

Quotes and Images From The Works of Charles Dudley Warner

Charles Dudley Warner - Edited and Arranged by David Widger

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Title: Quotes and Images From The Works of Charles Dudley Warner

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Release Date: August 28, 2004 [EBook #7557]

Language: English

Character set encoding: ASCII

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QUOTES AND IMAGES FROM CHARLES DUDLEY WARNER

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CHARLES DUDLEY WARNER

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PASSAGES AND SHORT QUOTATIONS FROM

CHARLES DUDLEY WARNER

WASHINGTON IRVING

"Some persons, in looking upon life, view it as they would view a

picture, with a stern and criticising eye. He also looks upon life as a picture, but to catch its beauties, its lights,--not its defects and shadows. On the former he loves to dwell. He has a wonderful knack at shutting his eyes to the sinister side of anything. Never beat a more kindly heart than his; alive to the sorrows, but not to the faults, of his friends, but doubly alive to their virtues and goodness. Indeed, people seemed to grow more good with one so unselfish and so gentle."
--Emily Foster.

....authors are particularly candid in admitting the faults of their friends.

The governor, from the stern of his schooner, gave a short but truly patriarchal address to his citizens, wherein he recommended them to comport like loyal and peaceable subjects,--to go to church regularly on Sundays, and to mind their business all the week besides. That the women should be dutiful and affectionate to their husbands,--looking after nobody's concerns but their own,--eschewing all gossipings and morning gaddings,--and carrying short tongues and long petticoats. That the men should abstain from intermeddling in public concerns, intrusting the cares of government to the officers appointed to support them, staying at home, like good citizens, making money for themselves, and getting children for the benefit of their country.

It happens to the princes of literature to encounter periods of varying duration when their names are revered and their books are not read. The growth, not to say the fluctuation, of Shakespeare's popularity is one of the curiosities of literary history. Worshiped by his contemporaries, apostrophized by Milton only fourteen years after his death as the "dear son of memory, great heir to fame,"--"So sepulchred in such pomp dost lie, That kings, for such a tomb, would wish to die,"--he was neglected by the succeeding age, the subject of violent extremes of opinion in the eighteenth century, and so lightly esteemed by some that Hume could doubt if he were a poet "capable of furnishing a proper entertainment to a refined and intelligent audience," and attribute to the rudeness of his "disproportioned and misshapen" genius the "reproach of barbarism" which the English nation had suffered from all its neighbors.

I have lost confidence in the favorable disposition of my countrymen, and look forward to cold scrutiny and stern criticism, and this is a line of writing in which I have not hitherto ascertained my own powers. Could I afford it, I should like to write, and to lay my writings aside when finished. There is an independent delight in study and in the creative exercise of the pen; we live in a world of dreams, but publication lets in the noisy rabble of the world, and there is an end of our dreaming.

THEIR PILGRIMAGE

Act of eating is apt to be disenchanting
Air of endurance that fathers of families put on
Anxiously asked at every turn how he likes it
As much by what they did not say as by what they did say
Asked Mr King if this was his first visit
Beautifully regular and more satisfactorily monotonous
Best part of a conversation is the things not said
Comfort of leaving same things to the imagination

Common attitude of the wholesale to the retail dealer
Confident opinions about everything
Couldn't stand this sort of thing much longer
Designed by a carpenter, and executed by a stone-mason
Facetious humor that is more dangerous than grumbling
Fat men/women were never intended for this sort of exhibition
Feeding together in a large room must be a little humiliating
Fish, they seemed to say, are not so easily caught as men
Florid man, who "swelled" in, patronizing the entire room
Hated a fellow that was always in high spirits
Irresponsibility of hotel life
It is a kind of information I have learned to dispense with
It's an occupation for a man to keep up a cottage
Let me be unhappy now and then, and not say anything about it
Live, in short, rather more for one's self than for society
Loftily condescending
Lunch was dinner and that dinner was supper
Man in love is poor company for himself and for everybody else
Near-sighted, you know, about seeing people that are not
Not to care about anything you do care about
Notion of duty has to account for much of the misery in life
People who haven't so many corners as our people have
People who leave home on purpose to grumble
Pet dogs of all degrees of ugliness
Satisfy the average taste without the least aid from art
Seemed only a poor imitation of pleasure
Shrinking little man, whose whole appearance was an apology
Small frame houses hopelessly decorated with scroll-work
So many swearing colors
Thinking of themselves and the effect they are producing
Vanishing shades of an attractive and consolable grief
Women are cruelest when they set out to be kind
Wore their visible exclusiveness like a garment
Young ones who know what is best for the elders

LITTLE JOURNEY IN THE WORLD

Absurd to be so interested in fictitious trouble
And in this way I crawled out of the discussion, as usual
Anything can be borne if he knows that he shall see her tomorrow
Clubs and circles
Democracy is intolerant of variations from the general level
Do you think so?
Eagerness to acquire the money of other people, not to make it
Easier to be charitable than to be just
Everybody has read it
Great deal of mind, it takes him so long to make it up
How much good do you suppose condescending charity does?
In youth, as at the opera, everything seems possible
It is so easy to turn life into a comedy!
It is so painful to shrink, and so delightful to grow!
Knew how roughly life handles all youthful enthusiasms
Liberty to indulge in republican simplicity
Much easier to forgive a failure than a success
Not the use of money, but of the use money makes of you
One thing to entertain and another to be entertaining

Possessory act of readjusting my necktie
Process which is called weighing a thing in the mind
Simple enjoyment being considered an unworthy motive
Society that exists mainly to pay its debts gets stupid
Talk is always tame if no one dares anything
Tastes and culture were of the past age
Unhappy are they whose desires are all ratified
World has become so tolerant that it doesn't care

