

deference, and the solid physical comforts so easily obtained at a London tavern. There he could make "inarticulate, animal noises over his food" without restraint; there he could bring only such companions as would bear to be contradicted, and there he could refresh body and mind without fear of intrusion from a printer's devil or needy author. Bores and duns away, a good listener by, surrounded with pleasant viands and a cheerful blaze, a man so organized and situated might, without extravagance, call a tavern-chair the throne of human felicity, and quote Shenstone's praise of inns with rapture. Beneath this jovial appreciation, however, there lurks a sad inference; it argues a homeless lot, for lonely or ungenial must be the residence, contrast with which renders an inn so attractive; and we must bear in mind that the winsome aspect they wear in English literature is based on their casual and temporary enjoyment; it is as recreative, not abiding places, that they are usually introduced; and, in an imaginative point of view, our sense of the appropriate is gratified by these landmarks of our precarious destiny, for we are but "pilgrims and sojourners on the earth." Jeremy Taylor compared human life to an inn, and Archbishop Leighton used to say he would prefer to die in one.

THAT is but a vulgar idea of authorship which estimates its worth by the caprices of fashion or the prestige of immediate success. Like art, its value is intrinsic. There are books, as there are pictures, which do not catch the thoughtless eye; and yet are the gems of the virtuoso, the oracles of the philosopher, and the consolations of the poet. We love authors, as we love individuals, according to our latent affinities; and the extent of the popular appreciation is no more a standard to us than the world's estimate of our friend, whose nature we have tested by faithful companionship and sympathetic intercourse. He who has not the mental independence to be loyal to his own intellectual benefactors is as much a heathen as one who repudiates his natural kin. Indeed, an honest soul clings more tenaciously to neglected merit in authors as in men; there is a chivalry of taste as of manners. Doubtless Lamb's zest for the old English dramatists, Addison's admiration of Milton's poetry, and Carlyle's devotion to German favourites, were all the more earnest and keen because they were ignored by their neighbours. In the library, an original mind is conscious of special and comparatively obscure friends; as the lover of nature has his pet flower, and the lover of art his favourite old master. It is well to obey these decided idiosyncrasies. They point, like the divining-rod, to hidden streams peculiarly adapted to our refreshment. I knew an old merchant that read no book except Boswell's *Johnson*, and a black and hump-backed cook whose only imaginative feast was the *Arabian Nights*.