

INTRODUCTION

FOR many years at Hull-House I have at intervals detected in certain old people, when they spoke of their past experiences, a tendency to an idealization, almost to a romanticism suggestive of the ardent dreams and groundless ambitions we have all observed in the young when they recklessly lay their plans for the future.

I have, moreover, been frequently impressed by the fact that these romantic revelations were made by old people who had really suffered much hardship and sorrow, and that the transmutation of their experiences was not the result of ignoring actuality, but was apparently due to a power inherent in memory itself.

It was therefore a great pleasure when I found this aspect of memory delightfully portrayed by Sir Gilbert Murray in his life of Euripides. He writes that the aged poet, when he was officially made one of the old men of Athens, declared that he could transmute