ADVANCE SHEET – August 30, 2024

President's Letter

We here reproduce a lecture by our founder George William Brown entitled *The Old World And The New*. It has seemed to me that Brown's influence was responsible for the imitation of the German research universities at Johns Hopkins, since Daniel Coit Gilman had not followed their example while at the University of California.

George W. Liebmann

How Much Is A Picture Worth Again?

For as long as I can remember, amongst the first faces I would see each morning as the elevator doors would open to the sixth floor of the Mitchell Courthouse, for my walk down the hall to the front door of the Bar Library, were those of the retired judges of what was then the Supreme Bench of Baltimore City. One recent morning however, the doors opened and they were not there. It was a different group, that of the more recently retired judges, most of them having served on the Circuit Court for Baltimore City. Somehow I had gotten off on the fifth floor, which is where these jurists "hung" out. No, it was six. There had been, in the words of Billy Higgins, "some changes made." Although not on the level of Yorktown, I found myself humming "The World Turned Upside Down." To be honest, there are still mornings when I think I have gotten off on five.

On the whole, however, I am pleased with the new reconfiguration, in that, many of the faces I now see are ones that I am personally familiar with, both for their service on the Bench as well as on the Bar Library Board. The list of those that have served on the Library Board is significant and symbolic of the strong ties that have generally prevailed between the Court and the Library. Past Directors that I have the opportunity to see each morning are Hon. Stuart R. Berger; Hon. M. Albert Figinski; Hon. Joseph H. H. Kaplan; Hon. Joseph I. Pines; Hon. Carol E. Smith and Hon. Gary I. Strausberg. Current Directors now "residing" on the sixth floor are Hon. Robert M. Bell and Hon. Ellen L. Hollander.

I am grateful for the service of these men and women to the Court and to the Library. I think we sometimes forget just how meaningful it is. For the portraits that provide a reminder, I am grateful as well.

I look forward to seeing you soon.

Joe Bennett

THE OLD WORLD AND THE NEW:

AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED BY

GEORGE WILLIAM BROWN,

BEFORE THE

Philoclean and Peithessophian Societies

OF

RUTGERS COLLEGE, NEW BRUNSWICK, N. J.,

AT THEIR ANNIVERSARY, ON THE 22D OF JULY, 1851.

NEW YORK:
R. CRAIGHEAD, PRINTER, 112 FULTON STREET.
1851.

ADDRESS.

GENTLEMEN OF RUTGERS COLLEGE:

Twenty years have completed their circuit since I stood within these walls on an occasion similar to the present, when my classmates and myself, with full hearts, took leave of each other and of our Alma Mater, and then went forth, each on his separate way, upon the great journey of life.

During this long interval, more than half the average duration of human life, time has not been idle with any of us, and has here done his work of change and alteration as thoroughly as usual. Even the quiet old town, which when I knew it still retained some traces of its Dutch origin, with something of the quaintness of its sturdy ancestry in the manners of its inhabitants, has by the potent influence of railroad and canal, been transformed into an "improving" modern city, struggling on with all its energy in the race of progress. The pleasant walk by the river bank, shaded by pines and willows, where we used sometimes to wander, discussing the

affairs of our student world, or speculating on the shadowy future, which, like all youths, we were ready to go forth to meet full of heart and hope, is now the tow-path of a canal where the slow mule drags after him the heavy barge. Even the college-grounds, which formerly stood aloof in quiet and dignified retirement, have just escaped invasion from the steam-car and its ponderous train as they rush whistling and rattling by. Of such invaders of academic walks and groves, we who were graduated at Rutgers twenty years ago, may, even in an utilitarian age, be excused for exclaiming, in the language of the priests of ancient Rome, when they warned off intruders upon sacred rites, "*procul, o, procul este profani!*"

But there are other changes to which it is less easy to be reconciled. Very few of the old familiar faces which greeted me with kindly encouragement when last I stood on this rostrum are here to meet me now. There are vacancies in the venerable rank of our instructors which faithful memory alone can fill. Their words of instruction and wise counsel are, I trust, still imprinted on many minds, but their forms have passed away for ever. And of those who went forth with me, and between whom and myself there exists that peculiar sympathy which always and everywhere unites those who, in the same class, have pursued the same studies, wrestled

with the same difficulties, and enjoyed the same pleasures, how few do I now see—how few shall I ever see again!

Still although so much around me is changed, and although I myself am not less changed, I do not feel myself a stranger here. There is a bond uniting the student to the college at which he has been educated which he could not sever if he would, and which he would not if he could. To all her children she is a common mother. We who have gone before are her elder sons, and you who are now under her parental care are our younger brothers. It is then with mingled emotions of pain and pleasure, and with something of the feeling with which the long absent wanderer through distant lands revisits his early home, that I return at your invitation to be present once more at the solemnities of your annual festival, and to bring to its exercises such contribution as I may have to offer. I have only to regret, as I very sincerely do, that it is not more worthy of your acceptance. I beg you to remember that I am not an habitual wanderer in the pleasant and shady walks of literature, but that these are forbidden paths where very rarely my footsteps venture to stray. He who is a painstaking member of any one of the learned professions, so called, has scarcely more time for the pursuits of literature than the follower of the most humble and

laborious calling—a truth which some of you who now hear me will one day with sorrow realize, when you look back, as I do now, after years have intervened, on many unfinished studies here commenced.

