

tic speculations which have gained such widespread acceptance in our modern days. A philosophy which limits our human existence to the narrow span of our physical life and which confines the human mind, in its search after truth, to that which our senses can reach, must naturally identify the morally good with the useful, with that which gives success in our earthly career. And having torn from man's heart his noblest aspirations and destroyed in his mind those lofty ideals which alone can lift him to the empyrean heights of infinite truth and beauty and love, what scope has it left to act except that of pandering to his sensual instincts? Having deprived man of heaven and immortality it has directed all his energies towards the pleasures of this world and has engendered in his heart an insatiate craving for their enjoyment. And the artist, the novelist, the poet, who are to furnish the mental pabulum to this infuriated appetite, have become the high priests in this carnival of sense. In accordance with this system, therefore, art is necessarily self-regulated, and independent of morality. But for us Christians, whose aspirations soar beyond this world of sense, art is subordinate to morality, which stands as far above it as the beacon-light stands above the ship which it is to guide into port. The reason for this is quite obvious. If man is responsible for life to a higher authority, and if he is destined for an end that lies beyond his mundane existence, it is evident that that only must be considered good which helps him to attain that end. It must, therefore, necessarily fall in line with morality which has for its object to regulate our conduct so as to attain our final destination. On the other hand, although art is subordinate to morality it is not necessary that it should obtrude its moral injunctions in too direct a fashion, as, by doing so, it would fall into the opposite error. It is the distinct office of art to paint the beautiful and by its sublime creations to so enrapture the soul of man as to lift him above this sordid world into the pure regions of celestial light and beauty, and by filling his heart with admiration for

that which is noble and true and with horror for that which is vile and false, art, in an indirect manner, becomes the teacher of mankind. But to obtain its moral end it is not necessary that art should idealize beyond measure the pictures which it holds up to our view, and represent to us virtue adorned in angels' attire and contrasted only by the shapes of fiends. Human nature is neither quite angelic, nor entirely diabolical. Such creations, therefore, would lack one of the essential characteristics of art, namely truth, and by their unreality they would naturally miss their aim and neither please nor teach.

On the other hand, art must be still more on its guard to avoid the opposite extreme, of presenting to us vice surrounded by all the allurements which captivate the senses and charm the imagination, contrasted by virtue in the dull garb of stupidity and commonplace. Thus it is represented by the modern school of so called realists, who pretend to represent life by depicting in the most fascinating colors the profligacy of the debauchee or the ravings of the revolutionist, or, maybe, the blasphemies of the infidel, with virtue in the background as a doubtful clair obscure, destitute of attraction in itself and serving only as a foil for the better display of the main figures of the composition. Thus life may appear to the hazy view of the profligate whose brain is still reeling from the fumes of his last debauch; such it may appear to all the other apostles of human degradation, whatever their name or creed, but to the sober sense of the Christian and to the average man of honor and worth (and they, after all, constitute the majority in our enlightened age) life presents a different aspect. For them virtue still holds the foreground in the hearts of man, not only because it is the injunction of religion and leads man to an everlasting reward hereafter, but because it is the dictate of reason and is the only means by which happiness can be obtained even in this world. And is not this modern sensualistic art in itself an apt illustration of the foregoing remarks? Examine the works and the lives of the