THE GOLDEN HOUSE

Absolutely necessary that the world should be amused
Affectation of familiarity
Air of determined enjoyment
Always did what he said he would do
Desire to do something rather than the desire to make something
Don't know what it's all for--I doubt if there is much in it
Easier to make art fashionable than to make fashion artistic
Emanation of aggressive prosperity
Everybody is superficially educated
Grateful for her forbearance of verbal expression
Happy life: an income left, not earned by toil
Her very virtues are enemies of her peace
How little a thing can make a woman happy
Human vanity will feed on anything within its reach
If one man wins, somebody else has got to lose
Knew how to be confidential without disclosing anything
Long-established habits of aversion or forbearance
Moral hazard bravely incurred in the duty of knowing life
Nature is such a beautiful painter of wood
No confidences are possible outside of that relation
No one expected anything, and no one was disappointed
No such thing as a cheap yacht
Ordering and eating the right sort of lunch
Pitiful about habitual hypocrisy is that it never deceives anybody
"Squares," where the poor children get their idea of forests
To be commanded with such gentleness was a sort of luxury
Was getting to be the fashion; but now it's fashionable
Whatever he disclosed was always in confidence
World requires a great variety of people to keep it going

THAT FORTUNE

Artist who cannot paint a rail-fence cannot paint a pyramid
Best things for us in this world are the things we don't get
Big subject does not make a big writer
Bud will never come to flower if you pull it in pieces
Do you know what it is to want what you don't want?
Few people can resist doing what is universally expected of them
Freedom to excel in nothing
Had gained everything he wanted in life except happiness
Indefeasible right of the public to have news
Intellectual poverty

Known something if I hadn't been kept at school
Longing is one thing and reason another
Making himself instead of in making money
Mediocrity of the amazing art product
Never go fishing without both fly and bait
Nothing like it certainly had happened to anybody
Object was to win a case rather than to do justice in a case
Public that gets tired of anything in about three days
Remaining enjoyment is the indulgence of frank speech
Sell your manuscripts, but don't sell your soul
Success is often a misfortune
Summer days that come but to go
There isn't much to feel here except what you see
Things that are self-evident nobody seems to see
Vanity at the bottom of even a reasonable ambition
We confound events with causes
What is society for?

AS WE WERE SAYING

Absorption in self
American pronunciation of the letter 'a' a reproach to the Republic
Annual good intentions
Art of listening and the art of talking both being lost
Attempt to fill up our minds as if they were jars
Barbarians of civilization
Blessed are those that expect nothing
But is it true that a woman is ever really naturalized?
Ceased to relish the act of studying
Content with the superficial
Could play anybody else's hand better than his own
Culture is certain to mock itself in time
Disease of conformity
Disposition of people to shift labor on to others' shoulders
Do not like to be insulted with originality
Eve trusted the serpent, and Adam trusted Eve
Fit for nothing else, they can at least write
Good form to be enthusiastic and not disgraceful to be surprised
Housecleaning, that riot of cleanliness which men fear
Idle desire to be busy without doing anything
Imagining that the more noise there is in the room the better
Imitateness of the race
Insist that he shall admire at the point of the social bayonet
It is beautiful to witness our reliance upon others
Lady intending suicide always throw on a waterproof
Let it be common, and what distinction will there be in it?
Man's inability to "match" anything is notorious
Needs no reason if fashion or authority condemns it
Nothing is so easy to bear as the troubles of other people
Passion for display is implanted in human nature
Platitudinous is to be happy?
Reader, who has enough bad weather in his private experience
Seldom that in her own house a lady gets a chance to scream
Taste usually implies a sort of selection
To read anything or study anything we resort to a club
Vast flocks of sheep over the satisfying plain of mediocrity

Vitality of a fallacy is incalculable
Want our literature (or what passes for that) in light array
We move in spirals, if not in circles

AS WE GO

Agreeable people are pretty evenly distributed over the country
As wealth is attained the capacity of enjoying it departs
Assertive sort of smartness that was very disagreeable
Attention to his personal appearance is only spasmodic
Boy who is a man before he is an infant
Bringing a man to her feet, where he belongs
Chief object in life is to "get there" quickly
Climate which is rather worse now than before the scientists
Content: not wanting that we can get
Excuse is found for nearly every moral delinquency
Frivolous old woman fighting to keep the skin-deep beauty
Granted that woman is the superior being
Held to strict responsibility for her attractiveness
History is strewn with the wreck of popular delusions
Hot arguments are usually the bane of conversation
Idleness seems to be the last accomplishment of civilization
Insists upon applying everywhere the yardstick of his own local
It is not enough to tell the truth (that has been told before)
Knows more than he will ever know again
Land where things are so much estimated by what they cost
Listen appreciatingly even if deceivingly
Man and wife are one, and that one is the husband
Mean more by its suggestions and allusions than is said
Must we be always either vapid or serious?
Newspaper-made person
No power on earth that can prevent the return of the long skirt
No room for a leisure class that is not useful
Persistence of privilege is an unexplained thing in human affairs
Poor inhabitants living along only from habit
Repose in activity
Responsibility of attractiveness
Responsible for all the mischief her attractiveness produces
Rights cannot all be on one side and the duties on the other
Servile imitation of nature degrades art
They have worn off the angular corners of existence
They who build without woman build in vain
Those who use their time merely to kill it
Trying to escape winter when we are not trying to escape summer
Use their time merely to kill it
Want of toleration of sectional peculiarities
Wantonly sincere
We are already too near most people
Woman can usually quote accurately

NINE SHORT ESSAYS

A Night in the Garden of the Tuilleries

Truthfulness
The Pursuit of Happiness
Literature and the Stage
The Life-saving and Life Prolonging Art
"H.H." in Southern California
Simplicity
The English Volunteers During the Late Invasion
Nathan Hale

