

writer's position. It is as natural for a man to gauge another by his pomp and circumstance, or by his ability to surround himself with the luxury which money alone can buy, as it is natural for him to cultivate such a one; and for a much stronger reason therefore it is natural for the masses to think poorly of the profession of letters, which brings so little reward. Every one who writes much for publication must have observed that his contributions are regarded by his non-literary friends purely from a commercial standpoint. Mr. Ticker, who, by a happy turn in the stock market, may in a few hours realize hundreds of dollars, regards with complacent superiority his literary friend, whose morning has been devoted to a leader for which he will be paid five or six dollars; Mr. Cotton, who in the past six months has made, by the rise in dry-goods, a small fortune, looks with pity upon the author who has been engaged during that time in writing a book, the profits of which may be to him five hundred dollars; while the popular salesman, or the president of a rich corporation fairly inflates himself with pride when he thinks how much more his services are worth than those of the editor of the journal across the way. So long then (and the present caliginous intensity in the literary horizon does not seem to presage the dawn of more material prosperity for the writer) as the current rates of compensation in the literary world obtain, just so long will the profession of letters be looked upon askance by the world at large, and the members of this profession must bear in silence the gratuitous commiseration of their inferiors in all but wealth. But there is one thing that the professional writer may do to raise the guild in the eyes of outsiders, which we would mention in an aside. We refer to authorial negligence of sartorial care and *les convenances*, and to the prevalence of what a newspaper man himself calls forcibly, if not euphuistically, "journalistic sloppiness." True, in trying to make both ends meet on nothing a year, and in being more absorbed in subjective than objective operations, the writer has some excuse for his notorious disregard for the little nothings which constitute the amenities of society, but none the less is this disregard regrettable.

Come we now to the last that we shall mention, but not the least deep of the well-springs of the popular disdain of the new profession. In addition to the fact that the activity of the writer requires, though in a less degree, an activity on the part of the reader for its effect to be noticeable at all; we have to observe that its effect is experienced almost entirely individually rather than collectively, and that it works its changes and influences tacitly, with hardly a possibility for the sensational exhibition of its power. On the other hand, the other learned professions have opportunities for the production of an outward and a visible sign of their worth in ways that cannot fail to catch the public attention. Law is woven into the very fabric of every branch of human activity, and the lawyer shows his ability in getting a verdict with a fortune; the doctor ministers to our ailments and snatches from death the dying patient; the minister sways assembled multitudes by his eloquence, who would never think of reading his sermon printed; the man of science controls and reduces to our bidding the forces of nature; and even the artist appeals to us more directly than the writer. The writer has no such advantages as these in offering his brain-work to the world. Little wonder, therefore, is it that the popular applause and material advantages follow professions where the influence is obvious to every one who cannot even write his own name. But who, of those fitted to judge, would rank the profession of letters below any of the professions mentioned, or its members as less powerful in intellect, less manly in purpose, or less able in execution? Great are the disadvantages of literature as a profession, but it has its compensations which only its own members can appreciate; while its influence, silent though it be, is far beyond any other in the moulding of opinion. Ultimately the profession of letters will assume its true position in the world. Until that time comes the writer can well afford to receive as compliment the disparagement of the masses.

C. DAVIS ENGLISH.

PALMERSTON was travelling north, on one occasion, by rail. He purchased a third-class ticket, lit his cigar, and entered the coach. One of the employes called the attention of the manager to the fact, remarking, "What shall we do if Lord Palmerston rides third-class? Every one will follow suit, and no first or second-class tickets will be sold." The manager thought a moment, then took two third-class tickets, handed them to two chimney sweeps standing on the platform, and ushered them into the coach where Palmerston sat. Palmerston looked up, and immediately comprehended the position and the motive. Arriving at the next station, he purchased two first-class tickets, took the sweeps out, and ushered them into the first-class coach. The retaliation was appreciated on the part of the railroad managers.

A QUIET NEW ENGLAND VILLAGE.

