

SOCIAL HYPOCRITES.

The most notoriously offensive social hypocrite is, to our minds, the man of sham geniality. Concerning even a real genuine "genial man" it may be plausibly urged that he is often intolerable, as he is almost always tolerant. He insists on calling people "good fellows," "excellent fellows," whom you know by instinct to be pestilent creatures, narrow, conceited, and envious. By a peculiarity of vision which must make life very enjoyable, the genial man is blind to these things, and no doubt he is the happier for his blindness. But that does not make him any the better companion to people of lower animal spirits, people who are not always in the very pink of mental, moral, and physical condition. On the whole, however, people of thoroughly healthy minds and bodies seem to be the majority in this world—a thought which should be a great comfort to the philosopher who takes wide views—because we do not find genial people decidedly popular. Hence the temptation to be a *faux bonhomme*, which naturally besets men of a certain weight and physical conformation who are not naturally genial. A man can hardly be genial under twelve stone; but it is not desirable that all persons who scale over that weight and are florid and unctuous should try to be genial. The result of their efforts is the existence of the most annoying sort of social hypocrite, the man who slaps backs out of malice aforethought, sits up and drinks toddy when he would be in bed if he listened to what the inner spirit sings, and who gives an exuberant welcome to people whom he heartily wishes never to see. A great many doctors, and a great many lawyers, with a sprinkling of the ministry of our Dissenting brethren, are falsely genial. It would be interesting to know whether they are aware that they impose on but few persons, while they inspire the rest of the world with a wild desire to rush on them, to rumple their shirt fronts, tear their broad-cloth, and beat them on the nose. They would be much less unpleasant if they were frankly bearish—if they were, in fact, their own disagreeable selves. They are execrable imitations of a type which less than most endures to be imitated. It is agreeable to believe that they are generally mistrusted, that they are always on the point of being found out, and that they compensate themselves for the open exercise of a brusque yet oily courtesy and good-will in public by bullying their families at home.

The sham man of the world is another most uncomfortable and uneasy social hypocrite. The poor wretch has a little taste perhaps and some literary ability; he took a very fair degree at college (where he posed as a hunting-man and a player of loo); he is not unsuccessful as a scholar, a professor, a writer, and a popular preacher. What he does naturally—namely, his work—he does well enough; what he does detestably is the thing that is not natural to him—his play. The late ingenious Lord Byron, if we are to believe Leigh Hunt and Mr. Trelawny, was the very crown and flower of this class of social hypocrite. His great natural gifts as a man of the world, his strength, his beauty, his wit, his success with women, were alloyed and impaired by his even more extraordinary poetic powers. The two sides of his nature clashed and made him miserable, and he always preferred and longed for the trivial fame of a man like Luttrell. The common man of letters who wishes to seem a man of the world is probably with his limited power of feeling, not much happier than Byron. He never can be persuaded that, if he were not a man of letters, he would be nothing. He is always craving for the reputation of the *roué* or the deer-stalker, of the *shekarri* or the athlete. It is not his Latin prose (which is not so bad) that he plumes himself on, but his riding, and he rides like a sack of potatoes. He knows a number of things; but he will talk about the things he does not know, such as jockey's weights, and handicaps. He tries to be the fit companion of young military men; and when he writes, he mentions "pedants" and "bookworms" as if he were not himself a member of the brotherhood. He is the pedant of fly-fishing, the prig of cricketing or boating in a shop. Everyone is a "pedant" in his eyes who writes about distant times in a tone that is not rollicking, and who writes correctly where he writes at random. If the contempt of scholars, the amusement of men of the world, and the admiration of people who are neither the one nor the other is a desirable reward, the sham man of the world does not lack his guerdon. He is most offensive, perhaps, when, being a popular preacher by his trade, he haunts billiard-rooms, and tries to win a reputation for his knowledge of risky stories. Bad as are the ignoramus who affects knowledge and the vulgar man who affects distinction, the shamefaced braggart scholar escaped from his cloister into mess-rooms and drawing-rooms is even more distasteful.

The refined men who pretend to a healthy, blustering quality are comparatively innocent impostors. Nature urging them to speak softly and to walk delicately, they must needs strut and shout for fear of being thought effeminate. They hold vague opinions, and vaguely believe in their casual creeds; but to hear them talk, or to read their writings, you would suppose them all to be Cromwells or Knoxes. Mr. Carlyle has much to answer for in regard to this class of humbugs. They are always saying that "the ratepayers will have Lord Lytton's head," or whatever head may be in question, and giving the world to understand that they are on the side of the bloodthirsty ratepayers. They long for rebellions in distant colonies that they may preach the virtues of flogging, of tar-caps, and of military executions. To tell the truth, they could not endure the sight of blood, and their hearts are as tender and womanish (if women's hearts are tender) as their theological opinions are casual and undermined. Yet, when they treat of the past of theology, or the present restoration of St. Albans, they speak as if they were convinced Calvinists or "hard-shell" Puritans, as if the stool of Jenny Geddes lay ever ready to be thrown at the first representative of "black prelaty" who comes within shot. These deluded persons have a feminine admiration of brute force. Some of them adore Cromwell and others Robespierre, while the charms of that conqueror, Henry VIII., still prevail over the lady-like minds of others. The result is to be found in the insincere noise of much modern rhetoric which is poured from a dozen various pulpits. The fires of Smithfield would be nothing to the conflagrations of to-day if all the pseudo-strong-minded writers had a period of power, and did not run away and hide when their chance came.

