ago. Already some of the colleges boast of their freedom from invidious social distinctions. There can never be, of course, in any association of middle and upper class Englishmen, even a theoretical adoption of the French ideal of equality and fraternity, or of socialistic principles. Their social revolution has produced no more startling results than a relaxing of the strict demarcation lines of their old caste system, and the introduction of less arbitrary and more democratic rules of selection.

The regulations of the university require every one to keep a certain number of terms, before he can offer himself for each of the "public," or university, examinations. No matter how mature in years or wisdom one may be before he goes to Oxford, he must remain in residence a year, by the university calendar, before he is permitted to pass "Moderations," and devote himself to work in any of the separate courses of study, which they call "Final Schools." There is no such thing as entering at an advanced stage of the course, as one may do at an American college, or taking a degree after less than twelve terms of residence. This being the case, and as the rapidity of a student's progress through these preliminary stages—the tadpole phase of his undergraduate existence—depends largely upon the pressure of circumstances on him, there is no test to correspond with the division into classes at an American college, and serve as a basis for social classification. Sets of men group themselves, accordingly, upon the natural principle of conformity of tastes and habits. The riding men, the boating men, the reading men, are likely to form closer and more lasting intimacies among those of their own way of life, than with others. But the tendency is now to avoid turning these natural associations into exclusive cliques. Men come together, quite irrespectively of them, at after-dinner "wines," and Sunday morning breakfasts out of college, and try to keep up a general interchange of hospitality and good feeling. At almost any college, the freshman—while he may be looking forward with annoyance to the rather childish first examination, in Oxford language known as "Smalls"—has an opportunity of enjoying the best society to which he can establish a right.

The life of English undergraduates differs in so many particulars from that of American students,—negatives the few points of general resemblance by such numerous and striking contrasts,—that little assistance is gained toward an understanding of it, through familiarity with the latter. Oxford is a federation of independent colleges, and each of these distinct societies, in the exercise of its complete autonomy, has established customs and regulations which are entirely peculiar to itself. Most of these differences are simply curious, and have no especial significance; but there are some which are of radical importance, giving a recognized character to the whole college. Often this character was impressed upon it by the object of its foundation, of which we have instances in the establishment of Jesus College, in 1571, for the benefit of Welshmen, and the recent erection of Keble for the sons of poor clergymen. Usually, however, it is the product of a combination of slight circumstances, which it is rather difficult to trace out. In some cases a college has kept a position, once obtained, for generations; others rise and fall, fluctuating with the tide of fashion. Its individual reputation is sometimes assiduously cultivated, like that for athletic spirit at Brasenose, for aristocratic eminence at Christ Church, for scholarly free-thinking at Balliol, and for good-fellowship and gentlemanliness, at University. Sometimes, on the contrary, it is forced upon a college, and eagerly disowned, when possible, as in the case of the character of Magdalen for poor scholarship and fast living, and the low social repute of Queens and Wadham. In view of these differences, great and small, it is safe to presume of almost any statement which can be made in regard to life or work at Oxford, that there are many exceptions to it. With this warning, by way of preface, we may feel more secure in taking up, with little pretense to method, some of the features of this peculiar life.

To give connectedness to the subject, we will suppose an American, with the object of studying,—not so much books as men and manners,—settled in his new environment at Oxford, and try to gain an idea of what his experience will be. If he is lucky, he has obtained a room in college, but the chances are that he will have to lodge outside for a time. While he is making his way into familiarity with his surroundings, every day will be filled up with occupations, interesting at least from the novelty of their details. The forenoon is nominally given up to reading and attending lectures. The venerable regulations of the university, which make it and the evening "study hours," are only remembered, as I have observed, to be disregarded, by those who are so inclined. But if one cares at all for the classics, he will enjoy re-reading the Æneid or Horace, and furbishing up a Greek play or two in preparation for the first examination. There is enough that is peculiar about the English method in classical work to make it interesting. Greek prose composition, and Latin, as well as Greek, verses, are no longer required in any stage of the course at Oxford; but the facility which is necessary to carry one through an ordinary college entrance examination in Latin composition, will put a fairly representative American graduate to his best paces. Lectures are chosen by each student for himself, under the direction of his tutor, with reference to the books he proposes to read. Many of them are drearily uninteresting. But, with the liberty which is allowed, it will be strange if any man of decided tastes cannot find a dozen thoroughly enjoyable lectures a week to be attended.