WE came upon it suddenly as we were returning from an afternoon drive one evening last summer, while we were boarding in M——, a country town in Massachusetts. Upon reaching a sudden bend in the road, which had led us on very quietly for a mile or two previous to this, this little hamlet lay spread out before us as plain as a map, and we stopped our lazy old steed, and he was not at all averse to stopping at any time, and readily complied with our request now.

We sat there, and "viewed the landscape o'er," and so peaceful, so quiet, and withal so beautiful was the scene before us, that it was photographed on my mind, and memory has reverted to it many times since, and always with pleasure.

Nearest to us was a large farmhouse, with a long array of outbuildings in connection, all in good condition, painted and trim, with grounds in front filled with shrubs and flowers, many of which were in bloom, making in themselves pictures that far excel any paintings done by human hand. A little farther on, and on the opposite side of the road, were two or three pretty, tidy cottages, shaded by one large old elm. Next comes the village store and post-office, with the usual number of after-supper loungers, age, youth, and childhood, all represented in the half-score of humanity ranged on the door steps. Across the way, and back from the street a little, stand the church and schoolhouse side by side, and behind them the long row of horse-sheds, indispensable adjuncts to the New England meeting-house.

Here the road divides, and one branch, crossing a bridge on the left, follows the stream a short distance, and then, still diverging to the left, is lost from sight, and the other branch, following the right bank of the stream, can be traced for some distance farther on, showing that its course leads by half a dozen more houses; then a saw-mill with piles of logs and piles of lumber before it; then a three-story shop for the manufacture of wooden pails, three smaller buildings, a blacksmith's shop, a waggon-shop, and a few more houses.

Behind these buildings, on each side, lie narrow strips of cultivated fields, where tall grass, fields of oats, corn, rye, and the inevitable potato-patch are all seen, and back of these rise a line of low hills, mostly covered with woods; and all this, seen in the glorious light of a June sunset, presents a scene which no beauty-lover could fail to admire. While we sit looking, a rush is heard, a shriek of a steam whistle, and out from a gap in the hills comes the evening train, stops for five minutes at the little brick depôt, just discernible in the distance, and dashes on. This starts a new train of thought, and also starts the old horse from the brown study he appears to have fallen into, and we allow him to jog on at his own sweet will, while we take observations. Passing the thrifty farmhouse, we observe a long building, under which is carefully housed farm-machinery of the most-approved invention—mowing-machine, horse-rake, hay-tedder, disc-harrow, sulky-plough, and also the comfortable two-seated carriage and light buggy, all showing thrift, enterprise, and comfort. The open windows of the house show taste and comfort combined. We catch a glimpse of pictures and hanging lamp, parlour-organ, and sewing-machine. Farther down the road, from the open doors of the kitchens, we see the glow of the Florence oil-stoves—that boon to tired women—and occasionally we see the cans of a patent creamer in bright array, waiting the evening milking-time, and showing the owners to be patrons of a Coöperative Creamery Association, located not many miles distant.

We arrive in front of the post-office just as a small throng is collecting to witness the arrival and distribution of the evening mail. A bevy of young ladies come forth—in whose manners, dress, and appearance, there is no perceptible difference from a similar group in any large town or city—save the bright eye, rosy cheek, and light step of health—carrying their share of the contents of Uncle Sam's mail-bag, among which we notice *Harper's Monthly Magazine*, *Lippincott's*, *New England Monthly*; besides the *Bazaar*, *Domestic Monthly*, *Household*, and other lighter publications. The men seat themselves on the steps of the piazza, to investigate the contents of the *Boston Weekly Globe*, *Springfield Republican*, *Homestead*, *Daily Herald*, *New York Times*, *Tribune*; and occasionally a youth is seen to be absorbed in the fortunes of the heroine of the story in the *New York Weekly*.

We see a gleam of wires in the sunshine on the piazza roof, showing this little hamlet to have telephonic as well as telegraphic and railroad connection with the bustling world beyond.

The homes look neat and tasteful, the children look bright and healthy, the men look enterprising and intelligent; and all the surroundings show that they keep abreast with the times, and that a practical use is made of many of the best labour-saving inventions of the day, and that the true New