

Mathew Arnold referred as a distinctive feature in all the great literary work as well as an integral element in all noble character. The fundamental error in sectarian socialism, viz., that every man is as good as every other man, and that all have therefore an equal right to everything—which is as untrue in ethics, sociology and politics, as it is contradicted by all historic experience—seems to be lessening the reverence of our age, both for the great men of the past and for the institutions of our ancestors. The old habit of reverence (of unselfish delight in what is above us, unenvious admiration for what is greater than ourselves, the willingness to defer to the teachings of experience, and to be led by the wisdom of age) is either far less common than it used to be, or it is assuming very strange and unfamiliar phases.

From the preceding five virtues—which are more especially individual—I pass to others which are social. Among them, as number *six* in the list, may be set down the habit of generous construction, or a chivalrous estimate of other people. It is surely a clear practical duty never to put an evil or sinister construction upon the deed of another person, until we have it proved to demonstration that the act *was* evil or sinister; and, even then, it should rather be accompanied by sympathetic sorrow for the offender, than by strong dislike or personal aversion. This virtue is radically akin to that which was placed second in the former list, viz., that of openness or candor of soul, and this will illustrate the unity of the virtues. There are some persons, however, so painfully self-engrossed "in narrowest working shut" that they cannot see—or can with the utmost difficulty see—that the good which is being achieved by others is quite as important to the world as anything which they themselves are doing. Few things are

more helpful to human progress than the ungrudged recognition of the merit and work of other people—a cordial and genial delight in their achievements. Closely allied to the foregoing virtue comes [*seventh*] that of friendship in its highest and purest forms—friendship developed into the habit of universal friendliness, and the constant effort to help other people. Many recognize this after a fashion, as it is one of the strongest social bonds; but the love of personal ease makes them shrink from the active offices of friendship, which demand constant sacrifice and self-surrender if thereby others can be helped. Nay, some friendship is at its root thoroughly selfish. There are those who wish to keep their friends to themselves. They are jealous lest they will lose something if their friends get into a still closer relationship with other people. In connection with this virtue another [*eighth*] may be noted, which grows up under its shadow, so to speak, and flourishes alongside of it. It is that of indifference as to how one is treated by others in the course of this devotion to their interests—indifference to dislike or even misrepresentation. The superiority which this virtue gives to one who practices it is marvelous. It creates an inner serenity of spirit. If one has large practical aims and ideals, if he is bent on adding something to the stock of human good that is in the world, what has he to do with taking umbrage or offense at the actions of other people? He has no time to think of these things, and is degraded by dwelling upon them.

Let your primary aim be *to find out the good* that is in others around you, to put yourselves in to lines of sympathy with them, and to serve them by eliciting that good still further; for, until you do so you cannot know how rich and wonderful a thing this Human Nature of ours is, which in its