Affection for the old-fashioned, all-round country doctor
Applauds what would have blushed at a few years ago
Architectural measles in this country
Avoid comparisons, similes, and even too much use of metaphor
Book a window, through which I am to see life
Cannot be truthfulness about life without knowledge
Contemporary play instead of character we have "characters,"
Disposition to make the best of whatever comes to us
Do not habitually postpone that season of happiness
Dwelling here. And here content to dwell
Explainable, if not justifiable
Eye demands simple lines, proportion, harmony in mass, dignity
Happiness is an inner condition, not to be raced after
Instead of simply being happy in the condition where we are
Lawyers will divide the oyster between them
Make a newspaper to suit the public
Making the journey of this life with just baggage enough
Moral specialist, who has only one hobby
Name an age that has cherished more delusions than ours
No amount of failure seems to lessen this belief
No man can count himself happy while in this life
No satisfaction in gaining more than we personally want
Not the thing itself, but the pursuit, that is an illusion
Profession which demands so much self-sacrifice
Proprietary medicine business is popular ignorance and credulity
"Purely vegetable" seem most suitable to the wooden-heads
Relapsing into the tawdry and the over-ornamented
Secrecy or low origin of the remedy that is its attraction
Simplicity: This is the stamp of all enduring work
Thinks he may be exempt from the general rules
Treated the patient, as the phrase is, for all he was worth
Unrelieved realism is apt to give a false impression
Warm up to the doctor when the judgment Day heaves in view
Yankee ingenuity,--he "could do anything but spin,"

FASHIONS IN LITERATURE

Discrimination between the manifold shadings of insincerity
Great deal of the reading done is mere contagion
His own tastes and prejudices the standard of his judgment
Inability to keep up with current literature
Main object of life is not to keep up with the printing-press
Man who is past the period of business activity
Never to read a book until it is from one to five years old
Quietly putting himself on common ground with his reader
Simplicity
Slovenly literature, unrebuked and uncorrected

Suggestion rather than by commandment
Unenlightened popular preference for a book
Waste precious time in chasing meteoric appearances

AMERICAN NEWSPAPER

American newspaper is susceptible of some improvement
Borderland between literature and common sense
Casualties as the chief news
Continue to turn round when there is no grist to grind
Elevates the trivial in life above the essential
If it does not pay its owner, it is valueless to the public
Looking for something spicy and sensational
Most newspapers cost more than they sell for
Newspaper's object is to make money for its owner
Power, the opportunity, the duty, the "mission," of the press
Public craves eagerly for only one thing at a time
Quotations of opinions as news
Should be a sharp line drawn between the report and the editorial

DIVERSITIES OF AMERICAN LIFE

It appears, therefore, that speed,--the ability to move rapidly from place to place,--a disproportionate reward of physical over intellectual science, an intense desire to be rich, which is strong enough to compel even education to grind in the mill of the Philistines, and an inordinate elevation in public consideration of rich men simply because they are rich, are characteristics of this little point of time on which we stand. They are not the only characteristics; in a reasonably optimistic view, the age is distinguished for unexampled achievements, and for opportunities for the well-being of humanity never before in all history attainable. But these characteristics are so prominent as to beget the fear that we are losing the sense of the relative value of things in this life.

PILGRIM AND AMERICAN

What republics have most to fear is the rule of the boss, who is a tyrant without responsibility. He makes the nominations, he dickers and trades for the elections, and at the end he divides the spoils. The operation is more uncertain than a horse race, which is not decided by the speed of the horses, but by the state of the wagers and the manipulation of the jockeys. We strike directly at his power for mischief when we organize the entire civil service of the nation and of the States on capacity, integrity, experience, and not on political power.

And if we look further, considering the danger of concentration of power in irresponsible hands, we see a new cause for alarm in undue federal mastery and interference.

Poverty is not commonly a nurse of virtue, long continued, it is a degeneration. It is almost as difficult for the very poor man to be virtuous as for the very rich man; and very good and very rich at the same time, says Socrates, a man cannot be. It is a great people that can withstand great prosperity

We are in no vain chase of an equality which would eliminate all individual initiative, and check all progress, by ignoring differences of capacity and strength, and rating muscles equal to brains. But we are in pursuit of equal laws, and a fairer chance of leading happy lives than humanity in general ever had yet.

CAUSES OF DISCONTENT

Now, content does not depend so much upon a man's actual as his relative condition. Often it is not so much what I need, as what others have that disturbs me. I should be content to walk from Boston to New York, and be a fortnight on the way, if everybody else was obliged to walk who made that journey. It becomes a hardship when my neighbor is whisked over the route in six hours and I have to walk. It would still be a hardship if he attained the ability to go in an hour, when I was only able to accomplish the distance in six hours.

It ought to be said, as to the United States, that a very considerable part of the discontent is imported, it is not native, nor based on any actual state of things existing here. Agitation has become a business. A great many men and some women, to whom work of any sort is distasteful, live by it.

Compared with the freedom of action in such a government as ours, any form of communism is an iniquitous and meddlesome despotism.

Doubtless men might have been created equal to each other in every respect, with the same mental capacity, the same physical ability, with like inheritances of good or bad qualities, and born into exactly similar conditions, and not dependent on each other. But men never were so created and born, so far as we have any record of them, and by analogy we have no reason to suppose that they ever will be. Inequality is the most striking fact in life. Absolute equality might be better, but so far as we can see, the law of the universe is infinite diversity in unity; and variety in condition is the essential of what we call progress--it is, in fact, life.

It sometimes seems as if half the American people were losing the power to apply logical processes to the ordinary affairs of life.

It is human nature, it is the lesson of history, that real wrongs, unredressed, grow into preposterous demands. Men are much like nature in action; a little disturbance of atmospheric equilibrium becomes a cyclone, a slight break in the levee a crevasse with immense destructive power.

