

heavens themselves may melt away,—but all the ideas with which they inspired us,—their vastness and their grandeur, will remain. Every flower might fade away from the garden of the earth,—but would beauty, as an essence, therefore cease to exist? Even love might fail us here. Alas, how often does it fail us at our utmost need. But the principle of love is the same,—and there is no human heart so callous; as not to respond to the language of the poet, when he says,

They sin who tell us love can die.
 Its holy flame for ever burneth,
 From heaven it came, to heaven returneth;
 Too oft, in earth, a troubled guest,
 At times deceiv'd,—at times oppress,
 It here is tried and purified,
 And hath in heaven its perfect rest;
 It soweth here with toil and care,—
 But the harvest-time of love is there."

All these ideas are excited,—and all these impressions are made upon the mind through the medium of poetry. By poetry I do not mean that vain babbling of rhyme, which finds no echo, either in the understanding or in the heart. By poetry I mean that ethereal fire which touched, not the lips only, but the soul of Milton when he sung of

"Man's first disobedience,"—

and which has inspired all who ever walked the same enchanted ground, from the father of poetry himself down to

"The simple bard, rough at the rustic plough."

Thousands have felt this principle of poetry within them, who yet have never learned to lisp in numbers,—and perhaps they are the wisest of their class, for they have thus the full enjoyment which poetic feeling affords, without the disappointment that so frequently attends upon the efforts of those who venture to commit themselves in verse.

Men of business, whose hearts and minds are buried in their bales of goods; and who know no relaxation from the office or the counter, except what the daily newspaper affords, are apt to conclude that poetry does nothing for them, because it never keeps their accounts, prepares their dinner, nor takes charge of their domestic affairs. Now though I should be the last person to recommend poetry as a substitute for household economy, or to put even the brightest emanations of genius, in the place of domestic duty, I do not see why the two should not exist together,—nor am I quite convinced

that, although a vast proportion of mankind have lost their relish for poetry, it would not, in reality, be better for them to be convinced by their companions of the gentler sex, that poetry, so far from being incompatible with social or domestic comfort, is capable of being associated with every lawful and rational enjoyment.

Yes, it is better for every one to have their minds elevated, rather than degraded, raised up to a participation in thoughts and feelings, in which angels might take a part, rather than chained down to the grovelling of mere corporeal existence;—and never do we feel more happy than when, in the performance of any necessary avocation, we look beyond the gross material on which we are employed to those relations of thought and feeling, that connect the act of duty which occupies our hands with some being we love, that teach us to realize, while thus engaged, the smile of gratitude which is to constitute our reward, or the real benefit that act will be the means of conferring, even when no gratitude is there. What man of cultivated mind, who has ever tried the experiment, would choose to live with a woman, whose whole soul was absorbed in the strife, the tumult, the perpetual discord, which constant occupation, in the midst of material things, so inevitably produces, rather than with one whose attention, equally alive to practical duties, had a world of deeper feelings in her "heart of hearts," with which no selfish, worldly, or vulgar thoughts could mingle. It is not because we love poetry, that we must be always reading, quoting, or composing it. Far otherwise. For that bad taste, which would thus abuse and misapply so sacred a gift, is the very opposite of poetical. The love of poetry or, in other words, the experience of deep poetic feeling, is rather a principle, which, while it inspires the love of beauty in general, forgets not the beauty of fitness and order, and therefore, can never sanction that which is grotesque and out of place. It teaches us that nothing which offends the feelings of others can be estimable or praiseworthy in ourselves; for it is only in reference to her association with others, that woman can be in herself poetical. She may even fill a book with poetry, and not be poetical in her own character, because she may at the same time be selfish, vain, and worldly-minded.