If an examination in Greek grammar, arithmetic, and Latin prose has no terrors for him, our inquisitive intruder within these precincts, hallowed by associations with half of England's worthies, may spend his mornings as his disposition prompts. He may revel in the magnificent stores of the Bodleian, or dip into the new books and periodicals which are spread over the tables of the Radcliffe. If it is winter, he may study the mysteries of rackets, or fives, and wish that the English did not have a practical monopoly of those excellent games, or may walk out to Marston for a spin around the running track, or take a canter through English lanes or across country. If it is summer, he will be more taken by the idea of Worcester or New Gardens, with a book and a pipe, a study of the rooks which build in the trees over Addison's walk at Magdalen, or a sculling boat on the deserted river. No one will care to interfere with him, and he will find plenty of countenance and as much companionship as he wants.

But whether the morning has been passed in close application, in lazy trifling, or avowedly in amusement, the afternoon is, at Oxford, by universal consent, given up to exercise and relaxation. There are no lectures; and he is thought a pretty close student who takes the last hour before dinner for his books. Dons, undergraduates and servants are all let loose in search of health and pleasure. In their devotion to the open air, they stop for no severity of weather. If they did, they would be confined to their rooms for half the year, for the head-quarters of the kingdom which Jupiter Pluvius establishes over England during the winter are undoubtedly at Oxford. The weather is then so uniformly bad that one ceases in practice to notice or care about it.

Even rowing is pluckily kept up through the winter, though the cold sometimes bites sharply. Those who merely seek in it amusement and exercise may take them in some other form on the stormiest days. But the crews in training for the "torpid" races, which occur early in March, and the two "trial eights," from which the "Varsity" is made up, never think of shirking this work. They regularly hurry down to the river through rain and wind and occasionally snow, muffled from ankles up to ears the moment before they get into their boats, in ulsters and comforters. The river does not freeze over, and there is seldom a troublesome quantity of floating ice. The eight men push off, with mufflers and heavy jerseys over their light rowing shirts, drop down a few rods to below the last of the barges, which serve the different colleges as boat-houses, where the superfluous clothing is removed, and then pull away at a sharp pace to the locks at Iffley. Here they turn, getting into their wraps, meanwhile, with a skill which comes of long practice and dire necessity, wait long enough to catch breath, and go up again, nearly at racing speed. This is usually done twice in the afternoon. The training for the great college races of the summer term, carried on, as it is, under the mild skies and frequent suns of April and May, is mere play in comparison with this. Still, in spite of its rigors and the grumbling which is called out by ice-coated oar-handles and frost-painted noses, I believe that Anglo-Saxon enthusiasm carries most men through the "torpid" training with a keen enjoyment. There is certainly a zest in the feeling with which one gives a parting rub to his bare arms before the spurt from Iffley up, with mercury verging upon freezing point, and an ungentle wind searching out the weak spots in his system. I remember the curious sensation with which I once brushed off a half inch of snow from my seat, where it had fallen while the boat was waiting for us. But weather cannot be always at its worst, even in Oxford during February. On a bright afternoon, at any time of the year, the scene on the river, and on the broad walk across Christ Church meadow to the barges, is like a carnival. Every college has a distinctive uniform for each of its crews, and all the colors of the rainbow and combinations unknown to the conventional fashion-makers of Paris are called into requisition by their ingenuity. The constant stream of these gay costumes to and from the river, and the shifting mass of boats in irregular procession on the narrow stream, give life to what is, even without them, a highly attractive picture.

Everybody rows at Oxford, even the dons and the college servants. At times, half the university will seem to be crowded on that stretch of water, a mile long, and five or six rods wide. Yet there is no lack of devotees to every other kind of amusement which this amusement-loving people has invented. In the proper season, cricket attracts half its population away from the river; and then is the time when the latter ceases to be a place for short, sharp exercise, which all one's manliness can only make endurable, and becomes a grand holiday scene for miles in each direction. Boating parties, from which occasionally a sound of feminine voices is heard, make its windings merry with the not too regular plash of oars; pedestrians frequent the towing path; bathers seek out remote bends for a cool plunge; and the inns at Sandford and Abingdon dispense a steady stream of beer to Oxford customers.

