

she proclaimed the Colonial Exhibition open, was so nervous and low we could hardly hear a word she said. This timid lady with the shining eyes was Queen Victoria, who, after an apprenticeship of fifty years, has a manner in public like that of a shy school girl. Though none of the Royal folk to-day look as if they were afraid of us, still they must be glad when the time comes to escape from our rather obtrusive loyalty.

Along the gravel paths of the garden we follow the company when the short ceremony is over, halting when they halt, listening with all our might as the Princess rapidly speaks to the stall-owners, and buys this thing and that, scattering sweet smiles, and shaking hands with the curtsying dames who are playing at shop. We only part with them reluctantly at the doors of their carriages, and as the procession trots off we stare after it as if we had never before seen those brilliant red liveries, those well-groomed bays, though indeed they are most familiar to nearly all of us. The bands playing on under the great shady elms that once shed their leaves on Lady Blessington's skirts, call us with their shrill music to return to the many exhilarating delights of the Exhibition; and after a time, when the light pales and alters, and in the gray gloom garlands of coloured globes outline the bridges, the Prince Consort's statue, the arches of the conservatories, then one sees that even such places as these have their moments of suggestive charm, and as the summer twilight deepens the Present, with its commonplace familiar air, fades, fades, till in its stead the Past stands, shadowy and dim. From the branches of the tree close by a nightingale begins its tender yearning songs—can't you hear it—and by the veranda of that low house (through the windows I see a score of girandoles and sconces in which the candles are ablaze) Landseer lounges, sketching the sky, and the leafy branches, and in particular that little brown bird who is singing of the sorrows of his heart. For ever the bird trills on, and the window shines, and the leaves rustle in the darkened air, for the drawing has been preserved, and hangs on the walls of the neighbouring museum. Under the elms and limes—the walnut and mulberry trees of which Wilberforce spoke when he was a tenant here have disappeared—the Great Duke strolls with his hostess, and Dickens talks to Miss Power; and Louis Napoleon, a diamond eagle for a scarf-pin, wanders moodily with D'Orsay, and while Moore hums his charming airs out here in the moonlight: Thackeray, Rogers, Bulwer Lytton, Planché, Landor—the ghosts of these men haunt the paths now lighted by these twinkling cremorne lanterns for the laughing groups of holiday makers. And then do you remember when Lady Blessington fled to Paris in debt, and a great sale took place—it was in '49—of the magnificent furniture she had gathered round her, how, among the crowds of careless lookers on, of busy buyers, the only person who seemed to think of, to feel sorry for, the late owner of all this finery, and who loitered in and out among the familiar rooms with tears in his eyes, was that hard-hearted cynic, the author of *Vanity Fair*? I have seen a golden cabinet which Ward, R. A., bought here at that time, and I have heard his testimony of the manner in which Thackeray showed his sorrow for the downfall of his kindly extravagant friend. For a year or two Soyer took Gore House, and turned it into a restaurant (christened by its owner *The Symposium*; called by the customers, with regard to the immense prices, *The Imposium*) the walls being decorated by Sala the journalist, bred as an artist. Then the nation bought it as a site for the proposed new National Gallery, but ultimately on the ruins of that verandahed villa where Hans Andersen spent those days he speaks of so prettily in his Letters, the Albert Hall has arisen, and the shady three-acred garden forms part of the exhibition grounds. So the notes of the nightingale have been supplanted by the Cigarette Song from *Carmen*, and the talk of those brilliant men of the last generation is silenced by the noisy clatter coming from the region of the Switchback as it bounds among the snow mountains.

That great contrast between East and West of which Professor Goldwin Smith tells you in his papers on England, struck me anew as I went down the wide Mile End Road this afternoon on my way to the People's Palace. I had come, *via* green countryfied Kensington through the fresh breezy parks, through the lines of magnificent streets—Piccadilly, and the region about St. James' filled with carriages, with the idle admirably dressed well-looking leisure classes crowding the pavements—and so by way of the busy Strand past St. Paul's (how much dearer to me than the Roman St. Peter's) Cornhill and Aldgate, right into the heart of Whitechapel. Such a glorious blue and yellow afternoon is this—does that phrase remind you of the *Edinburgh Review*?—just such a one as Whistler in his humorous *Ten o'Clock* bids us not to admire, when no cloud is to be seen in the mysterious sky, and the gentlest winds ruffle the leaves of the poor little country posies lying lost in a dream of cool woods, of deep fern-trimmed hedges, in the flower girls' baskets at the edge of the roads. In the West, only a mile or two away, Society is a-pleasuring, and the days being all too short, half the night is stolen for the round of junketings: but here in the East these many-coloured hours which Belgravia sets to music pass by sadly and silently enough. These people, whom Besant in his *Children of Gibeon* tells us to remember are, despite their clothes and manners, precisely the same at heart as ourselves, toiled through their work till lately unhelped, unpitied for the most part from year to year—for them, poor souls, there is not much, beyond the Palace, worth living for, one would think, though Mr. Rogers, of St. Botolph's, says indeed their condition has immensely improved of late owing to the help of a self-sacrificing body of clergy.

