

In fact, it might be said that all are on an absolute level, were it not that some by reason of wealth or taste, contrive to dress better than others (the recognition of which is strenuously concealed), and some are more proficient in "making themselves agreeable"—it has actually passed into a phrase (the recognition of which is not quite so strenuously concealed). In short, at such gatherings there is a supposed, though tacitly denied, absolute level of rank, of social importance, of distinction, of beauty, even of age. But since men are weak and women vain, and since in the course of life rank and importance and distinction and beauty and even age (the hoary head in the case of men, the dimpled cheek in the case of women) count for so much, not even on the most adroit of hostess's lawns can there be brought about that absolute level which all pretend and none admit. It is curious to observe how this pretence of equality, which in other quarters would be termed democratic, belonging to the rule of the mob, is here seen to cling to a society supposedly antipathetic to everything connected with Demos. It is but fair to note, however, that this equality has nothing in common with republicanism. The host or hostess is regarded as chief, and his or her will, though, like that of the sovereign, never arbitrarily exercised, is submitted to implicitly and without question. In short, a party is a petty court, and courtly, not parliamentary, manners prevail. As at court too, affairs of State are left for the Council Board, so at parties affairs of life are left for the office.

The right spirit, then, in which to attend a Garden Party is a spirit which is content for a time to forsake common earth and soar to a higher sphere, to make believe that all people are nice and all things pleasant, that the present conditions are the best possible, and that we are thoroughly gratified with ourselves and all about us. This is why so much stress is put upon mere bodily comfort, upon dress and ices and claret-cup, upon things that please the eye and palate; for to the mind the Anglo-Saxon gathering does not cater. To cater for the mind or the heart would be to introduce dissension and feeling, and dissension and feeling are the two very last things admissible at a Garden Party. Dissension and feeling relate to passion, and passion, by all the rules of human etiquette, is rigidly prohibited. Imagine a man showing enthusiasm at a Garden Party! How gauche he would be! Imagine a woman moved to tears at a Garden Party! What an "object" she would be! The place to show feeling is one's closet; not even is it permissible in church, closely and intimately as worship and emotion are—or perhaps ought to be—associated. But church is another species of Anglo-Saxon gathering, that perhaps in which we take our pleasure most sadly of all. However, that is another story.

Are Garden Parties, then, to be decried? Not by any manner of means. The lawns are refreshing, the umbrage is sweet, that most interesting of things, your fellowman, in the one case, and your fellowwoman, in the other, are to be seen in their most affable manner and gayest of toilets. The ices are delicious, the claret-cup capital. Everybody is nice and

everybody is trying to think of nice things to say. To be sure, this man may be wondering how on earth it came to pass that that one was asked, and this woman may be counting the number of bell skirts that have been gored and frilled into more fashionable shape. But surely this feeling of good nature, this sense of being pleased with oneself and one's neighbours is one highly worthy of cultivation. It opens the heart, warms the affections, and makes us better prepared to receive the gentler influences of grace and beauty and good-will. To some, too, the Garden Party brings relief from toil; to others relief from ennui, that more deadening enemy of the soul than even excess of toil itself; to all it brings relief from self. Further, it brings men and women together, and the Great God knows how hard it is for men and women to live alone. And in thus bringing men and women together, even if the Garden Party surrounds their intercourse with multiform obstacles to the true communing of heart with heart, yet eye looks into eye (even if veiled), and hand grasps hand (even if gloved), and perhaps now and again a tiny crevice is opened in that granite prisonhouse in which each of us frail mortals lives immured. And this crevice after-meetings may enlarge, till in time that sacred thing, called friendship, even that more sacred thing called love, may be awakened in the soul, and the prisoners clasp hands with tears of gladness. Love!—perhaps here we touch the very core of the reason for bringing men and women together, whether on the summer shaven lawn or the winter waxen floor. All seek love, though all hide that search, and all love the lover, though all smile at him; and so all are willing to give love and the lover scope and opportunity. For at bottom the human heart is conscious of its own weakness and is lenient to the weakness of another. And so hostesses place pairs of chairs in convenient nooks and carefully carpet conservatories and staircases. And surely of all places to give scope and opportunity to love and the lover the Garden Party is the fairest. There is always something in sward and foliage and the open sky that recalls Eden or Enna, and youth and beauty on a summer lawn is to-day as idyllic as in the day of Theocritus. Welcome, then, the season of the Garden Party!