EDUCATION OF THE NEGRO

But slavery brought about one result, and that the most difficult in the development of a race from savagery, and especially a tropical race, a race that has always been idle in the luxuriance of a nature that supplied its physical needs with little labor. It taught the negro to work, it transformed him, by compulsion it is true, into an industrial being, and held him in the habit of industry for several generations. Perhaps only force could do this, for it was a radical transformation. I am glad to see that this result of slavery is recognized by Mr. Booker Washington, the ablest and most clear-sighted leader the Negro race has ever had.

Conceit of gentility of which the world has already enough.

It is this character, quality, habit, the result of a slow educational process, which distinguishes one race from another. It is this that the race transmits, and not the more or less accidental education of a decade or an era. The Brahmins carry this idea into the next life, and say that the departing spirit carries with him nothing except this individual character, no acquirements or information or extraneous culture. It was perhaps in the same spirit that the sad preacher in Ecclesiastes said there is no "knowledge nor wisdom in the grave, whither thou goest." It is by this character that we classify civilized and even semi-civilized races; by this slowly developed fibre, this slow accumulation of inherent quality in the evolution of the human being from lower to higher, that continues to exist notwithstanding the powerful influence of governments and religions.

INDETERMINATE SENTENCE

The proposed method is the indeterminate sentence. This strikes directly at the criminal class. It puts that class beyond the power of continuing its depredations upon society. It is truly deterrent, because it is a notification to any one intending to enter upon that method of living that his career ends with his first felony. As to the general effects of the indeterminate sentence, I will repeat here what I recently wrote for the Yale Law Journal.

It happens, therefore, that there is great sympathy with the career of the lawbreakers, many people are hanging on them for support, and among them the so-called criminal lawyers. Any legislation likely to interfere seriously with the occupation of the criminal class or with its increase is certain to meet with the opposition of a large body of voters. With this active opposition of those interested, and the astonishing indifference of the general public, it is easy to see why so little is done to relieve us of this intolerable burden. The fact is, we go on increasing our expenses for police, for criminal procedure, for jails and prisons, and we go on increasing the criminal class and those affiliated with it.

I will suggest that the convict should, for his own sake, have the indeterminate sentence applied to him upon conviction of his first penal offense. He is much more likely to reform than he would be after he had had a term in the State prison and was again convicted, and the chance of his reformation would be lessened by each subsequent experience of this kind. The great object of the indeterminate sentence, so far as

the security of society is concerned, is to diminish the number of the criminal class, and this will be done when it is seen that the first felony a man commits is likely to be his last, and that for a young criminal contemplating this career there is in this direction: "No Thoroughfare."

It is very significant that the criminal class adapted itself readily to the parole system with its sliding scale. It was natural that this should be so, for it fits in perfectly well with their scheme of life. This is to them a sort of business career, interrupted now and then only by occasional limited periods of seclusion. Any device that shall shorten those periods is welcome to them. As a matter of fact, we see in the State prisons that the men most likely to shorten their time by good behavior, and to get released on parole before the expiration of their sentence, are the men who make crime their career. They accept this discipline as a part of their lot in life, and it does not interfere with their business any more than the occasional bankruptcy of a merchant interferes with his pursuits.

No tribunal is able with justice to mete out punishment in any individual case, for probably the same degree of guilt does not attach to two men in the violation of the same statute.

It is purely an economic and educational problem, and must rest upon the same principles that govern in any successful industry, or in education, and that we recognize in the conduct of life. That little progress has been made is due to public indifference to a vital question and to the action of sentimentalists, who, in their philanthropic zeal; fancy that a radical reform can come without radical discipline. We are largely wasting our energies in petty contrivances instead of striking at the root of the evil.

LITERARY COPYRIGHT

It is the habit of some publishing houses, not of all, let me distinctly say, to seek always notoriety, not to nurse and keep before the public mind the best that has been evolved from time to time, but to offer always something new. The year's flooring is threshed off and the floor swept to make room for a fresh batch. Effort eventually ceases for the old and approved, and is concentrated on experiments. This is like the conduct of a newspaper. It is assumed that the public must be startled all the time.

Consider first the author, and I mean the author, and not the mere craftsman who manufactures books for a recognized market. His sole capital is his talent. His brain may be likened to a mine, gold, silver, copper, iron, or tin, which looks like silver when new. Whatever it is, the vein of valuable ore is limited, in most cases it is slight. When it is worked out, the man is at the end of his resources.

It is generally conceded that what literature in America needs at this moment is honest, competent, sound criticism. This is not likely to be attained by sporadic efforts, especially in a democracy of letters where the critics are not always superior to the criticised, where the man in front of the book is not always a better marksman than the man behind the book.

The fashion of the day is rarely the judgment of posterity. You will recall what Byron wrote to Coleridge: "I trust you do not permit yourself to be depressed by the temporary partiality of what is called 'the public' for the favorites of the moment; all experience is against the permanency of such impressions. You must have lived to see many of these pass away, and will survive many more."

LITERATURE AND LIFE

All the world is diseased and in need of remedies
Arrive at the meaning by the definition of exclusion
Care of riches should have the last place in our thoughts
Each in turn contends that his art produces the greatest good
Impress and reduce to obsequious deference the hotel clerk
Opinions inherited, not formed
Prejudice working upon ignorance
Pursuit of office--which is sometimes called politics
Rab and his Friends
Refuge of the aged in failing activity
Riches and rich men are honored in the state
Set aside as literature that which is original
To the lawyer everybody is or ought to be a litigant
Touching hopefulness
Very rich and very good at the same time he cannot be
Want of the human mind which is higher than the want of knowledge
What we call life is divided into occupations and interest
Without Plato there would be no Socrates

EQUALITY

In accordance with the advice of Diogenes of Apollonia in the beginning of his treatise on Natural Philosophy--"It appears to me to be well for every one who commences any sort of philosophical treatise to lay down some undeniable principle to start with"--we offer this: "All men are created unequal." It would be a most interesting study to trace the growth in the world of the doctrine of "equality."