It has been my good fortune and great privilege to visit during the past twelve months some of the most striking scenes and places of the old world, of which I was neither an uninterested nor an inattentive observer, and I have thought that I could not better contribute to the interest of the present occasion than by endeavoring to revive and bring before you some of the impressions made upon my mind by foreign travel.

An American who has enjoyed any advantages of education on visiting Europe for the first time, has before him sources of instruction and gratification well nigh inexhaustible. He is not a mere explorer of strange countries in search of manners and habits different from those to which he has been accustomed, but he finds himself united to all, either by the close tie of relationship—for the fatherland of all of us lies somewhere in Europe—or else by some association of thought or feeling—often a stronger bond of union than even kindred blood. Every country has its own peculiar attractions; of some he has heard accounts, of others he has read descriptions, with all he has some degree of familiarity.

Europe not only pours daily on our shores a vast tide of population, soon to become part of our people and add materially to our physical wealth and resources, but sends with it a still more valuable freight of thought and ideas equally soon to become part of our intellectual wealth, and enter into and enrich our science and literature. Her great men are almost as well known to us as our own. The ocean has ceased to be a barrier to the intercourse between mind and mind, and is now the very channel of the speediest and most constant intercommunion. The expression, "republic of letters," is no longer a mere phrase, but indicates an important truth, every year acquiring a deeper significance. If in our days a great thought or a great discovery dawns upon a solitary thinker in his study in a distant corner of Europe or America, it does not slumber and die with him, as formerly it might have done, but often even before it is fully matured in his own mind, reaches and inspires investigating and kindred minds on the other side of the Atlantic.

The beautiful experiment of Mons. Foucault, which I saw when it was first exhibited in Paris, during the past winter, affords an illustration of what I mean. He had set in motion beneath the magnificent dome of the Pantheon in that city, the pendulum which made visible for the first time to mortal eyes the great fact, hitherto since the days of Galileo

taken upon trust by the world on the report of science, of the rotation of the earth around its axis. As the huge pendulum swung steadily backward and forward in parallel planes, the dial beneath it, which marked the earth's rotation, slowly revolved. The experiment was as beautiful as it was convincing, and crowds in the gay capital of France flocked to witness it. Soon afterwards I crossed the ocean, but I found on arriving at home that the whole story had passed over before me. The original pendulum had not ceased its vibrations in the Pantheon at Paris before a similar one, erected at Harvard University, gave ocular demonstration of the same grand truth to the students of an American institution. And here too, at our own institution, I find in successful operation a new experiment, devised and carried out by your learned instructor in mathematics, who was also mine, which exhibits the same fact in a manner not less satisfactory, and by a mechanism still more simple than the pendulum and dial of Mons. Foucault.

But it is not only the ideas and associations of the present time, full of interest as they confessedly are, which bind the American to Europe. Those of the past do so in a still greater degree, for in a comprehensive view the past of Europe is our past, and its history our history. There, almost every spot of ground has its traditions which are gathered up and preserved with reverent care.

The traveller, at every step as he advances, finds himself surrounded by relics of bygone ages, which seem to approach nearer than ever before. Antiquity ceases to be entirely dim and fabulous, and grows into a reality as he stands among its ruins. Intervening generations, one dominant race and nation after another, which in their turn have lived and ruled during their brief span of existence, have passed away as the waves which beat and break upon the sea-shore; but some relics or monuments of each remain, and from them the spirit of the past passes into our spirits. We can for example realize the existence of such an early people as the Etruscans, the predecessors, and in some degree the parents, of Roman civilization, when we see their vases of beautiful form and workmanship adorning the galleries of art, and when we meet in our journeyings scattered throughout Italy remains of their ancient walls, built of materials so massive that they seem to have been the work of Titans. We read from our school-days of the wonderful creations of Grecian genius, till the oft-repeated story loses its interest, and we feel inclined to place a large part of the account, at least, among the pleasant fictions with which our childhood was beguiled; but we begin to appreciate their power and beauty when we gaze with astonishment on such productions of the chisel as the Venus de' Medici, the Laocoon, the

Dying Gladiator, and the Apollo Belvedere. We all have some idea of the grandeur and simplicity of Grecian architecture, but in order to comprehend it we must wander among some of its vast ruins, such, for instance, as those of Pœstum.

Permit me to dwell for a moment on these striking remains, for perhaps I cannot in any other way so well convey to your minds an idea of the vivid impression which the antiquities of the old world are adapted to make on a traveller from our new country. The very origin and early name of Pœstum are lost. Who were its builders we know not, except that they were a Grecian colony; perhaps those luxurious Sybarites of whom it was said that they could not sleep if a rose-leaf were doubled under them. But the Sybarite has departed, and after him, by turns, Roman, Saracen, and Christian, who have successively dwelt in and passed away from the devoted city. Its very site is at present a desolate wilderness. The sea has shrunk more than a mile away; and the harbor where its commerce floated, and the environs where its famous roses bloomed, are now a dreary plain, infected with deadly malaria, where buffaloes and wild cattle graze, and a few sickly and savage-looking peasants dwell and gather a scanty subsistence. Some huge and scattered stones mark the spot where the walls or a great

building stood. All else is levelled with the dust, except three Grecian temples, and they stand side by side in the midst of surrounding desolation—simple, beautiful, majestic, built as if for eternity, telling to the present time the story of the hoary centuries that have gone, and destined to repeat it to ages yet to come. Even the religion whose solemn rites they were erected to perpetuate has passed away, and is now a forgotten fable, while they remain like sepulchral monuments over its grave. So severe are they in their simplicity, so beautiful in their proportions, and so majestic in their strength, that even the careless stranger does involuntary homage to the genius which conceived, and the skill and power which erected them. In the presence of such relics of antiquity the vain-glorious and self-sufficient spirit to which every age and nation are prone, is rebuked. We feel that the generation of which we form a part, and on which we imagine that the future destinies of the world depend, occupies but a point in the vast area of time, that great nations and master races have lived and labored before us, and we ask ourselves whether we in our day, with all our advantages, accomplish our appointed task as faithfully as they, according to their light and knowledge, did in theirs.

