

In like manner, every one needs the guidance of taste, but men of greatest ability seem to require its teaching most urgently, and especially men of real genius, lest, by following too closely the bent of their peculiar talent, they destroy the balance, mar the harmony, and in some measure lessen the beneficial influence of their gift.

It has been said by a modern American writer, that "a great error of human existence is devotion to one set of duties at the expense of others," and that man should endeavour to give his faculties their "due proportionate cultivation." May it be that the neglect of this accounts, in some degree, for the amount of "bad taste" of which we constantly complain, and for the so-called "eccentricities of genius," which amount, very often, to a total disregard for taste in the concerns of daily life. Man, complex as he is, requires education in every part, and unless mental, moral, and physical faculties are each and all duly cultivated, the development of his nature will be unequal and one-sided, instead of advancing towards perfection, however distant he may be from the goal.

I have only alluded hitherto to "bad" taste; but perhaps it requires a few words, though my business has been rather with taste which should and ought to be good, than with the reverse.

Now, "bad," is used in two different ways; being defined as wicked, ill, sick, vicious, hurtful,—there is the active "bad" as we use it of persons, or of any power that is combative on the side of evil, and originates it; and the passive "bad," as we use it, when we describe either an absence of accustomed power, or a disturbance of equilibrium, or a consequence of injury or disease. Taste may be bad in either of these senses; actively, *i.e.*, vicious, corrupt, depraved; for evil training may vitiate it as much as good training may improve and perfect it; and it then exercises a hurtful influence over its possessor, tying him down, there, where he has dragged it, making him delight in evil, instead of revolting from it, and rendering him unable to find his pleasure in pure and simple pursuits. Or it may be "bad" passively; imperfect, undeveloped, sick for want of nurture and cultivation; and this we are disposed to suspect is the most common species of bad taste, and is really occasioned by entire want of education, or from that unequal one-sided education of which we have been speaking.

There is, as we said before, less danger of this one-sidedness in those who just follow in the ordinary course, and neither devote their bodies or their minds to any thing in particular, than in those, who, either from genius, or talent for any particular thing, or from general ability and strength of character and will, go farther than their fellows. These latter feel that they are somewhat above and beyond others, that they go deeper

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