Every one talked of "the state of nature" as if he knew all about it. "The conditions of primitive man," says Mr. Morley, "were discussed by very incompetent ladies and gentlemen at convivial supper-parties, and settled with complete assurance." That was the age when solitary Frenchmen plunged into the wilderness of North America, confidently expecting to recover the golden age under the shelter of a wigwam and in the society of a squaw.

It is to be noticed that rights are mentioned, but not duties, and that if political rights only are meant, political duties are not inculcated as of equal moment. It is not announced that political power is a function to be discharged for the good of the whole body, and not a mere right to be enjoyed for the advantage of the possessor; and it is to be noted also that this idea did not enter into the conception of Rousseau.

We are attempting the regeneration of society with a misleading phrase; we are wasting our time with a theory that does not fit the facts.

WHAT IS YOUR CULTURE TO ME

It is not an unreasonable demand of the majority that the few who have the advantages of the training of college and university should exhibit the breadth and sweetness of a generous culture, and should shed everywhere that light which ennobles common things, and without which life is like one of the old landscapes in which the artist forgot to put sunlight. One of the reasons why the college-bred man does not meet this reasonable expectation is that his training, too often, has not been thorough and conscientious, it has not been of himself; he has acquired, but he is not educated. Another is that, if he is educated, he is not impressed with the intimacy of his relation to that which is below him as well as that which is above him, and his culture is out of sympathy with the great mass that needs it, and must have it, or it will remain a blind force in the world, the lever of demagogues who preach social anarchy and misname it progress.

Let him not be discouraged at his apparent little influence, even though every sally of every young life may seem like a forlorn hope. No man can see the whole of the battle.

To suggest remedies is much more difficult than to see evils; but the comprehension of dangers is the first step towards mastering them.

MODERN FICTION

One of the worst characteristics of modern fiction is its so-called truth to nature. For fiction is an art, as painting is, as sculpture is, as acting is. A photograph of a natural object is not art; nor is the plaster cast of a man's face, nor is the bare setting on the stage of an actual occurrence. Art requires an idealization of nature. The amateur, though she may be a lady, who attempts to represent upon the stage the lady of the drawing-room, usually fails to convey to the spectators the impression of a lady. She lacks the art by which the trained actress, who may not be a lady, succeeds. The actual transfer to the stage of the drawing-room and its occupants, with the behavior common in well-bred society, would no doubt fail of the intended dramatic effect, and the spectators would declare the representation unnatural.

Tragedy and the pathos of failure have their places in literature as well as in life. I only say that, artistically, a good ending is as proper as a bad ending.

Perhaps the most inane thing ever put forth in the name of literature is the so-called domestic novel, an indigestible, culinary sort of product, that might be named the doughnut of fiction. The usual apology for it is that it depicts family life with fidelity. Its characters are supposed to act and talk as people act and talk at home and in society. I trust this is a libel, but, for the sake of the argument, suppose they do. Was ever produced so insipid a result?

The characteristics which are prominent, when we think of our recent fiction, are a wholly unidealized view of human society, which has got the name of realism; a delight in representing the worst phases of social life; an extreme analysis of persons and motives; the sacrifice of action to psychological study; the substitution of studies of character for anything like a story; a notion that it is not artistic, and that it is untrue to nature, to bring any novel to a definite consummation, and especially to end it happily; and a despondent tone about society, politics, and the whole drift of modern life. Judged by our fiction, we are in an irredeemably bad way.

The vulgar realism in pictorial art, which holds ugliness and beauty in equal esteem; or against aestheticism gone to seed in languid affectations; or against the enthusiasm of a social life which wrecks its religion on the color of a vestment, or sighs out its divine soul over an ancient pewter mug.

MR. FROUDE'S PROGRESS

For, as skepticism is in one sense the handmaid of truth, discontent is the mother of progress. The man is comparatively of little use in the world who is contented.

Education of the modern sort unsettles the peasant, renders him unfit for labor, and gives us a half-educated idler in place of a conscientious workman.

Education must go forward; the man must not be half but wholly educated. It is only half-knowledge like half-training in a trade that is dangerous.

Mr. Froude runs lightly over a list of subjects upon which the believer in progress relies for his belief, and then says of them that the world calls this progress--he calls it only change.

There are some select souls who sit apart in calm endurance, waiting to be translated out of a world they are almost tired of patronizing, to whom the whole thing seems, doubtless, like a cheap performance. They sit on the fence of criticism, and cannot for the life of them see what the vulgar crowd make such a toil and sweat about.

ENGLAND

Both parties, however, like parties elsewhere, propose and oppose measures and movements, and accept or reject policies, simply to get office or keep office.

In the judgment of many good observers, a dissolution of the empire, so far as the Western colonies are concerned, is inevitable, unless Great Britain, adopting the plan urged by Franklin, becomes an imperial federation, with parliaments distinct and independent, the crown the only bond of union--the crown, and not the English parliament, being the

titular and actual sovereign. Sovereign power over America in the parliament Franklin never would admit.

It is safe, we think, to say that if the British Empire is to be dissolved, disintegration cannot be permitted to begin at home. Ireland has always been a thorn in the side of England. And the policy towards it could not have been much worse, either to impress it with a respect for authority or to win it by conciliation; it has been a strange mixture of untimely concession and untimely cruelty. The problem, in fact, has physical and race elements that make it almost insolvable. A water-logged country, of which nothing can surely be predicted but the uncertainty of its harvests, inhabited by a people of most peculiar mental constitution, alien in race, temperament, and religion, having scarcely one point of sympathy with the English.

