

Besides, I was anxious to have a chat with M. Frederic Passy, the French apostle of free trade, and M. Muzet, the president of the 200 syndicated trades of Paris, both able speakers. The Minister of Commerce was represented by his delegate, M. Mesureur, the leading authority on technical instruction. The ceremony took place in the Theatre of Versailles; the boxes were occupied by the ladies, the pit by gentlemen—all parents and relatives of the 200 pupils who sat in front in their smart uniforms, looking the picture of robust health, and steadily eyeing the mountain of prizes, elegantly bound volumes representing a value of 2,000 frs. On the stage, or estrade, were members of the Catholic and Protestant clergy, senators and deputies, representatives of the army, the administration, and of the academy. A military band discoursed beautiful music. The chairman made a business speech, congratulated the able director, M. Lagrange, on his success, and on his being decorated an officer of the academy. In looking over the distributed list of prizes, I noticed some pupils had won no less than eleven prizes, not only in the mechanical arts practically taught, but in modern languages, physical sciences, mathematics, etc. English and American boys came in for their share of honours. At the banquet which followed it was only across the walnuts and the wine I was able to have a straight talk with M. Passy. I buttonholed him on the new tariff. He says he has been denouncing it over the four corners of France; the crowds he addressed agreed with him and voted resolutions condemnatory of the tariff; when he spoke in the Chamber, deputies rapped him down with their paper knives, not that they viewed his statements as bad, but did not wish them to go before the country; they wanted the tariff bill voted at all costs. M. Passy's conviction is that the tariff will be the commercial ruin of France, unless, as is not impossible, the running up of food products drives the operatives to demand its immediate abolition.

Madame Potter, the "American Sarah Bernhardt," has returned from her theatrical tour to Australia and India, richer by 350,000 frs. than when she set out. In Melbourne, etc., she says, the people do not care for box seats, and when midnight arrives quit the stage of the representation, to catch home trains. In East India, the Rajahs and their world cared nothing for money, they only wanted to pay more than a rival prince. The "Dame aux Camélias" was everywhere the play that best drew. Z.

A PLEA FOR THE STINGINESS OF WEALTH.

FOR a rich man to escape the imputation of niggardliness is scarcely easier than for a camel to go through the eye of a needle. Some sorts and phases of notoriety he may sigh after in vain, but this seeks him out and comes to him even when he goes to some trouble to avoid it, and closely dogs his footsteps whether he likes it or not. He is, or he may be, accused unjustly of pride, of exclusiveness or ostentation. His taste may be criticized, his candour and sense called in question on insufficient grounds; but whatever may be the unfairness of a good deal that is said about him and his ways, if the imputation of stinginess is fairly fastened upon him, it is more than likely to be well deserved. Where his detractors err is in thinking him mean without cause.

There is perhaps no subject upon which more mistakes are apt to be made, or more nonsense talked by the numerically important class of people who are in the habit of jumping at slipshod conclusions, and adopting strong opinions without the trouble of thinking, than the use and misuse of wealth. Everybody who has none, or who has got himself into the habit of considering he has none to speak of, knows just how money ought to be applied to the best advantage so as to bring its owner happiness and his neighbours profit. What a number of social problems it is the evident duty of the rich to solve, and what claims of all sorts they ought, in a liberal but discriminating spirit, to attend to! For the critic himself, be his income one thousand, seven thousand, twenty thousand a year, it only just suffices for his reasonable wants, as all men may plainly see, for is not his tailor's bill two years in arrears, and his sandstone Elizabethan mansion mortgaged up to its full value? His scheme is one that can only be put in practice with any propriety by people like that old Smith round the corner, who never takes any notice of begging letters, and walks all the way to church and back on Sunday mornings, with his three horses eating their heads off in the stable, while he manages at the same time to be off at a friend's funeral whenever your wife calls to get him interested in a bazar or flower show.

