

tempt for the laws and law-givers that made Justice hand-
maiden to Sin, and expediency the excuse for both.

"I have lived for the last month, and I think that every man in Massachusetts capable of the sentiment of patriotism must have had a similar experience, with the sense of having suffered a vast and infinite loss. I did not know at first what ailed me. At last it occurred to me that what I had lost was a country. I had never respected the Government near to which I lived, but I had foolishly thought that I might manage to live here, minding my private affairs, and forget it."

Such words resound with the ring of truth, and do not strike us as issuing from a hollow selfishness. I have first presented this political aspect of the man that his subsequent actions may be viewed aright. Whenever he retires to solitude we may be assured it is not hermit-wise or in petulance, but as a man and patriot, intent upon his own purification, and consciously in the service of humanity. Bacon says, as said Aristotle before him, "Whoever is delighted in solitude is either a wild beast or a god: for it is most true that a natural and secret hatred towards society in any man hath somewhat of the savage beast, but it is most untrue that it should have any character at all of the divine nature except it proceed from a desire to sequester a man's self for higher conversation." These words contain much that bears upon the problem of Thoreau's life, and many essays have been little more than enlargements of this idea.

Bacon would have us consider this type as either Divinity or Beast. We can in justice do neither; and if our investigation should reveal for the most part the god-like qualities of his nature we should make wide reservation for all the wild traits of aboriginal or animal life that he incessantly betrays.

I doubt if a knowledge of the nature of an author's formula of religion is necessary to the understanding of his writings, unless indeed he be of the tribe of religious improvers or reformers, and his creed confront you everywhere with its doctrines of reason or nonsense. But in this time of great world-moving reforms and religious agitations, the belief of individuals is not without interest and importance. And because Thoreau makes full confession of his relation to Christianity it is impossible to avoid a notice of his religious position. Different biographers would pronounce upon him after their own manner, either by attack or by approbation. No critic with conscience could be silent. To the most rigid his life should justify his belief which he tells us is hostile to Christianity. As in every other respect, so in this for the satisfaction of his religion, he extracted from the accumulation of ages what profited him most and what his genius most approved. In a few significant sentences is to be found all that is needful to understand his position.

"It is necessary not to be a Christian to appreciate the beauty and significance of the life of Christ." Again—"Some, seemingly very unimportant and unsubstantial things to me, and relations, are for many people everlastingly settled; as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and the like. These are like everlasting hills to them. But in all my wandering I never came across the least vestige of authority for these things. They have not left so distinct a trace as the delicate flower of a remote geological period on the coal in my grate."

"To see from earth to heaven and see there standing, still a fixture, that old Jewish scheme! What right have you to hold up this obstacle to my understanding you, to your understanding me! You did not invent it; it was imposed upon you. Examine your authority."

Thoreau's literary style differs but little from book to book. In "Walden" perhaps it is most coloured with thought, for there he examines the most difficult problems that he ventures upon. Everywhere there is noticeable a conscious restraint, which is not thawed into emotional language even when he coldly examines the passions. I remember but one passage where he overleaps his self-imposed barrier, and that is in an apostrophe to the forest. In this passage he permits a yearning *Oh* to escape him, and perhaps regretted having done so, though it was in the privacy of his journal. He is compelled to stop short and receive a new vocabulary, when figures suggest themselves with the rapidity of high imagination. He dreaded an over-painting in words, though he is one of the most prodigious

exaggerators in literature. He trusted to the inherent beauty of the objects described or to the magnitude of the ideas discussed for all effect. His love of conciseness is remarkable, and is a great assistance to the strength of his intellect. In this respect he recalls the method of Emerson, but notwithstanding reports to the contrary, I think him natural if not original. A truth undressed may not charm us with measures of melody. The ear may not serve as a channel to the understanding. But the truth distils upon us no less, and the mind untrammelled by subservient considerations of art beholds truth as pure inspiration. Thoreau by excess laid himself unshielded to the charge of indulgence in mannerism. But this implied fault serves sometimes to enhance the value of his compressed wisdom.

PELHAM EDGAR.

To be continued.

THE TOURIST.

This is not the usual season for either ourselves or our readers to go "globe-trotting," yet one can very well do so, seated at home in his easy chair with all the accessories to comfort about him and a pile of the latest magazines at his elbow. We shall make an effort to explore the aforesaid pile and see if there is anything of value in it.

In the January *McMillan's Magazine*, Mr. Goldwin Smith contributed an article on "Shakespeare's Religion and Politics," which was reprinted in the *Globe* of January 15th. It is now reported that he will have a paper on Professor Bryce's "American Commonwealth" in the February number of the same magazine.

The *Fortnightly* for January is above the average. Oscar Wilde's "Pen, Pencil and Poison: A Study" treats of that strange character, Thomas Griffiths Wainwright, who was a *dilettanti* in art, letters and all things beautiful; a forger and a poisoner of no mean skill. J. A. Symonds writes "A Comparison of Elizabethan with Victorian Literature."

"Auld Wattie Scott" beams with kindly eyes on the reader who turns to the promised article on "The great novelist at work" in *Scribner's* for February. It is a most readable essay by S. H. Woodruff. R. H. Stoddard contributes a delicate little poem called "A Lyric of Lyrics." An illustrated paper on "Some Greek Portraits" proves interesting reading on account of the light it throws on the influence of Greek art in Egypt.

The *Century* opens with an article on the French artist Gérôme, which is virtually contributed by himself. The engravings are masterpieces. "Napoleon before the Sphinx" ("L'Eclipe") and "Thirst" particularly claim our attention; there is a strange fascination about them which leads one to them again and again. The publishers deserve great praise for the series of "Old Italian Masters" with illustrations of their work which they are now presenting to their readers. The influence of these papers must make itself felt on American art. Another article in the same line is Laurence Hutton's "Portraits of Mary Queen of Scots," but these do not impress one with the beauty of that unfortunate Queen. With the exception of the "Morton Portrait" one would be inclined to think that her beauty was rather a myth.

"All aboard for a trip round the world!" This might well be the preface to the February *Harper* and this number of *The Tourist's Guide*. In a very readable and well illustrated paper Theodore Child acts as our cicerone in exploring the mysteries of the Hôtel Drouet in Paris. We next find ourselves in "The Land of the Midnight Sun," of which Bjornstjerne Bjornson gives us many a glimpse. The next stopping-place is in Russia, where an artist with almost as unpronounceable a name as the preceding, to wit Vassili Verestchagin, is our guide through "A Russian Village." After a steep climb up the Himalayas in company with Henry Ballantine, we are well rewarded by the information he gives us of "Nepaul, the Land of the Goorkhas." We cross the Pacific and lie over a train or two to take a run through "Dakota" with P. F. McLure. This number is hardly up to the standard in poetry; Amélie Rives has two Scotch songs which show that she has overcome to some extent the difficulties of the Scotch dialect. One of them, entitled "My Laddie," is expressive of intensely passionate love, but there is a note in it which is quite in keeping with the style of the author of "The Quick and the Dead." In a long and very able article, Dr. Chas. Waldstein discusses "The Work of John Ruskin,"