Dinner in a college hall is not apt to be a very heavy meal, and yet undergraduates have pretty uniformly adopted the practice of doing nothing for an hour or two after it. When there is no formal wine party, the time till eight o'clock is still sacred to the *genius loci*—a curious genius for a university, which the Italians call "sweet idleness." In winter men gather over a bottle of port around some friend's fire, in summer on the grass of the quadrangle,—a word, by the way, of which one never hears the last two syllables. From eight till nine is the time when billiard-rooms are crowded, and men of all descriptions take a cue in a haphazard game of pool. Then the college gates are shut, and black-letter rules, weakly enforced by unwilling proctors, require every one to keep his room and spend the remainder of his waking hours in work. No one who lives out of college can go in after this, and those who have rooms inside are forbidden an exit. Those who are caught on the wrong side of the gates are allowed to pass them, of course, but are punished by a fine, with a sliding scale to fit the varying gravity of the offense. By nine, however, Oxford has settled down for the evening,—to reading, to cards, or to still other forms of amusement. There are seldom evening entertainments, either dramatic or social, in the town, to keep men out. The coffee-room at the "Union" is tolerably well filled, and the other clubs have a few stragglers all through the evening.

This rough outline, which I have sketched, of the occupations of undergraduate Oxonians, represents a life of routine to which there are fewer and less important exceptions than one would be apt to imagine. There are, as I scarcely need say, men who read hard and waste no time in other employments, and others, of an eccentric tendency, who have hobbies which they ride constantly. But individuality of character usually appears only in variations from this common routine, not in exceptions to it. Monotonous in its outlines, this life is redeemed from monotony by variety of detail. Days are filled up with a succession of inconsiderable matters, until the short term of eight weeks is suddenly over, to the surprise of every one. To stop and think amid such employments is impossible. As a result of the understood difficulty in accomplishing any serious work, many men prefer to read in vacation in order to have little to do during the term. The shortness of the academic year, which gives them more than six months away from Oxford, makes this quite feasible. Others, under the shadow of an imminent examination, stay at home, or find some other quiet place for study. But it is a very pleasant life for one who feels at liberty to enjoy it, and not a little good can be got out of it by a barbarian from this country in search of experience.

In its economic and intellectual aspects, Oxford undergraduate life is still more interesting. The English collegian is an independent housekeeper. He has a wine-closet, table-service, and all of the ordinary household utensils, except those for cooking; and the round of entertainments, including wine parties, breakfasts and luncheons, and occasional dinners, which figures so largely in all of the works of fiction where he appears, is fostered by motives of convenience and sometimes even of economy, as well as by the spirit of conviviality. As the first two meals of the day are taken in the students' own rooms, it naturally follows that a habit is formed among friends of eating them together in tolerably regular rotation. In the form that these entertainments take, there is the greatest variety. A few of the colleges encourage an active competition in display, and then they become elaborate and pretentious, and wines, in particular, are carried to an extreme, ending not unfrequently in a regular debauch. But as an undergraduate's purse is seldom unlimited, where this sort of hospitality prevails it can only be indulged in occasionally. As a rule, entertainments are conducted on an admirably moderate scale. Many of the college societies have very sensible regulations, which it is difficult to evade. At University, for instance, it is rarely that one breakfasts or lunches alone; but, to equalize matters, each man orders for himself what he wants from the college buttery and kitchen, and simply has it served by his friend's "scout" in his room. The host only bears the expense of the wine and the little dainties which the *bons vivants* among his guests will expect to find, but which the college larder does not supply. At the wine parties, which commonly take the form of desserts immediately after "hall," this rule could not be observed, as everything is brought in from out of college, but, except on extraordinary occasions, display is avoided, and there is extreme moderation in drinking. Englishmen are, in general, too familiar with the use of wine to be tempted to frequent excess. I doubt whether there is, throughout the university, more intemperance than at one of our city colleges, though the aggregate amount of drinking is far greater.

But while these entertainments vary widely, they have certain characteristics in common which are readily discernible. They are by far the most important element in the social economy of the university. Though the "scouts," or college servants, are trained to make all the preparations, as only English domestics ever are trained, they involve on the whole a large outlay of money, time and thought. In each college they are governed by, and tend in turn to keep up, its peculiar social tone. It is in them that English undergraduates can be studied collectively to best advantage.

