

pinnales of a sublime despair, on the baser clay low-level with its native mud, which knew no better than to laugh and be happy — whenever it got the chance. O, to turn corsair, and cut the throats of a loathed race, too sordid for appreciation of the funereal hero! But, alas! so useful and pleasant a career had its trifling drawbacks of some small hardship and a little danger; wherefore, the would-be hero contented himself with eating out his savage heart in a sublime scorn of men and things in general, until he grew middle-aged and bald, or died, or got married, or came to some other such unforeseen and prosaic ending. He is now pretty well extinct as a class; though here and there, in some obscure backwater of life, an isolated specimen may be found by the curious observer.

More of our own day, though by no means modern — indeed, a very antique, but common to all ages — is the *blasé* gentleman, who has “done it all,” and overdone it, and, having exhausted knowledge and experience, and sounded all the piddles of being, is weary of existence, and findeth all things “weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable” — like himself. We all know this gentleman: we have met him all over, and found him by turns distinctly aggravating and intensely though unconsciously diverting. Myself, I take a sinister delight in snickering up my sleeve as I hear this jaded exhauster of the sum of things lisp out a languid sentence or two on the misery of having untimeously used up the interests and resources of a cramped and paltry universe, and of being relegated for the remainder of his days to a hopeless stagnation little befitting powers that do but pine for some new world to conquer. And, all the while, the confounded fool knows only his own little beggarly fag-end of a teeming world which is itself but one poor dust-mote in the colossal immensity of creation.

There are other fads of which I should have wished to say a word or two: such as the aesthetic fad — a good thing badly handled; and the legislative fad, which would fain regulate all the affairs of life, temporal and eternal, spiritual and material, physical, intellectual, and moral, by process of law and governmental enactment — a peculiarly foolish and mischievous fad of recurrent appearance, and threatening a most unwholesome activity just now. But time fails me. I have dealt with my subject mainly in a humorous spirit, for it lends itself facilely to humour, and this latter is one of the great sanative influences of life — God-given and God-emanant. But I have indicated, too, that there is a serious side to the matter. Bubble-blowing from harmless ends, and for mere recreative purposes, is an innocent