

man of apparently finer mould, the Athenian idol, the mere exquisite, perhaps, who, nevertheless, comes little nearer than his more bestial brother to the ideal man in whom the "spark of the Infinite" waxes strong.

II. (b) "'Dole' means part or portion. The eyes are to see, the ears are to hear and communicate to the brain anything that will add to or give wisdom or power."

"'Dole'—share—portion. There is much for eyes to see and ears to hear, if eyes and ears are open to the beauties and wonders of nature, etc. As Mrs. Browning says:

'Earth's crammed with Heaven,
And every common bush afire with God;
But only he who sees takes off his shoes;
The rest sit round it and pick black-berries.'"

III. "'Yet' has an adversative meaning. He bethinks himself that he may have left upon our minds the impression that the body is not an aid to the soul. Hence he proceeds—but gifts should not be useless, and are not God's gifts of use?"

"'Yet' signifies 'nevertheless' or 'notwithstanding,' and is the connection between the idea embodied in St. 6 and 7, and that which follows in 9 and 10."

In commenting upon this portion the following ideas were given:

"In spite of seeming indifference to God's good gifts, the poet would not be understood to hold them cheap. On the contrary, he sees in all around him proofs that the body may serve the soul, and he asks if we may not innocently enjoy life."

"A man who has no intellectual or spiritual aspirations, who is perfectly satisfied with himself, is no better than a brute. And erring almost as much is the man who considers the body the soul's worst enemy, and seeks to give the soul aid by curbing and frustrating every natural bodily need."

Rabbi Ben Ezra.

STANZA VI. TO X. STUDY NO. 2.

The following answers to question IV. have been judged especially good. Another will be published, if space permits, in a later issue:

St. VI.—If we are a spark of the Infinite, with aspirations for a closer hold on God and immortality, sorrow, disappointment—the things that take rest and reward out of material life—even if in our joys we find strife, struggle, pain, inasmuch as these things urge us unremittently to press forward and upward, they are to be welcomed. "Noblest things are ever born in agony." To learn and to grow, with courage to endure, should be the supreme aim of the soul.

St. VII.—It may seem a paradox when we say that many things which are pronounced failures here have contained the elements of true success. There is a struggle that, failing of achievement, is in itself a most high and noble form of achievement. It may even seem mockery to say this to one who has given of his best and still fallen short of the goal. There should be consolation in the thought that the standard reared was a high one. For the aspirations which the poet has felt and assayed, he finds comfort, although he may not have attained to the full. He has, however, attained much more than if his ideal had not been high. He might even have fallen to the level of the brute had he not listened to the higher promptings. Not by achievement—not by failure will man be judged.

"Not failure, but low aim, is crime."

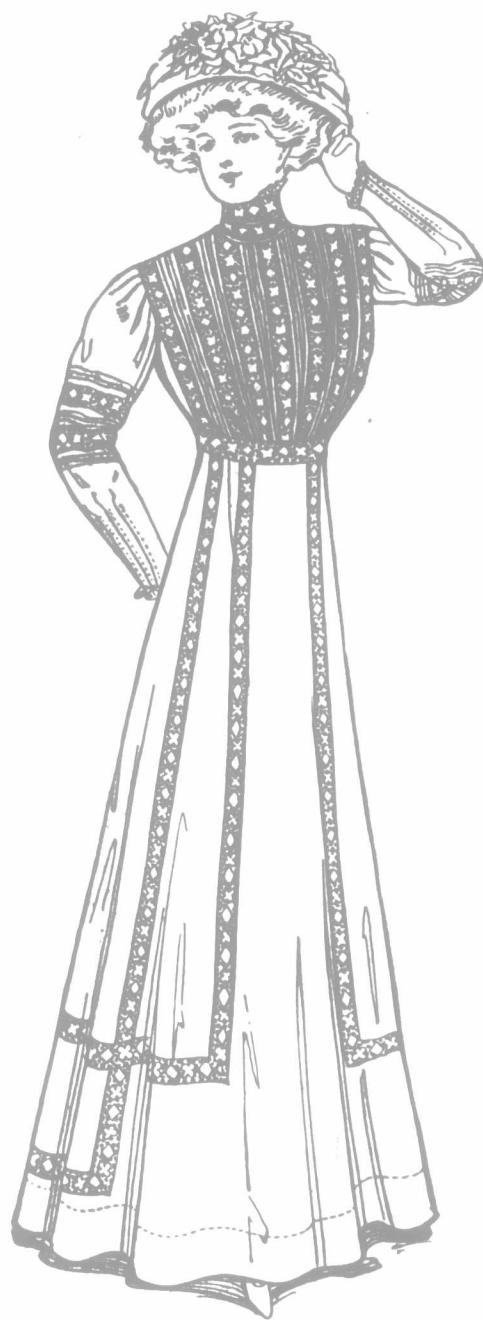
St. VIII.—Browning's rapidity of thought often causes him to abandon a certain line, returning again with just as sudden a transition. In our former study we have man compared with the overfed bird, the maw-crammed beast. Possibly we have here another type of man as fully allied to the brute, although somewhat harder to recognize. The man who in his sensual appetites, passions, amusements, pleasures and luxuries, makes the mind subservient to the lower nature by continual thought and pandering to the gratification of the flesh to the extent of ignoring and forgetting the intellectual and spiritual, is very closely allied to the brute. A test—a question—is proposed to man, how far can the body, even at its best, assist the soul upon its true quest?

St. IX.—Nevertheless, all gifts may be

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