The distrust of self, a fine and engaging diffidence, seems to be the motive of most social hypocrites. The sham genial man and the sham man of the world no doubt hope to gain something, some commercial or social reward, by

the r travesty. The others whom we have described find a dubious recompense in the power of occasionally believing that they really are what they try to seem—bluff, brutal, overbearing, roughly simple, destitute of distinction, and hopelessly commonplace. That prize, after all, is nearly as valuable as most of these which an approving and self-satisfied conscience can confer.—*Saturday Review.*

THE UNMARRIED ONES.

It is cheering to find it acknowledged by *The World* that, granting there is something to "give up" when from some cause or other one more unmated soul is added to the number, that such experience may bring "the peace of contentment, an abiding and satisfying joy." The question is, Is there anything to "give up" that is *real*, when a single life is our choice? The reality of giving up may be altogether on the other side—that of the married ones. We all have our ideal of the one being whom we would have to be our true companion through life. The form rises before our mental vision, dark, fair, beautiful, sprightly or commanding, as fancy prompts; but as we paint the picture to our liking, the spirit we embody in it draws forth our whole heart's love, and loves us with an answering fervour. To a man, the ideal may be the sweetest woman on earth, always helpful, never hurried, always pure and bright, never swayed by a selfish wish; or she may be a woman of genius and power, an acknowledged force in the world. A woman's ideal may be gifted with the tongue of an orator, possess the wisdom of the sage, the genius of the artist, or delight the world with his lofty poetical flights; or he may be the most ordinary, good-natured, commonplace being, with only a great love to give. Our ideal knows all our joys and is with us in every trouble, and this sympathy is the sweetest we can imagine and never obtrusive. Whoever misunderstands us, or crosses us, or fails to give us credit for best intentions, it is not our love; and there is no moment so occupied that our concerns seem of little interest compared with other things. Best of all, our ideal love is ours—our very own—in health or sickness, in wealth or poverty; and to this love there is no parting, no death, no end. Is this fanciful? Is it not rather for such a love as this that the heart of every true man and woman yearns with a longing unutterable? It is much to ask for from an ordinary mortal; but if there is courage and self-denial, as some may call it, to let the ordinary mortal go, we have our satisfying, spiritual, ideal love always, and our life may be lived in the sweet companionship of the purest and noblest we can ever know. A dream! Assuredly not. It is no dream to us till we, being blinded, begin to take down our ideal and play with it and handle it, and try to reduce it to a commonplace level in a world of cares. Then it is a dream, we say, because we have found a reality which is *not* our ideal. But is it not the reality which is a *fraud*, and not the ideal which is a *dream*? Be careful not to lower the ideal, for that only has real existence. There need be no loneliness to the unmarried of either sex; while to the married it too often comes in the forced companionship of uncongenial souls, who, while doing their best, only succeed in troubling each other; and when they do their worst—but, let the curtain drop. Who would rashly rush from wealth into poverty? And is it not much the same thing to carelessly throw away the ideal of our hearts for that which is untried and sure to be more or less imperfect? Yet the world moves on, and still the pity and the sympathy, so little needed and so greatly misplaced, is too often given to those happiest of mortals

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Dr. Lyman Beecher, the well-known American Presbyterian minister, once engaged to preach for a country minister on exchange, and the Sabbath proved to be one excessively stormy, cold and uncomfortable. It was in mid-winter, and the snow was piled all along in the roads, so as to make the passage very difficult. Still the minister urged his horse through the drifts, put the animal into a shed, and went in. As yet there was no person in the house, and after looking about, the old gentleman—then young—took his seat in the pulpit. Soon the door opened, and a single individual walked up the aisle, looked about, and took a seat. The hour came for commencing service, but no more hearers.

Whether to preach to such an audience was a question, and it was one which Lyman Beecher was not long in deciding. He felt that he had a duty to perform, and he had no right to refuse to do it because only one man could reap the benefit of it; and accordingly he went through all the services, praying, singing, preaching, and the benediction, with only *one* hearer. And when all was over, he hastened down from the desk to speak to his congregation, but he had departed.

A circumstance so rare was referred to occasionally, but twenty years after it was brought to the doctor's mind quite strangely. Travelling somewhere in Ohio, the doctor alighted from the stage one day in a pleasant village, when a gentleman stepped up and spoke to him, familiarly calling him by name. "I do not remember you," said the doctor. "I suppose not," said the stranger; "but we once spent two hours together in a house alone in a storm." "I do not recall it, sir," added the old man; "pray, when was it?" "Do you remember preaching, twenty years ago, in such a place, to a single person?" "Yes, yes," said the doctor, grasping his hand, "and if you are the man, I have been wishing to see you ever since." "I am the man, sir; and that sermon saved my soul and made a minister of me, and yonder is my church! The converts of that sermon, sir, are all over Ohio."

WHEN you have nothing to say, say nothing; a weak defence strengthens your opponent, and silence is less injurious than a bad reply.—*Lacon.*

Do not say or write anything to which you are ashamed to add your name. Mr. Spurgeon says: "Why any should withhold it we know not; the Holy Spirit did not keep back the names of the prophets and evangelists, neither did he direct Paul to write under initials. When we find an epistle of P., a Gospel according to L., or the Book of the Prophecy of A., we also will issue our sermons as those of C. H. S., but not till then."