NOVEL AND SCHOOL

Note the seeming anomaly of a scientific age peculiarly credulous; the ease with which any charlatan finds followers; the common readiness to fall in with any theory of progress which appeals to the sympathies, and to accept the wildest notions of social reorganization. We should be obliged to note also, among scientific men themselves, a disposition to come to conclusions on inadequate evidence--a disposition usually due to one-sided education which lacks metaphysical training and the philosophic habit.

Often children have only one book even of this sort, at which they are kept until they learn it through by heart, and they have been heard to "read" it with the book bottom side up or shut! All these books cultivate inattention and intellectual vacancy. They are--the best of them--only reading exercises; and reading is not perceived to have any sort of value. The child is not taught to think, and not a step is taken in informing him of his relation to the world about him. His education is not begun.

The lower-grade books are commonly inane (I will not say childish, for that is a libel on the open minds of children) beyond description.

The novel, mediocre, banal, merely sensational, and worthless for any purpose of intellectual stimulus or elevation of the ideal, is thus encouraged in this age as it never was before. The making of novels has become a process of manufacture. Usually, after the fashion of the silk-weavers of Lyons, they are made for the central establishment on individual looms at home.

An honest acceptance of the law of gravitation would banish many popular delusions; a comprehension that something cannot be made out of nothing would dispose of others; and the application of the ordinary principles of evidence, such as men require to establish a title to property, would end most of the remaining.

When the trash does not sell, the trash will not be produced, and those who are only capable of supplying the present demand will perhaps find a more useful occupation. It will be again evident that literature is not a trade, but an art requiring peculiar powers and patient training. When people know how to read, authors will need to know how to write.

FOR WHOM SHAKESPEARE WROTE

Any parish which let a thief escape was fined
Beer making
Capable of weeping like children, and of dying like men
Complaint then, as now, that in many trades men scamped their work
Courageous gentlemen wore in their ears rings of gold and stones
Credulity and superstition of the age
Devil's liquor, I mean starch
Down a peg
Dramas which they considered as crude as they were coarse
Eve will be Eve, though Adam would say nay
Italy generally a curious custom of using a little fork for meat
Landlord let no one depart dissatisfied with his bill
Mistake ribaldry and loquacity for wit and wisdom
Pillows were thought meet only for sick women
Portuguese receipts
Prepare bills of fare (a trick lately taken up)
Sir Francis Bacon
So much cost upon the body, so little upon souls
Stagecoach
Teeth black--a defect the English seem subject to

ON HORSEBACK

Anxious to reach it, we were glad to leave it
Establishment had the air of taking care of itself
Fond of lawsuits seems a characteristic of an isolated people
It is not much use to try to run a jail without liquor
Man's success in court depended upon the length of his purse
Married? No, she hoped not
Monument of procrastination
Not much inclination to change his clothes or his cabin
One has to dodge this sort of question
Ornamentation is apt to precede comfort in our civilization
What a price to pay for mere life!

BEING A BOY

Appear to be very active, and yet not do much
As they forgot they were a party, they began to enjoy themselves
As you get used to being a boy, you have to be something else
Boys have a great power of helping each other to do nothing
Conversation ran aground again
Expected nothing that he did not earn
Fed the poor boy's vanity, the weakness by which women govern
Felt wronged, and worked himself up to pass a wretched evening
Girls have a great deal more good sense in such matters than boys
Gladly do all the work if somebody else would do the chores

He is, like a barrel of beer, always on draft
Law will not permit men to shoot each other in plain clothes
Natural genius for combining pleasure with business
Not very disagreeable, or would not be if it were play
People hardly ever do know where to be born until it is too late
Spider-web is stronger than a cable
Undemonstrative affection
Very busy about nothing
Wearisome part is the waiting on the people who do the work
Why did n't the people who were sleepy go to bed?
Willing to do any amount of work if it is called play
Willing to repent if he could think of anything to repent of

SAUNTERINGS

Bane of travel is the destruction of illusions
Discontent of those who travel to enjoy themselves
Excellent but somewhat scattered woman
Inability to stand still for one second is the plague of it
Leaves it with mingled feelings about Columbus
One ought not to subject his faith to too great a strain

POCAHONTAS

According to the long-accepted story of Pocahontas, she did something more than interfere to save from barbarous torture and death a stranger and a captive, who had forfeited his life by shooting those who opposed his invasion. In all times, among the most savage tribes and in civilized society, women have been moved to heavenly pity by the sight of a prisoner, and risked life to save him--the impulse was as natural to a Highland lass as to an African maid. Pocahontas went further than efforts to make peace between the superior race and her own. When the whites forced the Indians to contribute from their scanty stores to the support of the invaders, and burned their dwellings and shot them on sight if they refused, the Indian maid sympathized with the exposed whites and warned them of stratagems against them; captured herself by a base violation of the laws of hospitality, she was easily reconciled to her situation, adopted the habits of the foreigners, married one of her captors, and in peace and in war cast in her lot with the strangers. History has not preserved for us the Indian view of her conduct.

This savage was the Tomocomo spoken of above, who had been sent by Powhatan to take a census of the people of England, and report what they and their state were. At Plymouth he got a long stick and began to make notches in it for the people he saw. But he was quickly weary of that task. He told Smith that Powhatan bade him seek him out, and get him to show him his God, and the King, Queen, and Prince, of whom Smith had told so much. Smith put him off about showing his God, but said he had heard that he had seen the King. This the Indian denied, James probably not coming up to his idea of a king, till by circumstances he was convinced he had seen him. Then he replied very sadly: "You gave Powhatan a white dog, which Powhatan fed as himself, but your king gave me nothing, and I am better than your white dog."

