

With pressed lips as bloodless
 As lips of the slain!
 Kiss down the young eyelids,
 Smooth down the gray hairs;
 Let tears quench the curses
 That burn through your prayers.

Strong man of the prairies,
 Mourn bitter and wild!
 Wail, desolate woman!
 Weep, fatherless child!
 But the grain of God springs up
 From ashes beneath,
 And the crown of His harvest
 Is life out of death.

Not in vain on the dial
 The shade moves along
 To point the great contrasts
 Of right and of wrong:
 Free homes and free altars
 And fields of ripe food;
 The reeds of the Swan's Marsh,
 Whose bloom is of blood.

On the lintels of Kansas
 That blood shall not dry;
 Henceforth the Bad Angel
 Shall harmless go by:
 Henceforth to the sunset,
 Unchecked on her way,
 Shall Liberty follow
 The march of the day.

YOUTH.

THE ancient statue of Minerva, in the Villa Albani, was characterized as the Goddess of Wisdom by an aged countenance. Phidias reformed this idea, and gave to her beauty and youth. Previous artists had imitated Nature too carelessly,—not deeply perceiving that wisdom and virtue, striving in man to resist senescence and decay, must in a goddess accomplish their purpose, and preserve her in perpetual bloom. Yet even decay and disease are often ineffectual; the

young soul gleams through these impediments, and would be poorly expressed in figures of age. Accepting, therefore, this ideal representation, age and wisdom can never be companions; youth is wise, and age is imbecile.

Our childhood grows in value as we grow in years. It is to that time that every one refers the influence which reaches to his present and somehow moulds it. It may have been an insignificant circumstance,—a word,—a book,—praise or re-

proof; but from it has flowed all that he is. We should seem ridiculous in men's eyes, were we known to give that importance to certain trifles which in our private and inmost thought they really have. Each finds somewhat in his childhood peculiar and remarkable, on which he loves to dwell. It gives him a secret importance in his own eyes, and he bears it about with him as a kind of inspiring genius. Intimations of his destiny, gathered from early memories, float dimly before him, and are ever beckoning him on. That which he really is no one knows save himself. His words and actions do but inadequately reveal the being he is. We are all greater than we seem to each other. The heart's deepest secrets will not be told. The secret of the interest and delight we take in romances and poetry is that they realize the expectations and hopes of youth. It is the world we had painted and expected. He is unhappy who has never known the eagerness of childish anticipation.

Full of anticipations, full of simple, sweet delights, are these years, the most valuable of lifetime. Then wisdom and religion are intuitive. But the child hastens to leave its beautiful time and state, and watches its own growth with impatient eye. Soon he will seek to return. The expectation of the future has been disappointed. Manhood is not that free, powerful, and commanding state the imagination had delineated. And the world, too, disappoints his hope. He finds there things which none of his teachers ever hinted to him. He beholds a universal system of compromise and conformity, and in a fatal day he learns to compromise and conform. At eighteen the youth requires much stricter truth of men than at twenty-four.

At twenty-four the prophecies of childhood and boyhood begin to be fulfilled, the longings of the heart to be satisfied. He finds and tastes that life which once seemed to him so full of satisfaction and advantage. The inclination to speak in the first person passes away, and his composition is less autobiographical. The

claims of society and friends begin to be respected. Solitude and musing are less sweet. The morbid effusions of earlier years, once so precious, no longer please. Now he regards most his unwritten thought. He uses fewer adjectives and alliterations, more verbs and dogmatism. There was a time when his genius was not domesticated, and he did his work somewhat awkwardly, yet with a fervor prophetic of settled wisdom and eloquence. The youth is almost too much in earnest. He aims at nothing less than all knowledge, all wisdom, all power. Perchance the end of all this is that he may discover his own proper work and tendency, and learn to know himself from the revelations of his own nature in universal nature.

For it is by this sign we choose companions and books. Not that they are the best persons or the best thoughts; but some subtle affinity attracts and invites as to another self. In the choosing of companions there seems to be no choice at all. We meet, we know not how or when; and though we should remember the history, yet friendship has an anterior history we know not of. We all have friends, but the one want of the soul is a friend,—that other self, that one without whom man is incomplete and but the opaque face of a planet. For such we patiently wait and hope, knowing that when we become worthy of him, continents, nor caste, nor opinion can separate us.

A like experience is known to the young man in his reading. 'Tis in vain to advise as to reading; a higher power controls the matter. Of course there are some books all must read, as every one learns the alphabet and spelling-book; but his use and combination of them he shall share with no one. Some spiritual power is ever drawing us towards what we love. Thus in books one constantly meets his own idea, his own feelings, even his most private ones, which he thought could not be known or appreciated beyond his own bosom. Therefore he quickly falls in love with those

books that discover him to himself, and that are the keepers of his secrets. Here is a part of himself written out in immortal letters. Here is that thought long dimly haunting the mind, but which never before found adequate expression. Here is a memorable passage transcribed out of his experience.