The genus "rich" in its relation to stinginess may be divided into two general groups, presenting certain features in common, yet each having its own characteristics—those who have made their money themselves, and those who have had it made for them by other people. Stinginess is by no means invariable in any sort or condition of mankind, but when found among wealthy people it is to be ranked commonly into one or other of these divisions. Either the niggard has been drilled into it by long years of drudgery at the wheel of fortune, and has come to find it as his vital breath and his native air, a quality to be sought after and enjoyed for its own sake, and, unlike virtue, pretty certain to be attained, or, escaping through the accident of his birth the sordid devices that await upon the lading of the thick clay, he yet finds

closeness thrust upon him, as it were, by the necessity of his environment, and, though he would very likely prefer to be generous, he is not strong enough to break through the trammels of routine. With these might be included the people who want to strike a mean between stinginess and its opposite, and to get a credit they never quite attain with a public that shrugs its shoulders in private at the calculated munificence and objects to be caught with chaff.

The pleasures of wealth ought to be great indeed if they are in any degree to outweigh its penalties. The mere apprehension of losing property, in reality quite secure, alone whitens many a head. Every rich man has to be potentially a miser and to bear in his breast the germs of avarice, at all times too ready to take root and grow. Though he may remember perfectly well how happy he was when he was poor, and though he cannot deny that he is now very much the reverse, yet to lose any part of his hoard takes to his haunting imagination the guise of a calamity the worst and most dreadful. Here is the true deceitfulness of riches, the vain show in which man disquieteth himself in vain. But what shall be said of the unfortunate who has to suspect of underhand designs almost everybody who comes near him? Alas, there is but little "deceitfulness" here. His alarm may be exaggerated but has its foundation in reality. If he were to meet people in the openhanded way they expect and take no care of his money, he would soon have very little money left to take care of.

For what is the position of the man of wealth if suspected of liberality? He seeks the sympathy of his fellow mortals—to be confronted with shares. Woman, lovely woman, even if he be out of reach matrimonially, ever meets him with her sweetest smiles—and her longest subscription lists. He has, perhaps, learnt to avoid her altogether by various subterfuges brought to perfection by long experience, and when at last run to earth, as sooner or later he must be, if she has once set her mind on his capture, surrenders strictly "at discretion," for let him once forget himself and be betrayed into a momentary generosity, and forthwith where the carcass is there will the vultures be gathered together. The horrid misery of it all to him is that no good seems to come of his dribbling benefactions, whether large or small. The skies are as brass above him, and he cannot even take comfort in the reflection that he is laying up treasure in Heaven, knowing as well he knows that he only contributes what he cannot well help, and is in no sense to be accounted the cheerful giver in whom the Lord delighteth. Through life he is bound, like Bunyan's pilgrim, to his weary burden, but with no sympathy from his fellows for this, his daily care, and no confident expectation, it is to be feared, of a bright reward in the world to come. What wonder, then, if he shrinks upon himself inwardly and clings to his dross? Here, at least, is power, fame, ascendancy. As long as he possesses that, though no poor men's prayers go up for him to Heaven, yet evermore shall rise around him the incense of envious worship, about the sincerity of which there can be no room for doubt. Nor is he left altogether without his consolations. His money really brings a certain degree of comfort and satisfaction to him, or, at any rate, resembles the schoolboy's salt that "made his potatoes taste nasty when he left it out." A good proportion of the stinginess attributed to him also he knows has no truth in it. It is plainly improbable that a person of means would think to save by making his wife experiment with "rainbow dyes" on her old dresses, and the stories of his turning away his cook for selling the kitchen fat out of the back door are evident concoctions of that lady herself in her vengeful mood. Then again, if one set of people think him proud and stuck-up, he has the consolation that another coterie pronounce him petty and vulgar. They cannot well both be in the right. From such observation of his neighbours and surroundings, he slides more and more into a sardonic way of looking at life, convenient but not at all leaning to virtue's side, and soothes his conscience as best he may by saying to himself that he is doing as well as could be expected of him, considering his temptations and the exceeding difficulty of seeing his way clearly. In old times he would have insured his soul by leaving money in his will for masses and to found monasteries, and he still occasionally tries to compromise with his Maker, or shows his intellectual barrenness by endowing colleges.

A year or two ago one of the London papers held an open discussion as to how a rich man could leave his money profitably to his soul's health, and had to give it up as a bad job, and those wealthy ones who confess themselves no wiser than the *Pall Mall Gazette* are, perhaps, not so much to be wondered at if they go on to the end and do nothing. The next possessor may understand the uses of wealth better than they. Who knows?—say they. He is always willing to assume the trust with a light heart.