Sir Thomas Dale was on the whole the most efficient and discreet Governor the colony had had. One element of his success was no doubt the change in the charter. By the first charter everything had been held in common by the company, and there had been no division of property or allotment of land among the colonists. Under the new regime land was held in severalty, and the spur of individual interest began at once to improve the condition of the settlement. The character of the colonists was also gradually improving. They had not been of a sort to fulfill the earnest desire of the London promoter's to spread vital piety in the New World. A zealous defense of Virginia and Maryland, against "scandalous imputation," entitled "Leah and Rachel; or, The Two Fruitful Sisters," by Mr John Hammond, London, considers the charges that Virginia "is an unhealthy place, a nest of rogues, abandoned women, dissolute and rookery persons; a place of intolerable labour, bad usage and hard diet"; and admits that "at the first settling, and for many years after, it deserved most of these aspersions, nor were they then aspersions but truths. There were jails supplied, youth seduced, infamous women drilled in, the provision all brought out of England, and that embezzled by the Trustees."

CAPTAIN JOHN SMITH

After fifteen years Smith is able to remember more details
Assertion in an insecure position
Cheaper credited than confuted
Entertaining if one did not see too much of him
Knew not the secret of having his own way
Long stick and began to make notches in it for the people he saw
Making religion their color
Peculiarly subject to such coincidences
Prince's mind imprisoned in a poor man's purse
Progressive memory
Somewhat damaging to an estimate of his originality
Thames had no bridges
Those that did not work should not eat
Tobacco-selling
Wanted advancement but were unwilling to adventure their ease
Would if he could
Writ too much, and done too little

SPRING IN NEW ENGLAND

Then follows a day of bright sun and blue sky. The birds open the morning with a lively chorus. In spite of Auster, Euroclydon, low pressure, and the government bureau, things have gone forward. By the roadside, where the snow has just melted, the grass is of the color of emerald. The heart leaps to see it. On the lawn there are twenty robins, lively, noisy, worm-seeking. Their yellow breasts contrast with the tender green of the newly-springing clover and herd's-grass. If they would only stand still, we might think the dandelions had blossomed. On an evergreen-bough, looking at them, sits a graceful bird, whose back is bluer than the sky. There is a red tint on the tips of the boughs of the

hard maple. With Nature, color is life. See, already, green, yellow, blue, red! In a few days--is it not so?--through the green masses of the trees will flash the orange of the oriole, the scarlet of the tanager; perhaps tomorrow.

But, in fact, the next day opens a little sourly. It is almost clear overhead: but the clouds thicken on the horizon; they look leaden; they threaten rain. It certainly will rain: the air feels like rain, or snow. By noon it begins to snow, and you hear the desolate cry of the phoebe-bird. It is a fine snow, gentle at first; but it soon drives in swerving lines, for the wind is from the southwest, from the west, from the northeast, from the zenith (one of the ordinary winds of New England), from all points of the compass. The fine snow becomes rain; it becomes large snow; it melts as it falls; it freezes as it falls. At last a storm sets in, and night shuts down upon the bleak scene.

During the night there is a change. It thunders and lightens. Toward morning there is a brilliant display of aurora borealis. This is a sign of colder weather.

The gardener is in despair; so is the sportsman. The trout take no pleasure in biting in such weather.

Paragraphs appear in the newspapers, copied from the paper of last year, saying that this is the most severe spring in thirty years. Every one, in fact, believes that it is, and also that next year the spring will be early. Man is the most gullible of creatures.

And with reason: he trusts his eyes, and not his instinct. During this most sour weather of the year, the anemone blossoms; and, almost immediately after, the fairy pencil, the spring beauty, the dog-tooth violet, and the true violet. In clouds and fog, and rain and snow, and all discouragement, Nature pushes on her forces with progressive haste and rapidity. Before one is aware, all the lawns and meadows are deeply green, the trees are opening their tender leaves. In a burst of sunshine the cherry-trees are white, the Judas-tree is pink, the hawthorns give a sweet smell. The air is full of sweetness; the world, of color.

In the midst of a chilling northeast storm the ground is strewn with the white-and-pink blossoms from the apple-trees. The next day the mercury stands at eighty degrees. Summer has come.

There was no Spring.

The winter is over. You think so? Robespierre thought the Revolution was over in the beginning of his last Thermidor. He lost his head after that.

When the first buds are set, and the corn is up, and the cucumbers have four leaves, a malicious frost steals down from the north and kills them in a night.

That is the last effort of spring. The mercury then mounts to ninety degrees. The season has been long, but, on the whole, successful. Many people survive it.

IN THE WILDERNESS

According to the compass, the Lord only knew where I was
Business of civilization to tame or kill
Canopy of mosquitoes
Caricature of a road
Compass, which was made near Greenwich, was wrong
Democrats became as scarce as moose in the Adirondacks
Everlasting dress-parade of our civilization
Grand intentions and weak vocabulary
How lightly past hardship sits upon us!
I hain't no business here; but here I be!
Kept its distance, as only a mountain can
Man's noblest faculty, his imagination, or credulity.
Marriage is mostly for discipline
Misery, unheroic and humiliating
Near-sighted man, whose glasses the rain rendered useless
No conceit like that of isolation
No nervousness, but simply a reasonable desire to get there
Not lost, but gone before
Posthumous fear
Procession of unattainable meals stretched before me
Sense to shun the doctor; to lie down in some safe place
Solitude and every desirable discomfort
Stumbled against an ill-placed tree
Suffering when unaccompanied by resignation
Ten times harder to unlearn anything than it is to learn it
There is an impassive, stolid brutality about the woods

BADDECK

Best part of going to sea is keeping close to the shore
Can leave it without regret
Dependent upon imagination and memory
Great part of the enjoyment of life
Luxury of his romantic grief
Picturesque sort of dilapidation
Rest is never complete--unless he can see somebody else at work
Won't see Mt. Desert till midnight, and then you won't