But my object is not to indulge in moral reflections, nor in descriptions of the striking and pictur-

esque. It is more prosaic, and at the same time more practical in its character. I desire rather to lay before you a few of the most striking of the many widely different results of the widely differing forms of society and systems of government prevailing respectively in Europe and in this country, and thus to suggest to your minds some considerations bearing on the question of all questions, that of human progress and civilization.

Europe may with truth be compared to a great storehouse filled with treasures new and old; and the American who visits it, let us honestly confess the fact, will frequently be made to feel painfully the deficiencies of his own country in some important particulars. In the fine arts, for instance, which, wherever they are successfully cultivated, so adorn and beautify life, we are but beginners. As a nation we cannot be said to appreciate their value, and the means of their successful cultivation have yet to be created among us. In Europe, on the contrary, they are everywhere cherished and understood. With the higher classes they have ceased to be a matter of mere luxury, and have become one of necessity. Nearly every city of any magnitude has its public gallery of painting and sculpture, where are to be found works of distinguished masters, and it is always liberally thrown open to visitors without charge for admission. At all times may be seen in these

galleries, seated before the works of the great masters, students and artists diligently engaged in studying and copying favorite pictures. No handsome private residence is considered complete without some specimens of art, and many a one contains a collection which would make the fortune of any public gallery in this country. I have myself seen in the old town of Antwerp, in the house of a silk merchant who still continues to sell silk by the yard, a collection of masterpieces of painting by the great artists which could not be equalled in all America. Statues adorn churches and public buildings, palaces and villas, public squares and fountains. The works of distinguished sculptors, ancient and modern, stand unprotected in the most public thoroughfares of the most crowded capitals. Beautiful paintings are placed in museums to which all have access. There is no fear of wanton injury or thoughtless mischief. So general is the feeling of admiration and respect for art that it is shared even by the most ignorant and humble who are not able to appreciate its value. Even revolutionary fury during the recent convulsions, when the passions of men were aroused to madness against those whom they deemed their oppressors, spared, with a few exceptions, their treasures of art. Such is the condition of things abroad. We all know, alas!

what would be the fate of sculpture and painting thus exposed in this country.

Music too is not in Europe, as it too often is with us, merely the ornamental branch of the education of a school-girl, forgotten almost as soon as learned, and considered beneath the dignity of a manly accomplishment. It there assumes the character of a science as well as an art, and boasts of votaries who spend whole lives and unbounded enthusiasm in its cultivation. Great masters devote themselves to its composition, and take rank among the distinguished men of their country. Wealth and honors are the fruits of success. Rossini still survives to find himself a classic author even in his lifetime, and to enjoy wealth and fame in the beautiful city of Florence, where he resides. Artists too, like Paganini, who excel chiefly in execution, achieve fortune and distinction. Everywhere splendid buildings are dedicated to musical performances, and crowds flock nightly to listen, criticize, and admire. It is a striking spectacle to an American to witness the delicate appreciation which an Italian audience exhibit of the beauties of a musical composition, their familiar acquaintance with the finest passages, and their delight at a brilliant execution.

In the grand and majestic effects produced by architecture this country, as compared with Europe,

is still more deficient. Painting, sculpture, and music, may be transported across the ocean, but not so with architecture. Nor will any description nor engraving suffice. We must see for ourselves before we can comprehend its elevating and ennobling influence. Like everything else, it needs to be understood to be fully appreciated; but every one of any sensibility must be forcibly impressed by a grand and well proportioned building. Like the eternal mountains or the golden clouds which gather around the setting sun, it appeals to the sense of the beautiful in every mind. For myself, I may say that I know of no work of human hands so adapted to move the soul as the old Gothic cathedrals of Europe. Although they were the creation of ages comparatively dark, yet modern times, with all their civilization, have produced nothing to be compared with them. These grand achievements of early genius and piety seem to have outstripped all other contemporaneous developments of the human mind, because they lay in the direction of its deepest instinct. Our public buildings, on the contrary, are, for the most part, adapted rather to corrupt than to elevate the national taste. It was long ago wittily, but severely said, that the demon of architecture seemed to have alighted upon this country, and it is to be feared that the evil spirit is not yet exorcised. How could it be otherwise where, as

with us, the first consideration in erecting a building is usually not suitableness, but expense; where the builder so often takes the place of the architect, and where the whole is ordinarily under the control of a building committee, taken indifferently from every walk of life, and whose qualifications seldom include a knowledge of the subject about which they are called to pronounce judgment. I do not overstate the matter, and might cite many instances in point. Let one suffice. There may be seen any day in a neighboring city, attached to a fashionable church, a Grecian portico of imposing size, and meant to be ornamental. The architect had intended that the portico should be sustained by eight Corinthian columns. That was the number necessary, according to his design, for a proper proportion between the supports and the thing supported. But in the opinion of the building committee that was a matter of small importance. Columns are expensive ornaments. It was desirable, therefore, to dispense with as many as possible. Six, it was thought, might suffice without any danger of breaking down. Here was an opportunity for economy too good to be lost; so at least thought the building committee, and accordingly they quietly left out two of the columns, and saved the money. The portico went up with six columns, and has not yet fallen, though if it should stand to the end of

time, it will always *look* as if it were in momentary danger of such a catastrophe. It is to be hoped that it may long remain, not indeed as a model of architectural taste, but as a monument of the too conscientious frugality of the building committee.