In the talk that goes on around the hospitable board of an Oxford student, personal traits and idiosyncrasies appear very little. This small and intimate society is actually among the strictest, in its repression of all eccentricity, and as it has to use the rough methods which are solely available for such a purpose, in condemning eccentricity and ostentation, it silences individuality also. While everything appears to be informal and unconstrained, and is so to a certain extent, each man has, consciously or otherwise, donned a conventional garb, which resembles, as nearly as may be, an established model. It is in the make-up of this model that undergraduate character, and, a little more remotely, English character, appear. Strongly marked originality will seem at first very rare at Oxford to an American, a Frenchman or a German. When discovered, it will be only in the disclosures of a quiet *tête-à-tête*, after overcoming the reluctance of habitual reserve. Within the limitations of such a despotism as this general conversation must be monotonous and can never rise to be intellectual. Decided expressions of feeling or opinion seldom interrupt it. When they do, they are apt to be received with universal disapprobation, and the mistaken venturer may think himself lucky if this does not take its severest form —universal silence.

But the ruling canons of taste forbid the ordinary talk of English undergraduates from becoming even scholarly. Nothing is more absolutely barred than "talking shop," under which head they include all but the most casual allusions to the work which is, ostensibly, the common object of their university residence. There is one curious illustration of the spirit in which displays of scholarship are received among these students. At dinner in hall, a custom, whose origin is lost in proper obscurity, imposes a fine upon any one who is guilty of a quotation from a Greek or Latin author, or from English poetry, or—strange association!—for profaneness or obscenity. This takes the form of a mulct of beer or wine for the benefit of the table, and is always made a great joke. But such humor sometimes has a deeper significance. I do not know whether this custom rules at the "scholars'" tables, but it is my impression that it generally does so.

Subjects of conversation, in any general assemblage of undergraduates may be drawn from current politics or literature, but, if so, they are treated superficially. The chief interest centers in their own constantly recurring athletic contests, in regard to which the minutest details of information are eagerly imparted and received. Other matters relating to their university life are also canvassed again and again. But notice the questions asked: "Whether Star of Trinity or Blank of Oriel is more likely to get a 'First' at the next Examination?" "How many hours a day this friend is reading?" and, "Whether that lecturer is not a bore?" Deeper than this into the philosophy of university education it is forbidden to go.

These facts are clues to a number of English characteristics, if not to English character. To explain them all by the one word, reserve, would be absurd, though it has much to do with producing this condition of things. Their habit of reserve enables many of these men, whose intellectual life is on an altogether higher plane, to mingle with the multitude without arousing feelings, either of inferiority and dislike, or of inferiority and emulation, and themselves to enjoy such companionship. But this only serves to point to the truth, that the typical young Englishman is not intellectual, not thoughtful—scarcely even serious. He is little inclined to speculate upon the past or the future and, in dealing with questions of the hour, is more anxious to get them disposed of than to have his solution perfect. He has not read much, when he goes up from school, outside of his classics; and, at the university, it is a question between laying in more classics, and taking a course in history or law, to which he is quite satisfied to restrict his efforts. At the end, he knows enough about his specialty to get a "pass," or perhaps squeeze in for a "third," and has still read nothing else. He has none of that mass of undigested facts and crude opinions, which is the ordinary product of our system of education in a genuine American, and, which, though scarcely to be stated as the proper object of education, is a better product, for our purposes, than the English.

For out-of-door exercise, the representative young Englishman is possessed by a passion, which follows him through life, until he grows too stiff, in turn, to chase a foot-ball, to wield a cricket-bat or throw the weight of his broad back on an oar, and finally to sit on horseback or handle a gun. He is fond of animals and keeps a dog; and is too apt to judge of one's regard for himself by the treatment accorded to this canine supporter. He is manly, full of animal spirits, modest, good-natured, and accessible—to those whom he likes. He is not intensely religious, though he may be reading divinity, but is a firm adherent of the established church, and intolerant of free-thinking to the last degree. His morality is formed upon his ideas of gentlemanliness. He is mature, as I have remarked, —because he is not ambitious enough to aim at knowing everything and being everything at once, like an American, or at doing something new and great, like a German; so that he is able to get rid of crudity very soon after coming under the influences of the university, and to settle down into the character which he is to carry, with no violent changes, through his life.