ARNOLD HAULTAIN.

A BACCHANALIAN.

Rosy Bacchus, god of Mirth,
Rouse once more the sleepy earth;
Round our brows the ivy twine;
Sadden all our cares with wine;
Then, as all our troubles flee,
Jovial is the hour with thee.

Earthly strife before thee dies,
Misery, too, no longer cries;
Peace, contentment, mirth and joy
Gather round thee, Happy Boy,
While the harsher cares of day
At thy presence flee away.

A. MELBOURNE THOMPSON.

I would do what I pleased, and doing what I pleased, I should have my will, and, having my will, I should be contented; and when one is contented, there is no more to be desired; and when there is no more to be desired, there is an end of it.—Cervantes.

"THE CITY OF DREADFUL NIGHT."

One of the most remarkable poems which the mind of the nineteenth century has produced and one which, if merit be the measure of endurance, is destined to live exalted for many centuries more,—is that mid-night epic, by James Thomson, "The City of Dreadful Night." This poem is the work of a modern Dante, who had no need to search his imagination for a hell, being fortunate enough to live in London. It is even more fearful than the "Inferno" or "Purgatorio," because it is more real. It is not a creation, but a picture. It is not a phantom of a brooding mind, but it is a crape-clad fact draped it may be, with the darkness of a sorrowing mind, shrouded perhaps unduly with the raven imagery of individual grief, but still a fact which many sad eyes have seen, a mid-night poem of which several sad stanzas had already been written in the intelligible wrinkles of many stricken brows. The touching language of wrinkles is unfortunately one which society is not at all times anxious to read and which poets searching for a present popularity, are seldom brave enough to record, and so it behooved this poet to do it for them, and this while other rymsters were sweetly warbling of lilies and roses, of azure clouds, and flowers, and silvery streams, and smiling skies and fair coquettes, he grandly, grimly, sternly did, and so behold "The City of Dreadful Night" rising in gloomy grandeur before the eyes of men, its foundation deeply, firmly laid upon the granite rock of fact; its massive outlines clearly defined in the centuries; its mighty shadow falling across the plain of ages. It is a negative argument for Utopia, a powerful pamphlet in the propaganda for social reform, and a new and striking feature in the landscape of the world's imagination. "The City of Dreadful Night" must take its place in the pantheon of imperishable thought there to live exalted when the reality of which it is the image has been wiped away from earth and there to be gazed at, wonderingly, by eyes as yet un-open and ages as yet unborn, as a dark reminiscence of the barbaric nineteenth century, and spoken of by lips as yet unsealed as "the picture of a hell, called in the language of the ancients, 'City.'"

The light of civilization can burn as well as brighten as the sun that shines can scorch, and there are some who feel its rays like daggers, and writhe amidst the thorns its warmth has nourished; and there are some, who at its zenith, live in utter night doomed by their day to darkness. The sun is responsible for the Sahara. There are deserts as well as gardens, and sighs as well as smiles, and in the very centre and soul of civilization a stately soul has lived a withered life, majestically prophetic in its gloom. It is significantly strange that there should be born of human thought works so dissimilar as this author's "City of Dreadful Night" and that other poem of his namesake, James Thompson, "The Castle of Indolence." One is the smile of the genius, the other is its frown; one is the light of the day, the other the light of the night. One is gilded with sunshine, the other is shrouded with shadow; and yet both came from citizens of a common civilization; but the eyes of one were sure-