And that reminds me that I should like to take you to a certain small church (not far from where Joe Willett once stabled his gallant steed), on the outside of which, wrought in mosaic, *Love and Life* looks down on the ugly, mud-coloured multitude, each little stone glittering with all sorts of hues. Watts and Winkles! 'Tis an odd combination! But that it is a step in the right direction I am sure. An imitator of Burne Jones has painted beautiful angels with jewelled wings, who guard the Notice Board

against the door, and inside the quiet pillared room, a veritable oasis in this howling wilderness of costermongers, hang coloured drawings from Watts's poetical pieces, of which *Love and Death* is the best to me, while here and there are photographs of some of the Madonnas from the galleries of Dresden and Florence. I am told the parson is an Oxford man, that he and his clever wife live in the midst of this squalor and misery, never ceasing for a day their care of the people about them; and I am shown adjoining the Vicarage a sort of club house, built round a peaceful quadrangle, where live sundry young gentlemen, also Oxford educated, who devote their time to the society of the East End instead of the society of the West, with the best of results, it is said. Turn a little from the highway, and continually you find such tokens of practical Christianity, the best of all answers to the tirades against religion of such men as M. Renan and his kind.

And now, passing the original of *Titbull's Almshouses*, where the three stone steps and Mr. Batten's pump are to this day (if you don't know that particular *Uncommercial Traveller* pray read it at once), I come at last to the People's Palace, which, standing on the high road to the Essex Marshes, in the centre of dismal poverty, has the power of attracting all manner of men from the fine squares and terraces the other side of Temple Bar to this hitherto unknown land. In such a curious country is this Palace that one comes away bewildered, touched, troubled, I think, at the many, many signs of generosity relieving want, of unselfish goodness battling with ignorant vice, the evidences of which in almost every street and alley round about Mr. Besant's Spanish Castle (the crown of this great work) makes one start at one's own indolent selfishness, one's own craven life.

The gold and white hall this afternoon was filled with readers in fustian, readers in corduroy, taking as much interest in the papers and books before them as do the richer classes in the British Museum, and requiring as much quiet as they study. Keen-faced men, shrewd-faced boys turn the leaves with that peculiar touch which tells you at once that those careful fingers would scorn to dog's-ear the corner of the pages—one sees by the way people look at the volumes and hold them in their hands whether they are really book lovers or no—and, lost in the new lands where they are wandering, never take their eyes, whatever the interruption, from the magicians who are showing them these undreamed of wonders. I suppose the first sign of Culture (Mallock's *New Republic*, and poor Matthew Arnold, the *Mr. Luke* of the party, comes back to one's recollection at this watchword) is a healthy love of literature—a means to the end, by no means the end itself—and if this place has only taught its visitors the pleasure to be derived from the thoughts, the travels, the talks of wise folk, it has done a great deal; how to apply these experiences as helps to oneself is surely a matter beyond the teacher. Round about the Central Hall are gathered many technical schools, gymnasiums, and swimming baths, all managed in the best possible way, all crowded night after night by the hard-working men and women who, without these bright clean rooms, would have to entertain each other on door-steps, as did Melinda and her friends. It is impossible to do justice to a Palace such as this in a few sentences; but after all, above and beyond praise, like the Old Masters whom Sir Joshua met and loved in Italy, one's approbation is here almost an impertinence. Only, will you remember when next you come to England, that proud as we are of our magnificent wealth in the West of London, there is also something worth seeing on the reverse of the medal, where instead of the Royal Arms and Crown, you will find the impression—not faint by any means—of a Divine Figure whose only symbols of authority are Mercy and Compassion?

WALTER POWELL.

A CANADIAN KRÄHWINKEL.

KRAHWINKEL is not very near to any of the railways or great towns of the rich, populous Province of Ontario, but lies, stranded as it were, beside the broad river of commercial life and activity. This gives it an air of quiet, and being out of the world that distinguishes it from the usual country town. Its single long street runs north and south, and both approaches are picturesque and pretty. From the north the road winds suddenly down a steep hill from the wide, well-tilled upland, and the town, with its two meeting rivers, the mill at the bridge and the maple-bordered street between the prim houses, rests on the plain below your feet.

From the south a turn in the road first brings the town in sight. You stand on a little rise of ground, and the long, straggling street stretches away to the line of hills with their fringe of woods. On the right hand, close to the road, is a little, weed-grown, God's-acre, "Peace-court," as the Germans call it, with a huge black cross in the middle. The grassy mounds from which it rises are marked with other smaller black crosses, as well as the white headstones. The inscriptions are in the old German character, and usually begin "*Hier ruhet*," or with the request to pray for the soul of the departed. In a moment you seem to be back in the heart of the Middle Ages. On the left, and not so near, the pleasant little river flashes and glistens between the beeches from its broad shallows.

There are other streets besides the High Street; but they seem to have lost heart in a race with the main highway, and stopped short in some inglorious blind-alley. A native told me the people were so proud that no one wanted to live on a back street. One great advantage which a village has over the city is that the building contractor has rarely exercised his mischievous activity there. The villager builds his own house to suit himself, as his needs, tastes, circumstances dictate; and so where you do not get picturesque effect you get the first element of it at least—variety. The Krähwinkel houses are both varied and picturesque. Beside the rectangular wooden house of the distinctively new world type there is occasionally the long-walled, high-roofed hut, with one door and one window on