The fascination of books consists in their revelations of the half-conscious images of the reader's mind. There is a wonderful likeness and coincidence in the thoughts of men. But not alone in books does one meet his own image at every turn. He beholds himself strewn in a thousand fragments throughout the world; and all his culture is nothing but assimilation of himself to them, until he can say with wise Ulysses,

"I am a part of all that I have met."

Thus Nature compels the youth to seek every means of stimulating himself to activity. He has learned that in periods of transition and change fresh life flows in upon him, dilating the heart and disclosing new realms of thought. He thanks the gods for every mood, Doric or dithyrambic, for each new relation, for each new friend, and even for his sorrows and misfortunes. Out of these comes the complete wisdom which shall make old age but another more fair and perfect youth. Even the face and form shall be fortified against time and fate. In the physiognomy of age much personal history is revealed. The dimples and folds of infancy have become the furrows of thought and care. Yet, sometimes retaining their original beauty, they are an ornament, and in them we read the record of deep thought and experience. But the wrinkles of some old people are characterless; running in all directions, appearing as though a finely-woven cloth had left its impress upon the face, revealing a life aimless and idle, or distracted by a thousand cross-purposes and weaknesses.

If now youth will permit us to look a little deeper into its heart, we will attempt to celebrate that unpublished and

vestal wisdom written there. Age does us only indirect justice,—by the value it gives to memory. It slights and forgets its own present. This day with its trivialities dwindles and vanishes before the teeming hours wherein it learned and felt and suffered;—so the circles, which are the tree's memories of its own growth, are more distinct near the centre, where its growth began, than in the outer and later development. Give age the past, and let us be content with our legacy, which is the future. Still shall youth cast one retrospective glance at the experience of its nonage, ere it assumes its prerogative, and quite forgets it.

When the first surprise at the discovery of the faculties is over, begins the era of experience. The aspiration conducting to experiment has revealed the power or the inability. Henceforth the youth will know his relations to the world. But as yet men are ignorant how it stands between them. There has been only a closet performance, a morning rehearsal. He sees the tribute to genius, to industry, to birth, to fortune. At first he yields reluctantly to novitiate and culture; he yearns for action. His masters tell him that the world is coy, must be approached cautiously, and with something substantial in the hand. The old bird will not be caught with chaff. He does not yet understand the processes of accumulation and transmutation. The fate of the Danaïdes is his, and he draws long with a bottomless bucket. But at last his incompetency can no further be concealed. Then he either submits to the suggestions of despair and oblivion or bravely begins his work. The exhilaration and satisfaction which he felt at his first performances, in this hour of renunciation, are changed to bitterness and disgust. He remembers the old oracle: "In the Bacchic procession many carry the thyrsus, but few are inspired." The possibility of ultimate failure threatens him more and more while he reflects; as the chasm which you wish to leap grows impassable, if you measure and deliberate. But the vivacity of youth

preserves him from any permanent misanthropy or doubt. Nature makes us blind where we should be injured by seeing. We partake of the lead of Saturn, the activity of fire, the forgetfulness of water. His academic praises console him, *maugre* his depreciation of them. His little fame, the homage of his little world, have in them the same sweetness as the reverberation of ages. Heaven would show him his capacity for those things to which he aspires by giving him an early and representative realization of them. It is a happy confidence. Reality is tyrannous. Let him construe everything in the poet's mood. He shall dream, and the day will have more significance. Youth belongs to the Muse.

How the old men envy us! They wisely preclude us from their world, since they know how it would bereave us of all that makes our state so full of freedom and delight, and to them so suggestive of the past.

"I remember, when I think,
That my youth was half divine."

Thus the great have ever chosen young men for companions. Was it not Plato who wished he were the heavens, that he might look down upon his young companion with a thousand eyes? Thus they do homage to the gift of youth, and by its presence contrive to nestle into its buoyant and pure existence. If youth will enjoy itself virtuously with gymnastics, with music, with friendship, with poetry, there will come no hours of lamentation and repentance. They attend the imbecile and thoughtless. These halcyon days will return to temper and grace the period of old age; as upon the ripened peach reappear the hues of its early blossoms.

Among his seniors the youth perceives a certain jealousy of him. They pretend that all has been said and done. They awe him with their great names. He has to learn, that, though Jew and Greek have spoken, nevertheless he must reiterate and interpret to his own people and generation. Perchance in the process something new will likewise be added. Many things still wait an observer. Still

VOL. II.

