

public policy ; the grand art of ordering and governing civil society : do not they also emanate from the study of nature in our own species ? The discoveries within the intellectual man : are not they equally the fruit of an attentive intuition of our thoughts ? Thus nature, the spirit of the Supreme Being, is the true type of genius, that stamps itself more especially in some privileged men, and proclaims them as natural kings and princes of the human race.

It is said that, in former times, Jupiter, the sovereign master of the universe, brought forth from his brain the goddess of wisdom and the arts, Pallas, or Minerva, armed from head to foot, with the help of Vulcan, or the celestial fire. The goddess of genius chose for her abode the city of Cecrops, the industrious Athens, from which idleness was banished, on the rugged shores of the Ilissus, in sterile Attica, near Mount Parnassus, the sacred habitation of Apollo and the Muses. There, under the laws of Solon and the government of Pericles, in a free and republican city open to all nations, among a people sensitive to glory, most ambitious of all the talents, proud of its valour and the delicate purity of its taste in eloquence and the fine arts, we see the dawning of multitudes of men of genius, and the hastening from all parts of the most illustrious spirits of Greece. All careers were open to merit, and triumphant fame was their reward. The Odeon and the temples resounded with melodious accents ; a thousand edifices arose with the noblest architectural proportions and embellishments of sculpture, decorated with paintings of inimitable art, in vain the envy of other nations.

Young lovers of the muses, whom a noble ambition launches upon a perilous career, do you feel the irresistible ascendancy of this genius ? Do you breathe the fire of fame, that proud and profound sensibility of soul which enraptures with truth, sublimity and beauty, and braves the horrors of misery, exile or death, to accomplish its destiny through all perils and all obstacles ? Do you know to go beyond the bounds of time, to disdain the passing splendours that fortune or the charms of life cause to glitter seductively before your eyes ? Magnanimous men ! come ! for you are opened the gates of immortality.

True genius is eminently philosophic ! It measures the human understanding on the spacious scale of the universe. Like the eagle that cleaves the skies, it withstands the splendor of the star of day ; it sees from above in its audacious flight the subjects of its meditations ; it hugs in its embrace all conclusions and rays that emanate from it. From the pinnacle of the highest possible generalization it contemplates time ; unrolls space and circumstances ; imitates the divinity whose resplendent image it becomes ; penetrates the sanctuaries of immensity and eternity ; and, filled with the treasures of supreme intelligence, spreads its marvels before the dazzled view of mortals.

Genius is an innate talent, an unlearned power, not acquired by laborious study, or hereditary transmission of knowledge. Studies that are too advanced at first push the mind to premature development. Infancy is only the aurora of genius ; soon there arrives an epoch of activity and revolution that marks its path and destiny in the world.

The ancient Greeks, excelling in literature, fine arts and philosophy, veiled their most learned observations under ingenious allegories. Minerva, the goddess of genius, was a virgin, her name *Ἀθηνᾶ* (*quasi* *A*, *θηλή*), signifies *non effeminate*. Thus the head of Medusa, the immortal *Ægis*, defended her bosom against the darts of Cupid. All the Muses were virgins, for every grand intellectual race exacts chastity from a favourite of Apollo.

It has been remarked by all physiologists that continence gives tension and extreme vigor to our whole organization, stirs up the brain and exalts the faculty of thought. If it be true that strong passions excite the imagination, give wings to thought, transport the soul to sublime regions where it contemplates the universe with rapture and rushes to immortality, the only means of obtaining these powerful impulses is not to glut the body with voluptuousness. The more the eye is accustomed to a dazzling light the more its faculty of vision is weakened and impaired.

As civilization advances by a less precarious existence and arrives at a stable basis which permits, and even compels, the development of industries, the State, starting into manhood and strong in its institutions, opens a freer field to genius ; all kinds of talents come to light and flourish ; then we see grand ages resplendent with glory, like beacons spark-

ling from afar upon the gloomy path of barbarism ; as the Greeks shone in the time of Pericles and Alexander, and the Romans under Augustus.