Why does not somebody try the experiment of leaving his money to an enemy? The grateful victim would go off in all sincerity and erect a stained glass window in honour of his benefactor's many virtues, and forthwith enter, with joyful alacrity, upon his new career of flavourless pleasures, varied by idleness and self-reproach. In no long time he would be sighing in secret for the happy days when his heart and energies were fresher than his collars and cuffs, yet of which the simple and healthy flavour was now lost to him forever. Thus would he live, his days given up to phantom enjoyments, and his nights to very real discomfort and regret, while each passing month and every revolving year but rivetted his fetters and made his return to contented obscurity less possible.

HENRY CARTER.

CONSTANCY.

I DREAMED a friend and I together strayed
In gardens wide where grove and gay parterre
Lay side by side, and fountains idly tossed
Their jewelled droplets in the morning air.

To me the form of this friend worthy seemed
Of all the praise that beauty e'er should win.
Perchance I thought it such because I knew
The beauty of the soul that dwelt within.

We paused to rest within a latticed bow'r,
Though leafy vines had thick o'erspread the whole,
Eaves-dropping roses panting bosoms pressed
Against the bars and hurried glances stole.

The gate was near. I asked if she would tread
With me the path that wound o'er plain and hill.
She raised her trusting eyes and grasped my hand
So warmly that I feel it clasping still.

I plucked a list'ning rose and gave it her;
Then passing out an altar we espied
Beside the gate. We knelt and vowed that naught
Should ever lead one from the other's side.

Our way seemed clothed in nature's loveliness;
Green groves and sunny valleys smiled to greet
Our coming, gaily brooklets leaped and danced,
And flowers cast their garments at our feet.

But soon the path grew steep and rough, the hills
And dales no more in sunny robes were dressed,
The weary foot by jagged cliff was bruised,
And blasts with wintry arrows pierced the breast.

Then I reproached myself that I had led
Her with me o'er this pathway rough and cold;
But turning met the same calm trusting eyes,
And found her hand had not relaxed its hold.

We passed the mount and found a desert plain
Where revelled sultry winds. We long had strayed
Its trackless wastes, when suddenly we saw
A river far ahead and palm tree shade.

Our hearts took courage at the welcome sight;
We hastened to the river, but I sank,
Oppressed with heat and faint from weariness,
Just as we reached the palm trees on its bank.

Then while my weakened frame and throbbing brain
Foretold the near approach of death's dark hour,
Again I bitterly reproached myself
That I had led her from her garden bow'r.

I felt her cooling hand upon my brow,
My flitting spirit turning saw her press
My parted lips and close my eyes, then sit,
Still clinging to my hand, in silentness.

Years passed. My soul came back and saw
Her by a mound whose marble bore my name,
Her eyes bent on a faded garden rose,
Their pure and trusting love-light still the same.

LYMAN C. SMITH.

THE RAMBLER.

EDWIN PERCY WHIPPLE, so long considered one of America's leading critics, remarked in the summer of 1876, the year of centennial rejoicing, that "James Russell Lowell is now in the prime of his genius and at the height of his reputation. The spirituality of his thinking has deepened into advancing years. The 'Biglow Papers' are unique in our literature. Lowell adds to his other merits that of being an accomplished philologist; but granting his scholarship as an investigator of the popular idioms of foreign speech, he must be principally esteemed for his knowledge of the Yankee dialect. Hosea Biglow is almost the only writer who uses the dialect properly, and most other pretenders to a knowledge of it must be considered caricaturists as compared with him; for like Burns he makes the dialect he employs flexible to every mood of thought and passion, from good sense as solid as granite to the most bewitching descriptions of nature and the loftiest affirmations of conscience."

Without calling in question Mr. Whipple's last sentence, which is certainly not any too "flexible" or "solid" itself, we may surely accept his estimate of the lately-deceased poet, essayist and patriot. Mr. Lowell was fortunate in not continuing as he began to be only the humorist. Mark Twain will not, I imagine, have earned a niche in Westminster by the time his earthly course is run; nor Jerome K. Jerome; nor yet Jas. Whitcomb Riley. After all the humorist is at best but a clown, courted but soon forgotten, admired but only tolerated. The cumulative force of good work amounts to this in the end, that thought and imaginative powers, insight and invention bring their reward at the last, though not certainly always during the lifetime of the writer. In Mr. Lowell's case this latter fatality, happily, escaped him. He lived to sit under the tree he had planted and to become an honoured and favourite visitor in England, the