

bert, than to any great natural tendency in himself. Just as is that of Ibsen in a less degree. I think we may find an answer to our question in the fact that to the human eye there seems and always has seemed to be a great preponderance of the evil over the good in the affairs of this world. About five hundred years before the Christian era the Ephesians called upon Heraclitus the Philosopher to frame for them a code of laws, but he declined, giving as his reason that the corruption of the Ephesians was so inveterate as to be beyond remedy. History is all one; it is a protean spirit—to-day Cæsar, to-morrow Napoleon—but the one great human spirit, universal as the ages themselves, is much the same now as then, and if we go abroad with absolute faith in this human eye of ours, to draw our facts concerning the manner and substance of the life around us from what we see, we will be impressed much as was Heraclitus of old and come back either wondering if God be asleep in the world, or exclaiming with the cynicism of Voltaire that there is no God in the rascally world at all. Cynicism is the deadliest enemy of all that is highest in art. Now, the idealist with all the enthusiasm of optimism, scrutinizes the events of life with an eye of faith and, believing that the good is not always borne down by the evil, he tries to raise and strengthen his fellows by bringing into their lives the glory of this hope. To do this he does not rest with depicting life as it is but strives to create it as it should be. "The highest thing," says Ruskin in his lectures on art, "that art can do is to set before you the true image of the presence of a noble human being." It has never done more than this, and it ought not to do less. This then is the dream of the idealist. I do not wish to be understood as saying that he does not seek the ground-work of his art in nature. Indeed it may just as truly be said of him as of the realist that

he "holds the mirror up to nature;" but he does more than this. He remembers the profound remark of Aristotle that nature has the will, but not the power, to realize perfection. and it becomes the great yearning of his life to realize it for her. As I stood one morning in Venus gallery of the Louvre, without a sound of the laughter and gaiety of the Boulevards to draw my thoughts away to the great world of Paris without, I turned around, and at once, like a soul-compelling light, there burst upon my gaze that supremest work of art of any age, the Venus de Milo. I could never forget that moment. The very soul of all pure women seemed to look out of that marble face, and as the exquisite beauty of the creation slowly pervaded me, I began to realize why it was that Heine, worn with paralysis, dragged himself down every morning to drink in new inspiration at her feet. It left upon me a distinct impression for good. No woman born was ever like that. Indeed the history of Greek art teaches us that the perfection it attained was not the result of perfection in its models. From whence then did it emanate?

If we remember the words of the great Greek sculptor Lysippus, that men should be represented, not as they are, but as they ought to be, we may perhaps discover an answer to our question. Greek art never at any time depended upon a servile imitation of nature for its great creations. In the antique, the forms are scientifically disposed according to a certain established scale or harmony of proportion, and the details are subordinated to that distribution. The type is never lost sight of; it dominates all the parts. The Greek artist in his work never suffered himself to be seduced from his own ideal conception by any accident of the model, but relied for the absolute perfection of his work upon principles drawn from a severe and constant study of the varying forms of nature. The first scientific and absolute standard of the proportion of the