It is no new discovery that these are some of the most common features of English character, as developed by the universities. But studying character in a series of personal experiences is a quite different thing from getting it out of books, although the conclusions reached may be the same, or may, even, be less broad and true than those attainable through a comparison of others' experiences. It is certain, however, that, before long, a genuine American—ambitious, energetic, speculative—will grow restless under such artificial restrictions, and begin to seek for some more congenial society. Even within his college he can hardly fail to find it. His relations with the instructors will be pleasant. He will find himself meeting them, now and then, on almost intimate terms. And there are, of course, undergraduates in every college, who, while they are marked by all that is admirable in the English type of character, have nothing commonplace about them. The individual worth of such men is enhanced by their modesty. Those who have read and thought to real advantage are no more rare among Oxford students, than they are at Yale or Heidelberg. The difference is that there is no temptation to parade, and less inclination to it than among young Germans and Americans. It is my conclusion that the thoughtless, unintellectual tone of English undergraduate society, is rightly attributed by Englishmen, whose pride resents any further explanation, to the unwillingness of those who have valuable mental stores to hawk them for the general benefit. But beneath this fact there is another—at once its cause, and the true key to the whole situation—which I should state thus: when one descends from the small circle of those who have read much and thought carefully, he falls in with scarcely any who have read some things, and got some good out of them, but comes at once upon an army of Philistines, who have read nothing but a few text-books, and thought as little as they could.

One who makes his way into Oxford undergraduate society for the purpose of getting an inside view of England and the English, must ordinarily be too mature to suffer from influences which it might be unwise to throw around him at an earlier point of development. So far from being injuriously affected by the enervating tendency of Oxford life, he will find it the thing best worth studying, —the very thing which makes his object attainable. An independent character, once thoroughly developed, may be even led to a truer knowledge of itself, to a better-directed energy, by contact with antagonistic principles. There appears no reason at all why an American education should not be supplemented by such a residence at an English university.

But I doubt whether a course of study under these social influences is, in many cases, a desirable *substitute* for that at an American college, at the age at which our young men usually leave school. It is true that the advantages for study are in one sense great, and the assistance which is offered would be very useful, if the most were made of it. But it is not probable that an American, at that age, will do far otherwise than those around him. He is surrounded by an atmosphere—beautiful, lazy, careless. No active incentives are brought to bear on him; but—by example, certainly, and indirectly by precept—a powerful influence toward mental inertness. He may resist this; and then he will probably come away a scholarly *dilettante*, with a disqualification for any rougher work or less civilized life than is within the limited ken of the conventional English man of culture. I do not say that he may not escape this, also. I must avoid overdrawing the strength of the deleterious influence which I should fear for an immature American. My idea is that, while there is less room for dilettanteism in our uncompromising, ungloved civilization, than in the English, an American at Oxford is, on general principles, more likely than an Englishman to be drawn irresistibly into the current which sweeps toward this gulf. In building up their social and educational systems together, the English have adapted the latter to the former with the most perfect economy. It satisfies their own wants. The exact wants of other people have not entered into their calculations.

There are some other considerations suggested by the proposal, which we now hear not infrequently, to substitute an English for an American university course, which intimately concern the future of our own system of higher education. If a preference of the English course is justifiable, it will practically settle the question of the availability of their model as a guide for our efforts in the development of our own universities, which is one of the grave problems for this generation of Americans to decide. It will be a not unfit conclusion to my effort to sketch, in one of its important aspects, the most prominent representative of English ideas of education, if I enter a little into the merits of this question. And as the German university scheme is the competitive model for our adoption, our examination of parallelisms and divergencies in our own and the English systems will be more instructive, if it is also included.

The present differences between these three educational systems can be best arrived at through a statement of their objects. We, in this country, in preparing work for our students, spread our efforts very widely, scarcely failing to run our plow-share into at least a corner of every field within the known and habitable territory of knowledge. Our aim, as it is intelligently understood by those who have studied it, is *instruction* or *information*. All that our colleges have—until recently—attempted, has been to lay a broad foundation for life-work and self-education. The fault of our scheme has been superficiality and incompleteness; its merit, breadth and suggestiveness.

