

wild beast, growling and snarling in a den from which he is to be tempted only by the prospect of fresh bloodshed. When his passionate hatred of one man has been overcome by his desire for revenge upon another he rushes forth, slaughters defenceless captives with savage delight, and heaps unmanly insults upon the corpse of a gallant enemy. Yet this great brute commands some measure of our admiration in spite of all these things because he is swift of foot, irresistible in combat, and able to wield a javelin which the strongest of his strong companions cannot handle. Richard Cœur-de-Lion, a favourite hero with school-boys and not unadmired by many people of maturer judgment, was a modern Achilles with the harsher features of his character somewhat toned down by the influence of an age and surroundings which though barbarous enough in themselves, were polished and humane compared with those of the Grecian hero. We cannot very sternly censure the follies and cruelties of a man—

Against whose fury and unmatched force
The aweless lion could not wage the fight.

and who, as we are told, could shatter ordinary men like glass with a mighty axe which none but he could lift. We cannot resist the attractions which could captivate the gentle and humane mind of Sir Walter Scott. And though we have learned to look for higher qualities in our heroes, the success of Mr. Lawrence's novels proves even in our own day that muscular strength and skill have their fascinations even when displayed in company with some of the worst vices of barbarism. Guy Livingstone and the Cool Captain, lustful, revengeful modern savages and childish in everything save innocence and weakness, receive a measure of approbation that would hardly be given to moral and upright men who could not, like them, thrash prize-fighters and manage unbroken horses.

The ancients recognized no law but that of force, and no force but that of animal strength. They treated the moral virtues very much as we do the physical ones, honouring them now and then in speech with a few commonplace commendations, while in practice they either violated or ignored them. Literature and the fine arts had not acquired popular forms, indeed they had hardly more than come into existence. Alexander the Great was probably as wise and well educated as most of his predecessors or contemporaries. Yet when he was asked whether he would have preferred to be Achilles or Homer, his answer was so decided that he could only express it by another question: "Which is the nobler," said he, "a victor at the Olympic Games, or the herald who proclaims him?" There were no ingenious instruments to enable the weak to compete with the strong, either in the arts of warfare or in those of peace. A man without muscular strength and endurance was as naught, and in some states indeed such a man was not allowed to exist. In Sparta, every child which appeared at birth to be deformed or sickly or incapable of growing up to a life of labour and hardship, was at once exposed to perish upon Mount Taygetus. The highest honour to which a Greek citizen could aspire,