BACKLOG STUDIES

A good many things have gone out with the fire on the hearth
Abatement of a snow-storm that grows to exceptional magnitude
Anywhere a happier home than ours? I am glad of it!
Associate ourselves to make everybody else behave as we do.
Chilly drafts and sarcasms on what we call the temperate zone
Criticism by comparison is the refuge of incapables
Crowning human virtue in a man is to let his wife poke the fire
Don't know what success is
Each generation does not comprehend its own ignorance
Enjoyed poor health
Enthusiasm is a sign of inexperience, of ignorance

Fallen into the days of conformity
Few people know how to make a wood-fire
Finding the world disagreeable to themselves
Have almost succeeded in excluding pure air
Just as good as the real
Lived himself out of the world
Long score of personal flattery to pay off
Not half so reasonable as my prejudices
Pathos overcomes one's sense of the absurdity of such people
Permit the freedom of silence
Poetical reputation of the North American Indian
Point of breeding never to speak of anything in your house
Reformers manage to look out for themselves tolerably well
Refuge of mediocrity
Rest beyond the grave will not be much change for him
Said, or if I have not, I say it again
Severe attack of spiritism
Shares none of their uneasiness about getting on in life
Silence is unnoticed when people sit before a fire
Some men you always prefer to have on your left hand
Sort of busy idleness among men
There are no impossibilities to youth and inexperience
Things are apt to remain pretty much the same
Think the world they live in is the central one
To-day is like yesterday,
Usual effect of an anecdote on conversation
Women know how to win by losing
World owes them a living because they are philanthropists

SUMMER IN A GARDEN

But I found him, one Sunday morning,--a day when it would not do to get angry, tying his cow at the foot of the hill; the beast all the time going on in that abominable voice. I told the man that I could not have the cow in the grounds. He said, "All right, boss;" but he did not go away. I asked him to clear out. The man, who is a French sympathizer from the Republic of Ireland, kept his temper perfectly. He said he wasn't doing anything, just feeding his cow a bit: he wouldn't make me the least trouble in the world. I reminded him that he had been told again and again not to come here; that he might have all the grass, but he should not bring his cow upon the premises. The imperturbable man assented to everything that I said, and kept on feeding his cow. Before I got him to go to fresh scenes and pastures new, the Sabbath was almost broken; but it was saved by one thing: it is difficult to be emphatic when no one is emphatic on the other side. The man and his cow have taught me a great lesson, which I shall recall when I keep a cow. I can recommend this cow, if anybody wants one, as a steady boarder, whose keeping will cost the owner little; but, if her milk is at all like her voice, those who drink it are on the straight road to lunacy.

Moral Truth.--I have no doubt that grapes taste best in other people's mouths. It is an old notion that it is easier to be generous than to be stingy. I am convinced that the majority of people would be generous from selfish motives, if they had the opportunity.
Philosophical Observation.--Nothing shows one who his friends are like prosperity and ripe fruit. I had a good friend in the country, whom I

almost never visited except in cherry-time. By your fruits you shall know them.

Pretending to reflect upon these things, but in reality watching the blue-jays, who are pecking at the purple berries of the woodbine on the south gable, I approach the house. Polly is picking up chestnuts on the sward, regardless of the high wind which rattles them about her head and upon the glass roof of her winter-garden. The garden, I see, is filled with thrifty plants, which will make it always summer there. The callas about the fountain will be in flower by Christmas: the plant appears to keep that holiday in her secret heart all summer. I close the outer windows as we go along, and congratulate myself that we are ready for winter. For the winter-garden I have no responsibility: Polly has entire charge of it. I am only required to keep it heated, and not too hot either; to smoke it often for the death of the bugs; to water it once a day; to move this and that into the sun and out of the sun pretty constantly: but she does all the work. We never relinquish that theory.

I have been digging my potatoes, if anybody cares to know it. I planted them in what are called "Early Rose,"--the rows a little less than three feet apart; but the vines came to an early close in the drought. Digging potatoes is a pleasant, soothing occupation, but not poetical. It is good for the mind, unless they are too small (as many of mine are), when it begets a want of gratitude to the bountiful earth. What small potatoes we all are, compared with what we might be! We don't plow deep enough, any of us, for one thing. I shall put in the plow next year, and give the tubers room enough. I think they felt the lack of it this year: many of them seemed ashamed to come out so small. There is great pleasure in turning out the brown-jacketed fellows into the sunshine of a royal September day, and seeing them glisten as they lie thickly strewn on the warm soil. Life has few such moments. But then they must be picked up. The picking-up, in this world, is always the unpleasant part of it.

Nature is "awful smart." I intend to be complimentary in saying so. She shows it in little things. I have mentioned my attempt to put in a few modest turnips, near the close of the season. I sowed the seeds, by the way, in the most liberal manner. Into three or four short rows I presume I put enough to sow an acre; and they all came up,--came up as thick as grass, as crowded and useless as babies in a Chinese village. Of course, they had to be thinned out; that is, pretty much all pulled up; and it took me a long time; for it takes a conscientious man some time to decide which are the best and healthiest plants to spare. After all, I spared too many. That is the great danger everywhere in this world (it may not be in the next): things are too thick; we lose all in grasping for too much. The Scotch say, that no man ought to thin out his own turnips, because he will not sacrifice enough to leave room for the remainder to grow: he should get his neighbor, who does not care for the plants, to do it. But this is mere talk, and aside from the point: if there is anything I desire to avoid in these agricultural papers, it is digression. I did think that putting in these turnips so late in the season, when general activity has ceased, and in a remote part of the garden, they would pass unnoticed. But Nature never even winks, as I can see. The tender blades were scarcely out of the ground when she sent a small black fly, which seemed to have been born and held in reserve for this purpose,--to cut the leaves. They speedily made lace-work of the whole bed. Thus everything appears to have its special enemy,--except, perhaps, p---y: nothing ever troubles that.

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