The Germans pursue very much the same course at their gymnasia, which are the real rivals of our colleges and of the "academical departments" in our universities. But once at the university, they change their method, drop all but one subject, and carry proficiency in that to a degree which excites our envy. Their object in the university course is not information, in the sense in which I have used it, or education, in any sense; but *training*. Their universities are able to turn out highly trained specialists, because the gymnasia have sent them educated and widely informed men. This is intelligent specialization, and the whole system administers a reproof at once to those who decry, and to those who ignorantly grasp at, its fruits.

The English, in their universities, now specialize also, but not so strictly and not from the beginning of the curriculum. Their "Final Schools" are broader than a German's special course, and do not commonly exclude one another. Traversing, as they do, a more extended space, they are not able to reduce it to possession so completely, and are not trained for dealing independently with their specialties at once. The cure of souls appears indeed to be taught sufficiently in the "Divinity School" —or course—at the English universities, for young curates step directly from the hall where they take their bachelor's degree into parish work. But in no other profession is this true. The bachelor of medicine goes into a London hospital, or to Paris or Vienna, before he opens an office; the bachelor of law, into the chambers of a practicing attorney. The student of science attends lectures in London, or goes to the Continent. Perhaps pure mathematics, at Cambridge, should be excepted from this statement, but I know of nothing else. On the other hand, the English public schools are not German gymnasia, but almost confine themselves to a classical course, as a result of which we have seen that a graduate of Oxford may be, and often is, actually ignorant of many subjects which come equally within the scope of the German system of education and our own. The object of the English who support the two old universities, has been frequently alluded to in the preceding pages. It is *culture*,—a word which, in conventional English usage, has had a peculiar meaning, not referring so much to symmetrical development, and a broad intellectual horizon, as to a combination of the tastes and manners of good society, with a pretty talent for Greek verses. This is what their universities have been. Just now there is a rubbing of eyes, and stretching forth of tentative limbs, among the powers that be, which betoken an awakening to new life. It must be said for them that they have abolished recently a large number of venerable abuses, and that they have pursued their ideal of culture very successfully.

Such is an outline of the differences which these three systems present. Which of them is the better, and which will prevail; or if we admit that our own is unsatisfactory, to which of the others shall we look for suggestions? A slight review of history will show us that the German is at least leading in the direct course which events and changes have been taking, and are likely to take. The evolution of a scheme of education is, in its general contour, one of the simplest processes to be traced out in the history of modern civilized peoples. We can follow it from the time of scholastic logic and would-be philosophy—the dark ages—through the awakening period, which we are just leaving behind us, with its eagerness after universal knowledge, on to the future, when universal knowledge will have become too vast to be attempted by one man, and the most that can be done will be to raise a superstructure of special attainments, on a basis of general information. How thoroughly the Germans are at the head of this movement need not be further emphasized. The narrowness which has been made a reproach against their education, is imaginary, in the first place, as any one could find out by examining the system which they have as subsidiary to their universities; and, so far as it is borne out by a few remarkable instances, is justified by the irresistible logic of necessity.

But while we see them ahead of us in the true path, it is possible that they are also ahead of the time, advancing at too great speed. The English have been following them with faltering steps, and have now arrived at a condition which admits of no excuse, except on the ground of its being transitional. For us it is full of instruction, chiefly by the way of warning. Whether or not the Germans are ahead of the time, it is certain that the English, in Oxford and Cambridge, are not anxious to overtake them speedily. The German extreme is rather shocking to their conservation. England has her great specialists whom she honors, fêtes; with whose names she fills biographical dictionaries. But their influence on society and public opinion is slight in comparison with that of the corresponding class in Germany. While a peculiar conception of culture remains the educational ideal of the west end of London, Oxford and Cambridge will not get much in advance of it, or move on a consistent plan of improvement. Whatever rebellion there is against their conservatism will find vent probably in the University of London, and other institutions which are less influenced by the prevailing social tone. The course of university reform in England will be that which they have taken in parliamentary and law reform. Foreign theories will be ignored, and not much more value attached to foreign experiments. Changes will be made slowly, and in accordance with no coherent scheme. The English have a marvelous faculty for putting up with partial reforms, and living under a system of things which bristles with theoretical contradictions.