A. KIRKWOOD.

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The Latest News From Paris.

(By Our Special Correspondent.)

"**A** LAS, poor Yorrick ! I knew him, Horatio : a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy." That portrait suited poor Raoul Toché. Who was the latter, that has made Parisians truly sorrowful for twenty-four hours by his death—his suicide, and that eclipsed, in point of Boulevard interest, the official flight of Casimir-Perier and the advent of Felix Faure ? Toché was the favourite writer of witty and humorous *chroniques*, that set the table in a roar, and that formed a portion of the necessary food supplies of true Parisians. They were witty, genial, but eminently Parisian. He was also a popular writer of genteel farces, and *Revue*s of the year's leading topics. Some of his plays, collaborated with M. Blum, may be known to the outside world : *Paris, Fin de Siecle* (the latter since has become a household word), *Nos Moutards*, *Madame Satan*, *Voyage en Suisse*, the *Monde ou l'on Flirte*, etc. He was a native of Paris. At college he was a brilliant student, and during the war proved a brave sub-infantry lieutenant. He was only 44 years of age : married, and father of two children, not yet in their teens—whom he adored. His home was happy, he received a good deal of society, and of the best in the artistic, literary, theatrical, and critical worlds. But shrewd observers shook their heads, that while he was making between 50,000 and 60,000 fr. a year by his pen as a journalist, and his rights as a dramatist, he was living beyond his means. His manners were most winning ; he was ever jovial, brimming over with wit and fun ; he was as harmless as a child, and was only sad when powerless to grant anything demanded of him. His motto was *Soyons gaies* !

But what a fund of resolve, of stoical self-control, and of energy he possessed ! Under that happy exterior—for he was alluded to as the type of mortal happiness—was the most terrible of cupboard skeletons, and this is the stage of his existence that comes home to men's interests and bosoms. Since five years, he was steeped to the lips in debt, he was in the meshes of Shylocks, worse than Shakespeare ever drew ; of Lobsecks more terrible than ever Balsac depicted. They appropriated his flesh, blood, bones, and marrow. He had as many accommodation bills flying as would paper his study. He wished to avoid two eventualities ; the pain of the revelations to his wife, and appearing in the list of bankrupts. The usurers blossomed upon him ; shent per shent interest was but a flea bite ; he paid every three months 2,000 fr. for the renewal of a bill of 10,000 fr. Many bills he paid the principal several times over by extortionate discount. The usurers compelled him to declare himself a "bachelor," and by legal deed notarially executed seized his wife's—now become his "mistress" apparently—fortune, and appropriating her signature, sold its values, of course totally unaware to her. Nay, more ; he earned by his plays, in the form of author's rights, 30,000 fr. a year. The usurers compelled him to assign all such rights existing, or to exist, till the year 1900 for 30,000 fr., that is, they gained 120,000 fr. on the transaction.

What did he do with his money ? Gambled. But his mind was ill at ease since the Paris blackmailing scandals became known. The now famous Canivet, happily under bolts and bars, was his bosom friend, and it is suspected, but not yet proved, that the dread of being dragged into that infamy unnerved him. But the last drop in his poisoned chalice was at play last week ; he had bills falling due for 80,000 frs. ; he gambled desperately, and lost to the extent of 100,000 frs. in his club—nearly all Paris clubs are "dens" to be avoided. He was at last mined ; he was tracked, run to earth by the usurers, of which one, Tamin, is the head centre. But Toché was a dramatist. The next day after his loss—the event is not yet a week old—he never was more gay at the family déjeuner ; announced he had discovered a new plot. His colleague, Blum, congratulated him : the manager of the Palais Royal theatre purchased it in advance. It was a little tragedy, the first he ever wrote. Retiring to his study he penned two letters ; then he said to his wife he had a pressing rendezvous ; he kissed her and the children