

ever kindled by the false lights of bigotry and superstition.

No spectacle can be considered grand, unless it represent some great sentiment or idea. If these are puerile or exaggerated, their effect is lost; there must be sympathy between the eye and the mind, or the most imposing show is unsatisfactory. The tournaments of the middle ages—what were they but an expression of fierce animal courage—a love of war for its own sake—a thirst for glory, which drowned all sweet and gentle charities in its selfish gratification. The *prince chevalier*, with his boasted chivalry and loyal devotion to his lady's charms, threw off his brilliant qualities with his cuirass, and in his feudal castle became a cruel lord, a reckless companion, and a domestic tyrant. Domestic virtues, it is true, were then lightly prized; and so long as arms were the standard of excellence, and the daring feats of tilting fields amused the public mind, all thoughts of peace, all regard for humanity were thrown aside, and man's intellect became dwarfed, ignorance flourished, and the world's progress was retarded.

The barbarous bull-fights of Spain, still witnessed with cruel delight, are a true type of that nation's mental imbecility; and in the palmiest days of Rome, the combats of gladiators and wild beasts—the frightful waste of human life to gratify the public eye—the triumphal processions, in which were borne the spoils of war—the trophies of victory, and the vanquished foe in chains—all manifest the lowest moral degradation, scarcely redeemed by a solitary display of humane and generous feeling.

These gorgeous pageants have all passed away; they were the popular expression of a turbulent and semi-barbarous civilization, which no form of social life, in the world's advance, can ever again bring into existence.

Sight Seeing, in these modern days, is reduced to a deplorably narrow compass. Some few years ago, when the world was a battle field, and military glory was in vogue, crowds flocked to see a Review, and the roll of the drum was a challenge to the bump of combativeness. But the world has grown pacific in spite of itself, and philanthropists and utilitarians have nearly vanquished the advocates for false glory. The pulse is no longer stirred by martial strains; the latest "nigger song" is more popular than the patriotic airs of old England; and even in the eyes of "sweet sixteen," a scarlet coat is no longer irresistible. Still, in all the elements of society, there is a manifest admiration of outward show, and there ever will be, till mankind learn to place a true value on externals, and realize that the simple

dignity of humanity rests solely upon inward worth; and as long as there are vacant minds, or an idle and unemployed populace in our streets, there will not be wanting lookers-on, whether a troop of friars appear in holy garb, or His Excellency ventures to take an airing—whether a wedding issues from the portals of a church, or a funeral with unwonted state, passes slowly to the last lowly resting place.

There was, without doubt, a rude magnificence, an earnest enthusiasm, in the grand processions of early times, which redeemed them from total vulgarity, but that is now entirely unknown. Our shows are got up for effect—from party motives—sometimes a political bargain—often mere vanity and narrow egotism. Our national societies savor too little of the true spirit of universal brotherhood. While the representatives of each nation, with an emblematic flower in their button-hole, march under floating banners, and to the sound of martial music, do they feel more in charity with each other, and with the rest of the world, than when meeting in the ordinary walks of life? or are they not rather inclined to appropriate an undue share of patriotism to themselves, and to regard others as scarcely entitled to equal honors and privileges? The outward display is not objectionable, if it truly carries out the principle professed; nay, it may give fresh impulse to the benevolence which we believe is the fundamental idea of all similar societies.

We would not rudely pry into the secrets of Free Masons and Odd Fellows, though sorely puzzled to decypher their hieroglyphics, which might well baffle the skill even of the Grand Masters of Jerusalem and Malta. A little harmless vanity may be excused when a charitable object lies couched beneath it; but the lordly sex who repudiate vanity, and class it altogether as a *noun feminine*, should explain why they throw aside their manliness and trick themselves out in ribbons and aprons, like cooks on a gala day.

These harmless shows, however, are altogether a matter of taste, and as long as men and women seek excitement in external manifestations, and substitute mere amusement for the rational exercise of their mental faculties, so long will gala and fête days, and all occasions of display, ordinary and extraordinary, obtain the popular favor. In the present state of society these evils must be permitted; the populace demands cheap amusement, and vulgar minds in all ranks will give the sanction of their approbation. It is only when Sight-Seeing ministers to the depraved and base passions of our nature that it becomes a positive evil and demands a decided check. Whenever a