But the question of what ought to be and will be done, is much more interesting as applied to ourselves, and not so simple. We have no settled intellectual habits, as a people, from which to argue. Still, it is possible to discover some things which we do not yet feel the need of, and which our educational institutions will not be largely called on to supply at once; and one of these is special scientific and professional training, so long-continued and strict as to involve a sacrifice of everything else. Extreme enthusiasm for specialization in study has never pervaded this country, any more than it has England, though for different reasons. Indeed, I fancy that instead of appearing to thoughtful Americans as an intoxicating dream, to be courted with German eagerness, it has taken the shape of a nightmare, whose remotest threatenings they have regarded with dread. We are not well enough educated as a nation to afford to specialize. What our educators must aim at, for many years to come, is a diffusion of information of a higher grade than that which is furnished by our boasted public schools,—a spread of that truer culture than the English, which means a broadened and receptive mind, a capacity for independent thought on new and grave subjects, a desire to know and use "the best that has been thought and said in the world,"—a culture which fits men to maintain a democratic form of government by teaching them self-government.

It is clear, then, that the prevailing tendency in our leading educational institutions, to disregard entirely the ideal of which Oxford is a representative, is based on our actual needs, and is to be encouraged, in spite of the protests of a few admirers of everything English. But it is no less clear that this tendency needs to be carefully regulated. In our admiration for the achievements of the Germans in education, we may make the mistake of emulating them too zealously. There has been no lack of apprehension of the fact that their university system is built on their school system, and that before we can have the one we must have the other. For accomplishing this double end two methods have been proposed. The earlier involved raising our preparatory seminaries into gymnasia, as the first step toward making our colleges universities. Of late, however, impatience has led to the attempt, in some instances, to make both university and gymnasia out of an "academical department," with a four years' course, by introducing optional studies, not unlike the English, and building up distinct professional and scientific schools around this. Such a scheme looks rather hopeless to one who has not implicit faith in American creative genius. If we grasp so inconsiderately at German success, we may find ourselves stranded on the very English error which we wish to avoid still, as we have done.

But there is still a third plan of action, more promising than either of the others, which has been recently inaugurated at Yale, in the establishment of graduate courses of study. If we admit the somewhat distasteful fact that in our old colleges and academical departments we have gymnasia already, and nothing more, the adoption of this plan would seem to follow on the simplest economic principles. I believe that this is the destiny of the American system of education. But if it is, our future gymnasia—the present "academical departments" of our so-called universities—should not, in the meantime, be changed in any radical way. Optional studies ought to be introduced in them sparingly, if at all, and in such a manner as only to better the good work which they have done in the past,—a work which is now what we need more than anything else. Scientific and professional schools should be made not auxiliary, but supplemental to the central academy, and then they, with what we now call graduate courses, would be our universities, as soon as funds could be obtained to endow more professorships, and students induced to lengthen out a four years' course to seven. It may be asked why, in pursuing this plan, it would be undesirable to yield, temporarily, to the not very intelligent popular clamor for immediate change, in the direction of specialization. To this the English experience is a sufficient answer. Such a change in our situation would be an obstacle to complete development—another illustration of the manner in which, as Spencer has so clearly pointed out, structure, too hastily arrived at, may impede progress.

THROUGH THE TREES.

If I had known whose face I'd see
  Above the hedge, beside the rose;
If I had known whose voice I'd hear
  Make music where the wind-flower blows,—
I had not come; I had not come.

If I had known his deep "I love"
  Could make her face so fair to see;
If I had known her shy "And I"
  Could make him stoop so tenderly,—
I had not come; I had not come.

But what knew I? The summer breeze
  Stopped not to cry "Beware! beware!"
The vine-wreaths drooping from the trees
  Caught not my sleeve with soft "Take care!"
And so I came, and so I came.

The roses that his hands have plucked
  Are sweet to me, are death to me;
Between them, as through living flames
  I pass, I clutch them, crush them, see!
The bloom for her, the thorn for me.

The brooks leap up with many a song—
  I once could sing, like them could sing;
They fall; 'tis like a sigh among
  A world of joy and blossoming.—
Why did I come? Why did I come?

The blue sky burns like altar fires—
  How sweet her eyes beneath her hair!
The green earth lights its fragrant pyres;
  The wild birds rise and flush the air;
God looks and smiles, earth is so fair.

But ah! 'twixt me and yon bright heaven
  Two bended heads pass darkling by;
And loud above the bird and brook
  I hear a low "I love," "And I"—
And hide my face. Ah God! Why? Why?