

imaginative work that is false and founded upon untruth is a vain will o' the wisp. Of course the realists might claim an advantage in that a sound foundation is superior to a showy superstructure on a flimsy foundation. True, but it is not a thing of beauty. No one, meantime, can dispute Zola's title to be called a capable and laborious workman.

Let me say in conclusion that all literary men are not arrayed in two hostile camps under the banners of idealism and realism. For example, W. D. Howells is a realist in his method, an idealist in his choice of subject. In fact, these terms I have been discussing are the poles of all true art. The great literary artists have set nought aside; they accept the universe in its entirety, light and darkness, Inferno and Paradiso, Heaven and Hell. Milton was a man of superlative genius, born, unfortunately as it might seem, in an age when extremes ruled. He was forced to cast in his lot with the contemptibly narrow Israelites to escape from the more contemptible and infamous Philistines. The fine equipose of *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* was struck aslant by the evil days on which he fell, and when he came to justify the ways of God to man he treated his subject in an analytic and controversial spirit. Shakespeare essayed the task on a broader basis. To him divinity was more immanent and vital; he showed definitely and in all relations that the earth is, as it was declared to be, good; that the low is the necessary complement of the high, and that neither this part nor that part of life is to be cast aside. Art holds the mirror up to Nature—the whole of Nature. The image is false when it lacks balance and proportion; the base is vile only when it is obtruded and out of place. He is only a half-seer that fears to look on both the light and shade that compose this world-picture. What was clean enough to be created is worthy of imitation, if the artist for every depth he sounds could scale a corresponding height. A French writer on Plato says, "l'art humain est analogue à l'art divine," and the artist who follows his copy most completely is most god-like, and has fulfilled the destiny of man, which, as the catechism says, is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.

Literary art, as it develops, widens its scope and finds place for a greater diversity of detail.

## NAUSICAA AND MIRANDA.

THE story of Nausicaa is one of those pleasing pictures which contribute so much to the interest of the "Odyssey" of Homer. For the time the hero and his trials are forgotten in the account of the gentle girl and her home.

After the Trojan War, Odysseus set out on his return to Ithaca, but by the machinations of hostile gods, he spent years in wandering and toil. In the course of his struggles he was shipwrecked by Poseidon and would have perished if Athene had not guided him to the Phaeacian land, where he was carried up safe on shore and, overcome with weariness, fell asleep in a sheltered nook. The Phaeacians were ruled by Alcinous, whose daughter the beautiful Nausicaa was. To her Athene appeared in a dream disguised as one of her companions, who urged her to take the raiment of the household at break of day to wash. In the early morning the princess went with her attendants to the distant washing place and halted by the river's mouth near the retreat of Odysseus. When the clothes were washed they were spread out on the shore to dry while the workers ate their mid-day meal and played

at ball. Athene had devised that Nausicaa should be Odysseus' guide to the palace. The princess playfully threw the ball at one of her company. It missed the girl and fell into the river beyond; whereat they all screamed and Odysseus awoke bewildered. He saw in them his only hope of safety and approached. The maidens were frightened at his appearance, for he had been buffeted by the waves for two days and nights and the salt foam had crusted on his head. Nausicaa alone stood her ground, for Athene gave her courage. She took pity on his sorry plight, heard his tale and assured him of a kindly welcome from her father. She bade the attendants give him food and clothing and took him back with her. Alcinous received him as a suppliant and promised him a safe convoy.

In Miranda, the only woman in Shakespeare's "Tempest," we see portrayed a character which admits of close comparison with that of the heroine described above. The thread of the story in so far as it concerns Miranda is this: Prospero, the rightful Duke of Milan, was driven from his dukedom by his brother, and, being set adrift in an old boat with his infant daughter, was cast up on an uninhabited island. He was skillful in magic art and had command of the spirits of the air. The play opens when Miranda is grown up. Prospero caused a ship on which his brother was sailing past the island to be wrecked and the passengers to be washed up on shore unhurt. Among them was Ferdinand, son of the King of Naples, who fell in love with Miranda. For his own means Prospero kept him a prisoner and forced him to perform hard tasks to prove his love. He did not falter but valiantly did the work, so that Prospero released him and promised him Miranda's hand. The magician disclosed his identity to his brother, forgave him and sailed back to Naples.

The two stories have little in common, for Miranda's is a love story and the other is not; but they serve to bring out the same traits of character. In both cases there is a storm and a wreck with such attendant circumstances as arouse compassion. Unlike the supernatural element in Miranda's life, the part played by the goddess Athene in the "Odyssey" has a direct bearing on the plot; it sets the other parts going. Miranda was conscious of the presence of spirits, made manifest by music in the air and voices of unseen speakers, but they were to her merely well-known phenomena and had no influence on her life. Nausicaa, however, knew nothing of the promptings of the goddess as such. In the dream Athene appeared in the guise of a fisherman's daughter, a girl who was known to Nausicaa. The Greeks believed that the deities watched over their affairs and guided them, but they were not conscious at the time that any supernatural agency was at work. When anything miraculous happened, they were wont to say "some god has done this."

Nausicaa and Miranda were both young, marvelously beautiful, and of noble birth. They lived simple lives, but it is at this point that there is some divergence. Nausicaa's simplicity was the product of her times, Miranda's of the accident of her life. In Homeric days the queen was as good a housewife as any. She sat in the long hall of the palace spinning with her handmaids and directing their work. The princess did not disdain to wash the family linen and share the duties, however menial, of her servants.

Until she became a woman Miranda knew nothing of her origin and believed that her father had always lived on the island, holding sway over the spirits of heaven and earth. She was a veritable child of Nature. Nature had been her only companion. She expressed her thoughts and feelings without hesitation. She had seen no man but her father, and no woman but her own reflected image during her life on the island. Society had not spoiled her