We must confess then, if we are candid, that in matters pertaining to art we are far behind our European brethren. It is not a sufficient explanation of this inferiority on our part to say that this country does not possess the accumulated wealth of older communities, and therefore has not sufficient means to encourage art. We have wealth enough for those things which we really appreciate. There is no country in the world where the necessaries of life are so generally diffused as in this, and where so large a surplus remains which may be applied, and which is actually applied, to the comforts and enjoyments. There is none where there is more lavish expense, but it is appropriated much more frequently and in far larger proportions for stylish houses, gilded furniture, dress, equipage, and costly entertainments, than for objects of art. The large amount of money spent by Americans who go abroad is a matter of surprise and frequent remark on the part of foreigners; but milliners, tailors and jewellers, obtain a much larger portion of it than artists.

Original pictures and statues of merit, ancient or

modern, are expensive luxuries, and our travellers are generally satisfied with cheap copies. Good stories are sometimes told, not much to the credit of the taste of our countrymen. I have heard of an order left with a foreign banker by an American for the purchase of a lot of what he called "good furniture pictures"—an order rather puzzling to the banker, for that description of pictures is entirely unknown in Europe. I was told by a picture-dealer in Florence of a still more striking case, that of a wealthy New York merchant who refused to buy a single good picture, but for a few dollars purchased all the rubbish in the dealer's collection, knowing it to be such. The merchant could not himself distinguish the good from the bad, and he flattered himself that the daubs he had got, when handsomely framed and hung up in his house at home, would be taken by his friends for works of the distinguished masters, for which, I am sorry to say, he intended to attempt to pass them off.

This parsimonious patronage of art arises from no want of liberality, for illiberality forms no part of the national character, but simply from a deficiency of cultivated taste, both on the part of those abroad who purchase, and of those at home for whose admiration and benefit the purchases are made. It is different abroad. Nothing in art not really excellent is there valued, and what is

really excellent is highly valued. To such an extent is this carried, that it is contrary to law to remove from some of the Italian states any work of one of the old masters of celebrity without the consent of government being first obtained; and we read of Roman cardinals who were in the habit of spending a dollar for their dinner, and yet who would not hesitate to pay a thousand pounds for a picture or statue. These cardinals, and the Roman nobles generally, adorned their palaces with treasures of ancient and modern art. Some of these palaces are now deserted, and others are only partially inhabited. An air of decayed grandeur pervades them; the floors are without carpets, the furniture is clumsy and antiquated, but marble columns and gilded ceilings ornament the saloons, and here are to be found the works of the divinest masters, such as Raphael, Guido, Correggio, Andrea del Sarto, and a host of others, whose names are celebrated throughout the world. These the modern Roman has received as heir-looms from his forefathers, the badges of his descent from ancestors of refined and cultivated taste, and to these he clings even in the midst of poverty as the best proof of his nobility. The magnificent public galleries of the Capitol and the Vatican, as well as the private collections in the palaces of the nobles, are freely thrown open to all strangers, and this enlightened and wise liberality

makes Rome, fallen as she is in other respects, still the chosen home of art, whither its votaries flock from every civilized land, and where they most love to congregate and dwell.

But we must concede to Europe superiority in a matter of greater importance than mere art. The means of obtaining a solid and highly finished education are there far more abundant than here. Schools and colleges are more thorough and comprehensive. I do not mean to say that the number of branches attempted to be taught to each individual is as large as it is here, for the contrary is probably the fact; but the instruction is more thorough, and the range of studies is wider for those who desire to pursue a more extensive course. Not only do the language and literature of Greece and Rome form an essential part of the education of a European scholar, but he has also generally at command one or more of the languages of modern Europe, in addition to his own. Too many of our countrymen, on the contrary, travel abroad, *haud inexpertus loquor*, somewhat in the condition of deaf and dumb men, unable to converse in the language of any foreign country which they may happen to visit, or to understand it when spoken. All the appliances of study are more numerous in Europe than in this country. Libraries are to be found compared with which one of our own seems like a shelf full of books, and they are

liberally thrown open to students who desire to make use of them. The pleasant account given by Irving in his "Sketch-book" of the readers whom he saw in the British Museum, may be verified any day by any one who chooses to visit it. Instruction may be obtained in every department of learning. While I was in Paris, during last winter, more than one hundred courses of lectures were being delivered at the expense of government, or of public institutions under its control. All were gratuitous, and they embraced nearly the whole circle of human knowledge, from subjects the most abstruse and recondite, such as pure mathematics and the Hebrew, Sanscrit, Arabic, and Chinese languages, to those most practical in their character, such as agriculture and the application of chemistry to the art of dyeing. These lectures were attended by numerous pupils, some of them from distant lands, and among them might be seen, when the subjects were adapted to their trades, artisans of Paris dressed in their blue cotton blouses. The names of some of these lecturers are distinguished throughout the world by their writings in their respective branches, such as those of Michelet in History, Leverrier in Astronomy, Orfila in Chemistry, and Velpeau and Andral in Medicine.

