

ambition, anger, courage, revenge, in a word the more manly passions, if they may be so termed. But such massive strength attracted not the effeminate moderns. Achilles was dethroned and Paris set up to be the future hero in art. For of all the passions, love was selected to reign supreme in the new art about to be created. The result has been deplorable indeed. Art now no longer presents the faintest resemblance to real life. When we enter its modern palace we leave our reason without its portals; we are in dream-land and are to expect nothing but dreams. If we inquire the cause of the signal failure of the new creation, it will be easily found in an analysis of human nature.

Love, heaven-descended, binds all human hearts to one another with flowery chains of sweetest fragrance, and also lifts them up to their Divine Maker in solemn adoration. Yet, in its grosser manifestations it is the most degrading of all human passions which drags man down below the level of the brute. Unfortunately, this latter phase of it is too often made the groundwork of what, in our day, is called art. In fact, the modern artist of the so-called realistic school, poet as well as novelist, has drawn his inspiration from the same sources from which the Italian bard drew, but with the ardent religious devotion of the middle ages he has lost their lofty conceptions of woman-kind and of love. He has drawn the trail of the serpent over that which in itself was legitimate and commendable. He has prostituted the sentiment of love, and has made of it a gossamer drapery to veil, but not conceal, hideous vice. The modern French novel may be cited as a case in point, since it essentially depends upon such abominable caricature of the Almighty's handiwork. The future historian will point to this prostitution of art as the loathsome ulcer disfiguring the fair face of nineteenth century civilization. It goes without saying that such hideousness has no place in true art.

There is, however, a legitimate love, of which that just discussed is but a distorted image. Has, then, this a right to reign exclusively in art? Few will deny that other sentiments may well dispute the claim. This love, although, perhaps, all-absorbing at a certain period, is not the centre around which the whole of life

revolves. It will be conceded that this youthful fever, like the measles and chicken-pox of infancy, though violent during its paroxysms, is generally harmless and of short duration. Do not gravely shake your head and call this cynical. The existence of a strong conjugal affection constituting the basis of the family-life, and by its ever-increasing radiance brightening man's path through this dreary world when all other interests are fading away, is entirely unquestioned. But the continuance of that sweet ardor which invariably invades the heart of the timorous swain and the coy maiden when about to emerge from their teens, is as firmly denied. Where are the proofs? Daily observation. The sentiments of mature age are less feverish, but more solid and lasting. Their character, too, is different. If man be truly christian, his mind turns naturally, to a considerable degree, toward another and a better world. Even in the natural order, ambition, patriotism, philanthropy—these and other such aspirations, nobler in kind and wider in scope, will naturally supplant the youthful fever of love. All this is said, be it remembered, without for a moment questioning that love in its genuine signification, and not as specifically applied to that evanescent passion, is an essential requisite in life, if existence is to be enduring. If art, then, is to be nature and life idealized, how absurd to make that its fundamental principle which is far from wielding the greater influence in actual human existence. Let this sentiment have its legitimate place in life, but let not the ivy attempt to supplant the oak. When the other impelling forces of the human heart will also be accorded their true place in art, then will art approach nearer and nearer to its ideal perfection. That its progress for the last two or three centuries has been retrograde is evident from its history.

It is not the writer's intention, however, to pose as a mourner over the palmy days of old, which in reality never existed. The material and intellectual condition of the race to-day is far and away in advance of what it was in any previous age. In art we must confess to an inferiority, yet here too, doubtless

"Through the ages one increasing purpose runs.
And the thoughts of men are widened with the
process of the suns,"