

pant. And the whole association of the place is of the choicest kind of gentle living. Assuredly it was a good thing that there should be an artist of the period who could record these qualities.

Stuart brought to the task a keenly comprehending mind, and a large experience in the acquaintanceship with men of affairs, of wit and learning, and brilliant, varied accomplishments. Himself a man of brilliant parts, he had ceased to be dazzled by brilliance; could look at the individual example of manhood that he was studying in its own separate perspective; could take in the complexities of his character and give a complete, instead of a fragmentary, record. Neither in his whirl of success, we may believe, had he lost touch entirely with the gentle associations that surrounded his early life. There was much in the riot of those times to hurt a sensitive susceptibility, and Stuart so often refused a sitter, or threw up a commission partly executed, that it is not unreasonable to assume that such acts were due in some measure, at least, to a certain preciosity in his own feelings. Certainly no other man of his time could have presented this fine side of Washington. West would have given a grandiloquent rendering of the hero; if not bombastic, probably theatrical; whereas it is the reticence of Stuart's portraits that is so admirable.