But it should be specially remembered that this proficiency in art and perfection in the means of education of which I have spoken, are not the

consequences of a general want or a general enlightenment, and that they are the work of government, and of the patronage of the few. The people, notwithstanding the case of the artisans of Paris to which I have referred, and which constitutes the exception rather than the rule, have little to do with them, and derive comparatively little benefit from them. The few are refined and educated, while the many are unrefined and ignorant.

Art and learning, instead of elevating, as they ought, the masses towards the higher classes, thus serve but to make a wider line of demarcation, and to cut off sympathy between them. Such partial civilization is no indication of national progress, and has no guarantee of stability. It resembles a foreign plant in uncongenial ground, fostered by artificial stimulants and care, rather than the natural and healthy growth of a deep and fertile soil. With us, happily, it is different. Such art and learning as we have are a true index of the national advancement. Our governments, so far as they extend encouragement, only reflect the popular will; and it is not very different with individuals. We have no titled class whose wealth and honors are hereditary, and whose ideas are as hereditary as their wealth. Riches with us seldom continue in the same family for more than two generations, and our rich and distinguished men mount upwards in constant succession from the

mass of the people, whose feelings and opinions they necessarily share. Until, then, public sentiment takes a direction in favor of the highest intellectual culture and of the liberal arts, neither will be effectually provided for. But public sentiment will sooner or later take such a direction, and when it does, it will move onward with a power proportioned to the grandeur of our country, the vastness of our population, and the characteristic enthusiasm of our people.

There are already many evidences of such a tendency in the matter of education, and art will not long be lost sight of. I am not singular in this opinion. One of the most eminent sculptors in Rome, a Prussian, some of whose works I had seen and admired in this country, and whose studio I accidentally visited, seemed to value highly his trans-Atlantic reputation, and remarked to me that the day was approaching when America would be among the nations the greatest patron of the fine arts. He argued correctly that our increasing and diffused wealth would necessarily bring in its train a taste for art. And I thought I saw already a slight indication of such a result in the fact that the two most expensive and beautiful groups of statuary now being executed in the studios of Florence and Rome are by Americans, and were ordered from this country. One by Horatio Greenough is designed for the Capitol at Washington, and the other, by

Crawford, is intended to adorn the State House at Richmond. In this, as in some other things, Virginia has been prominent in setting a good example to her sister States. Let us hope that it may be generally followed. It is a stronger indication, however, that although the Greenough whom I have just named is now in the very prime of life, he was the pioneer among American sculptors, and has already many followers and able competitors in his noble art. Indeed, America has no cause to be ashamed either of her painters or sculptors now residing abroad. They are doing their share, and more than their share, towards the establishment of an American school of art, and it rests with those at home to extend the encouragement which is their due.

The taste for art, when it does come, will be a national one, and will be universally gratified. Already are we a nation of readers, and on that account the most efficient patrons of literature in the world, as is abundantly shown by the very natural anxiety of English authors to obtain American copyrights for their works. Hereafter, when we become as a nation lovers of the beautiful, we shall be equally efficient patrons of art. As no man now would be without a shelf full of books in his house, so no man then will be without a picture or statue, or at least an engraving, or a cast, to adorn his dwelling, however humble it may be. He will

have something beautiful always beside him which he can admire himself and teach his children, from their earliest years, to admire. There is nothing in republican institutions unfriendly to the successful cultivation of any branch of art, literature, or science. On the contrary, the history of the world seems to establish that the stimulus of freedom is essential to the highest achievements of the human mind in every sphere of its exercise.

As I have undertaken to give you some account of the impressions made upon my mind by what I saw abroad, there are one or two other things, perhaps, which here deserve a passing notice.

In Europe, and especially in southern Europe, the American traveller is struck with the polite and courteous manners of the inhabitants. Nor is this civility a mere outside show, but often manifests itself in substantial acts of kindness. A stranger never receives an uncivil answer to a polite inquiry. His blunders, however gross, are not laughed at. If he loses his way, as he is often likely to do, in a labyrinth of narrow streets, the first person whom he meets will perhaps walk a square or more to set him right. Large crowds can assemble for the purpose of amusement, and disperse without manifesting a disposition to tumult or strife. A countryman of ours who occupies a high diplomatic post abroad, told me, that on the occasion of a very large gather-

ing of the people in one of the principal cities of Italy, he was mortified to find himself the only ill-bred man in the crowd, for in the excitement of the moment, and with a sort of American instinct to take care of himself, he had elbowed his way towards one of the best seats, and was only made sensible of his incivility by having the place politely yielded to him. During three months spent in Italy, in traversing much of the country and wandering about in every direction through some of its chief cities, I never met a drunken man, although there, even the beggars drink wine, and never saw a blow struck in anger.

It must also be admitted that in Europe generally public order is much more steadily maintained than it is in this country. The pugilistic propensities which we have inherited from our Anglo-Saxon ancestors seem not to prevail on the Continent, and there is nowhere any hesitation about enforcing laws because they happen to be opposed by combinations of men. The fights and fire riots which so often disgrace some of our principal cities would not be tolerated for a moment in any part of Europe. Such an outbreak would be considered as the precursor of a revolution, and if not speedily quelled would very probably lead to one.

In respect to amusements too, we might, perhaps, derive some valuable lessons from our

European brethren. Life in this country is more intense and serious than it is elsewhere, and becomes in reality what it is often called metaphorically—a battle. A distinguished physician in Dublin once asked me whether we had any fat people in our country, "For," he continued, "I never saw a jolly American in my life." I confess that I was not able to answer the question in a manner entirely satisfactory to myself. In his own country, Ireland, in the midst of beggary, wretchedness, and decay, a kindly good humor and a vein of fun and jollity are ever peeping out. A knot of men there can hardly assemble without a joke and laugh. Even the beggars exhibit traits of drollery in the midst of their piteous stories.