23

is there infinite hope and expectation, which youth must realize. In war, in peace, in politics, in books, all eyes are turned to behold the rising of his star.

Reluctantly does the youth yield to the claims of moderation and reserve. Abandonment to an object has hitherto been his highest wisdom. But in the pursuit of the most heroic friendship, or the most sovereign passion, the youth discovers that a certain continence is necessary. He cannot approach too closely; for that moment love is changed into disgust and hate. He would drink the nectar to the lees. This is one of Nature's limitations, and has many analogies; and he who would never see the bottom of any cup, and always be possessed with a divine hunger, must observe them. I remember how it piqued my childish curiosity that the moon seemed always to retreat when I ran towards her, and to pursue me when I fled. It was a very significant symbol. Stand a little apart, and things of their own accord will come more than half-way. Nobody ever goes to meet a loafer. Self-centred, domesticated persons attract. What would be the value of the heavens, if we could bring the stars into our lap? They cannot be approached or appropriated. Upon the highest mountain the horizon sinks you in a valley, and far aloft in night and mystery gleam the retreating stars.

It must be remembered that indirect vision is much more delicate than direct. Looking askance, with a certain oblique and upward glance, constitutes the art and power of the poet; for so a gentle invitation is offered the imagination to contribute its aid. We see clearest when the eye is elongated and slightly curtailed. Persons with round, protuberant eyes are obliged to reduce their superfluous visual power by artificial means. We subordinate the external organ in order to liberate the inner eye of the mind. The musing, pensive Hindoos, who have elongated eyes, look through the surface of things to their essence, and call the world Illusion,—the illusory energy of Vishnu.

There is a vulgar trick of wishing to touch everything. But the greatest caution is necessary, in beholding a statue or painting, not to draw too near; and it is thus with every other beautiful thing. Nature secretly writes, *Hands off!*—and men do but translate her hieroglyph in their galleries and museums. The sense of touch is only a provision against the loss of sight and hearing. We should cultivate these, until, like the Scandinavian Heimdal, we can hear the trees and the flowers grow, and see with Heraclitus the breathing of the stars.

The youth once loved Nature after this somewhat gross and material fashion, for the berries she gave him, the flowers she wove in his hair, and the brooks that drove his mimic mills. He chased the butterfly, he climbed the trees, he would stand in the rain, paint his cheeks with berry juice, dabble in the mud, and noth-

ing was secure from his prying fingers and curious eyes. He must touch and taste of everything, and know every secret. But it eluded him; and he lay down from his giddy chase, tired and unsatisfied, yet still anticipating that the morning would reveal all. Later he approaches men and things in a different mood. Experience has taught him so much. He begins to feel the use of the past. Memory renders many present advantages as nothing, and there is a rare and peculiar value to every reminiscence that connects him with the years from which he is so fast receding. The bower which his own hands wove from birch-trees and interwove with green brakes, where at the noon-time he was wont to retreat from the hot school-house, with the little maid of his choice, and beguile the hour so happily, suggests a spell and charm to preserve him in perpetual childhood.

PINTAL.

IN San Francisco, in 1849, on Dupont Street near Washington, a wretched tent, patched together from mildewed and weather-worn sails, was pitched on a hill-side lot, unsightly with sand and thorny bushes, filthy cast-aways of clothing, worn-out boots, and broken bottles. The forlorn loneliness of this poor abode, and the perfection of its Californianness, in all the circumstances of exposure, frailness, destitution, and dirt, were enough of themselves to make it an object of interest to the not-too-busy passer; yet, to complete its pitiful picturesqueness, Pathos had bestowed a case of miniatures and a beautiful child. Beside the entrance of the tent a rough shingle was fastened to the canvas, and against this hung an unpainted picture-frame of pine, in humble counterpart of those gilded rosewood signs which, at the doors of Daguerreotype galleries, display

fancy "specimens" to the goers-to-and-fro of Broadway. Attracted by an object so novel in San Francisco then, I paused one morning, in my walk office-ward from the "Anglo-Saxon Dining-Saloon," to examine it.

There were six of them,—six dainty miniature portraits on ivory, elaborately finished, and full of the finest marks of talent. The whole were seemingly reproductions of but two heads, a lady's and a child's,—the lady well fitted to be the mother of the child, which might well have been divine. There were three studies of each; each was presented in three characters, chosen as by an artist possessed of a sentiment of sadness, some touching reminiscence.

In one picture, the lady—evidently English, a pensive blonde, with large and most sweet blue eyes curtained by the longest lashes, regular and refined fea-