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A master of English prose has told us how he found in an old writer, a quaint apologue, in which human life is symbolized by a vast board pierced with innumerable openings of every size and figure,—circular, square, obtuse and acute angled.

Every denizen of the earth has there his fitting opening—if he can only find it. But some maladroit influence has arranged the occupants, and, as the author says, feelingly, “How often do we see the round man in the three-cornered hole?”

The occupation of the chair this evening may possibly revive this pleasant fable in many memories, as it certainly has in mine. I can but console myself by the thought that, like thousands of others similarly situated, I am but in a secondary degré responsible for the misplacement.

The custom of the Society calls upon me for a few introductory remarks on assuming the position with which I have been honoured. The short space in which I intend to trespass on your patience, must be occupied in viewing the topics suggested by the occasion, from a