On the Continent of Europe generally the governments take some pains to amuse the people, and they are easily amused. A show or procession, an opera, a party in a tea-garden, music, or a dance in the open air, are recreations heartily enjoyed. Every city has its public promenade, which is a source of perpetual gratification; and some have public botanical and zoological gardens, conducted on a scale of great magnificence and expense. But in America it is otherwise. There is far more comfort here than anywhere else, but I believe that there is more care also. A reason for this may perhaps be found in the strong stimulus given to ambition by the nature

of our Government, which arouses the aspirations of all by throwing open the highest places to the humblest. Every man strives to better his condition and to elevate himself above the station in which he was born. If he fail to achieve this for himself, he hopes at least to accomplish it for his children. A consequence of this intense devotion to practical objects is that amusement is almost thrust out of the plan of life. It is admitted to be necessary for children, and tolerable in the young, but is treated as a thing with which the mature and the aged have little or nothing to do. A powerful and universal principle of human nature is thus suppressed and almost ignored among us: but not with impunity, for in proportion as amusement is banished from the society of the old and wise, it becomes more coarse in its character and most dangerous to morals. Such amusements as we have are more the result of accident than design, or rather, like wild flowers springing up by the dusty road-side, they are provided by a wise and benevolent hand, which delights to send beauty and fragrance to adorn and sweeten even the most formal works of man. It is not surprising, then, that foreigners generally consider America a gloomy country, while they are struck with astonishment at its wonderful prosperity.

Let us concede, then, that in Europe there is

more learning and more art—these are the natural results of an older civilization; that there is stricter order—this we shall have when we have experienced more of the evils of disorder; that there are more popular amusements—these we may also have when we feel the want of them, and of a higher and better kind, too, than many of those enjoyed abroad.

But there is another side to the picture. These things, important as some of them are, are as the small dust in the balance when placed by the side of the great moral and material interests of the millions who go to make up a nation. As to all such interests it is not necessary to appeal to the future in order, on a fair comparison between Europe and this country, to draw a conclusion favorable to our own. For those who possess great wealth, and mean to spend it in the enjoyment of luxury, for votaries of art, for merely literary or learned men, for lovers of pleasure, and for idlers of every taste, Europe undoubtedly possesses superior attractions; but for the vast majority of mankind, whose lot it is to earn their bread by labor in some profession or calling, it is far otherwise; and I see not how a right-minded American can return home after travelling abroad without a feeling of devout thankfulness to God that his lot has been cast in this land of freedom. There is indeed an exception to this freedom, but of that this is neither the time nor place to

speak. I refer to the general rule, not the exception. Freedom in this country is the great fact. We owe all to it. We enjoy the largest freedom compatible with social order. We have freedom to think and speak, to write, to print, and to read what is printed; freedom to labor in any honest calling, and to worship God according to our consciences, no matter what may be the form or creed. All men are equal before the law. The highest stations are open to the humblest. Every man is conscious of the dignity of possessing rights, and is made aware that rights bring with them correlative duties. Self-respect is thus taught by the very nature of our institutions.

It is different in Europe. Nothing, perhaps, better illustrates this than the different extent to which mendicancy prevails there and here. With us few beg except those who are in actual want. Men are ashamed to be suppliants to their equals, or to ask others to do for them what they can do for themselves. But in Europe the frightful inequality of condition existing in society leads to degradation and servility in the lower classes. There beggary is a profession. Alms are a species of tax levied by the poor on the rich. At the doors of churches, in the churches themselves, in the public squares and walks, wherever a crowd assembles, the ragged throng abounds. Infants in their mothers' arms, before they can speak, are taught to hold up their little hands to beg.

Deformed limbs are thrust before the face of the traveller; cripples hobble after him; active children with piercing cries, follow his carriage for miles, and will take no refusal, well aware from previous experience that perseverance will at last be crowned with success. Laborers on the public roads are not ashamed to leave their work to sue for alms, sometimes with gestures which resemble threats almost as much as entreaties. I have myself had a decently dressed man go down on his knees before me in a dirty street in Rome to beg for a baiocco (a coin of about the value of a cent), and it was with difficulty I could make him comprehend that I would give him nothing unless he rose from his abject position. After he had received the pittance, and before I was aware of his intention, he had seized my hand, pressed it to his lips and kissed it. I do not desire, however, to be understood as alleging that this description of mendicancy applies to every part of Europe. It is true to this extent only of the worst governed portions, but beggary prevails everywhere in a greater or less degree—everywhere far more than here. Still, wretched, disgusting and painful as it is, there is one mitigating feature about it. It shows that, large as is the army of beggars, the army of givers is still larger, that the kindly feelings of the human heart manifest themselves everywhere under every form of government, religion, and

society, and that where wretchedness most abounds heavenly charity also abounds as a corresponding good.

But this is only one of many facts. Nowhere in Europe is a population to be found so well clothed, fed, paid and housed, as ours. Nowhere is there the same evidence of life, progress and improvement. Nowhere is there so general a diffusion of knowledge and intelligence. Nowhere—though this is a point on which it is difficult for a mere traveller to speak with confidence—nowhere, I believe, is there the same depth and universality of moral and religious feeling.

As a nation we have respect for virtue. Vice is obliged to hide itself, and dares not come forward into the light of day, as it does in some of the countries of Europe. However widely individuals may go astray, public sentiment in the United States is generally right, and sets its seal of condemnation on that which is wrong. It is not so in countries where all power is in the hands of a few. There, public sentiment has not the strength of a controlling and restraining force, and is not so regarded either by the great, for they are above it, or the humble, for they are beneath it.

And the religious sentiment in this country is well nigh universal. No eminent public man would venture to run counter to it, or avow disrespect for religion even if he felt it. There is, indeed, diversity

enough in forms and creeds, but there is a growing unity of feeling. The faith of the nation at last goes back to, and rests mainly upon, a common ground—the Bible, differently understood and explained as to matters of doctrine, but still the Bible. So familiar are the people with that book that its language affords the readiest means of access to the popular heart, as our most distinguished speakers well know, for on great and solemn occasions their most effective appeals are found to be those which borrow largely from the spirit, and somewhat even from the phraseology, of the sacred Scriptures.

On the continent of Europe, I do not now refer to Great Britain, in both Protestant and Roman Catholic countries, complaints are made of the decline of religious faith. It is said that doubt and scepticism are descending from the learned few to the unlearned many, and that rationalism in some countries and superstition in others, have borne their legitimate fruit—irreligion.

But another and potent reason for the decay of faith in Europe may be found in the fact that there religion is not supposed to be able to manage its own concerns, and is therefore taken under the patronage of the state. The consequence of this unholy alliance is not to elevate the state, but to degrade religion. The church naturally arrays itself on the side of the

power which protects it, and thus frequently becomes the apologist and defender of flagrant abuses. The abuses cannot be reached without attacking the church, and when the contest comes, the church is found to be on the wrong side—that of the oppressors instead of the oppressed. This leads to two great evils. Reform, on the one hand, is always stigmatized as irreligious, and sometimes becomes so in fact; and on the other, religion itself is confounded with the acts of rulers, with whom it ought to have nothing to do, and of its own ministers, who by their connexion with the government are placed in a false position.

With us, on the contrary, the church has no connexion with the state, and is not responsible for any of its acts. Reform and religion, instead of being unnaturally divorced, move together hand in hand. It has always been so heretofore, and may it continue to be so to the end of time.

But I must hasten to bring these remarks to a close, which I shall do after laying before you another striking contrast between the condition of things here and abroad.

The distinguishing feature of our political institutions is that the people govern themselves in conformity with written laws and constitutions of their own making. It is not enough to say that they are contented with this state of things, and want nothing better. That would coldly express the fact. With

the exception of a factious and discontented few, who would be satisfied with nothing short of a government ordered in all things according to their own perverse will, and probably not long with that, and of a few others who view with alarm what they regard as the radical and levelling tendency of the times, it may be said of the American people that their devotion to their political institutions partakes, in depth and fervency, of the character of a religious sentiment. Republicanism here is more than a mere opinion; it assumes the dignity of a faith—a belief. To a constitutional, representative government, fairly carried out to all its consequences, this country is inevitably pledged, now, hereafter, and to the end. By it we must stand if we continue to be a nation, or with it we must fall, if our fate be to perish.

In most of the monarchical countries of Europe the reverse of all this is true. The people there do not govern, but are governed. They do not stay contentedly in their humble places, but are kept down by the strong arm of power. Somehow or other, in spite of restrictions upon speech and the press, either from the effect of our example, or from the instinctive yearnings of their own hearts, they have fallen in love with republicanism. They do not perhaps understand very well what it means; they may have certain fanciful notions of their own about it, and sometimes it assumes a red and porten-

tous hue. But the idea is in their minds, and neither hunger can starve, nor fire burn, nor iron drive it out of them. They feel, too, that recently they had the power in their own hands, but that, in their haste to tumble down old institutions, they failed to consolidate others in their stead. They believe that they were cheated into making terms with rulers who would keep no faith with them. And now they bide their time. The future with its chances is all that is left to them, and they await, with such patience as they can, what it shall bring forth.

Meanwhile the monarchical party are not idle, and at present have it all their own way. In the striking language of Mazzini, the distinguished patriot, and one of the Triumvirate which governed Rome so wisely during the existence of the late republic: —"The crusade is organized. Royalty takes the camp. He has for better or for worse furbished up his old armor of the middle ages, his old feudal sword of the sixteenth century. He has put on his spurs, *à la Louis Quatorze*. He bestrides his great war-horse, the *coup d'état*. He is ready for battle."

The note of preparation is everywhere sounded. Europe resembles an immense camp. Our whole standing army is less in number than the garrisons of some of its principal capitals. The march of a considerable body of troops is so frequent a sight in the large cities that even the boys do not stop to gaze at

it. The roll of the drum is the most familiar of sounds. Soldiers with fixed bayonets mount guard before royal palaces, legislative assemblies, theatres, public buildings, and all places where crowds assemble. They form part of every pageant, and mingle even in the most solemn processions of the church.

Many hundred thousand men, thus taken from peaceful occupations, are doomed to a life of idleness, and become mere consumers of the fruits of the earth when they ought to be producers. Their appropriate tasks, including the cultivation of the soil, are devolved mainly upon women, who are compelled to neglect their own proper duties for coarse and arduous labors, unsuited to their sex and inconsistent with the refinement and delicacy which constitute their sex's chief attraction.

But standing armies have recently, on various occasions, proved an unsafe dependence. Even hired soldiers have human feelings, and taken as they are from the mass of the people, are liable to side with them when the conflict actually comes. To guard against such a contingency foreign troops are introduced having no sympathy with the people, whom they are called upon to hold in subjection.

Thus, when I was abroad, Baden and other small German states were overrun by Prussian soldiers. Tuscany was in the hands of an Austrian army. In Naples King Ferdinand's main reliance was on his

Swiss troops, and his capital, with its batteries of cannon, frowned like a besieged city, except that the guns pointed not outwards against a foreign foe, but inwards against his own people. In the Papal States it was still worse. While Austrians kept rule in the north, a French army in the south were prepared with grapeshot and musketry to repeat the instructive lessons in liberty, as understood in France, which they had previously given to their brother republicans in the Eternal City; and the person of the chief pontiff himself was intrusted to none but his famous Swiss Guard.

Still the nations cannot be said to dwell in peace. There is a troubled calm, a feverish quiet, an enforced stillness—but it is not peace. It is rather a pause, a lull in the storm, which at any moment may burst forth again with redoubled fury. Nothing seemed so forcibly to strike intelligent foreigners with whom I conversed as the profound peace which reigns in this country. It was more often the subject of remark than our great prosperity, our victories in Mexico, or than even the gold of California. But in Europe the nations have outgrown their institutions, and changes, sooner or later, must come, and there is great reason to fear that they can be brought about only by bloody contests between parties and principles too opposite and hostile for any compromise or reconciliation. Such, at least, is the opinion

of those who lead and direct the republican party. They urge uncompromising resistance and speedy action, and place their counsels upon the high ground of religious duty. I quote again from one of the stirring appeals of Mazzini, addressed to his brother patriots from his place of exile.

"I have faith," he exclaims, "in God, in the power of truth, and in the historic reason of the times. I am conscious of such faith in my heart. This is but a halt which it depends on us to interrupt. At this moment we march over the crust of the old world. But its living principle is exhausted. Another ferments beneath. It is for us to break for it a passage, even if we perish amid the ruins.

"Have faith, then, O you who suffer for the noble cause, apostles of a truth which the world now despises, soldiers of just battles which it degrades by the name of revolts. To-morrow, perhaps, the world, now incredulous or indifferent, will prostrate itself before you with holy enthusiasm. To-morrow victory will have blessed your banner of crosses. March on then in faith, and fear not; Christ has done so, and humanity may do so. Believe, and you shall conquer. Believe, and the nations shall rouse themselves before you. Believe and act. Action is the Word of God. Thought by itself is but a shadow. Those who separate thought and

action divide God—deny his unity. Thrust such from your ranks, for they believe not who are not ready with their blood to bear witness to their faith."

Such trumpet tones as these cannot fail to awaken many answering voices as they penetrate into the Alpine fastnesses of Switzerland, as they sweep over the plains of enthusiastic Germany, and circulate among the vine-clad hills and valleys of classic Italy. They overleap all barriers and spread over all lands, as if borne thither by the winds of heaven.

They are designed to prepare Europe for a revolutionary war similar to that which this country has already passed through. If such a war should come, it is likely to be as much more terrible than our own as the interests at stake are vaster, the numbers engaged on each side larger, and the feelings of the opposing parties more hostile and embittered than they were in the contest in which our liberties were won. In any such struggle we in this country could not fail to give all our sympathies and good wishes to those engaged in a strife for freedom, for it is the sacred cause of those "who strive in God's name for man's rights." But what should we desire for them? Let me in a word answer this question. We should wish for them that, the victory won and their toils and sufferings

over, they may have the wisdom to establish, and the moderation to maintain, institutions, civil and religious, similar in their fundamental principles to those which we now possess. And it should be to us a source of the devoutest thankfulness, not of self-glorification, for not ours is the praise, that we can desire nothing more nor better than this, not only for our brother republicans in Europe, but for the suffering millions everywhere throughout the whole earth.

This country now occupies, and, whether we will or not, must continue to occupy a most important and responsible place; perhaps I should not over-state the truth if I were to say, the most important and responsible place among the nations of the earth. To the oppressed and unfortunate of distant lands she opens wide her protecting arms, and every year receives them by hundreds of thousands into her ample bosom. She has room for all and to spare, and enough, and more than enough, for all to do. But she has a higher and nobler mission to accomplish than even that of affording shelter and a home to the suffering and oppressed. As the leading representative of free principles, and as the only nation which has ever successfully tried the great experiment of self-government, she holds the proud position in the eyes of all men of the standard-bearer in the cause of liberty. But she is regarded with

different and conflicting emotions by the two great parties of the past and the future into which the world is now divided. The adherents of absolute power, to whose minds the dogmas taught by tradition are alone sacred and venerable, view her onward course with envy, fear, and ill-concealed hatred. But those who have faith in the future and in a better destiny awaiting man, to be accomplished by the free development of all his energies and faculties, look to this country with hearts beating high with hope, confidence, and joy. Their ranks may be broken by the trained bands of despotism, they may be defeated and scattered again and again, as they have been and now are, but with the example of this country before them they will never surrender their hopes, nor abandon their great enterprise. While, then, the new world is indebted to the old for the swelling tide of population ever setting towards her shores, and still more for the glories of art, the delights of literature, and the treasures of science, she will repay, and more than repay the obligation, if she shall continue to teach the impressive lesson that a nation, with the help of God, and without the help of king or nobles, or of arbitrary power vested in any man or set of men, is capable of self-direction, self-control, self-government, and of achieving for itself a happy lot and an honorable name.