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MEMORIES OF GREAT MEN.

What a wonderful and beautiful thing is the gift of genius! How it enshrines its possessors in the minds and memories of men! How it creates a home for itself in hearts which have long felt, but could not express, its breathing thoughts and burning words! How its interests and sympathies go on circling and widening, like the ripples around the stone cast into the water, till they become as 'household words' or 'old familiar faces,' in all tongues and in all lands! How it grows—never older, but ever younger; the mighty men of yore speaking more powerfully to the generation of to-day, than to the past of yesterday!

Beauty has power, and it, also, is a gift from Heaven; but it passeth away, and its place is known no more; for who treasures the defaced and vacant casket, or the flower of the morning, when it lies on the cold ground? The easel of the painter and the chisel of the sculptor, may preserve the lineaments of loveliness, but only as a sight to the eyes, no longer as a voice to the heart.

Riches, too, have power, but they have also wings, and oftentimes they flee away. And even when they remain till the rich man is obliged to flee from them, they leave no memories, they create no sympathies.

Rank is mighty over the minds of men, and proudly does it rear its ermined form and jewelled brow; but the time soon comes when no voice sounds. No power emanates from the crimson pall and escutcheoned tomb. How different is genius from all these!

True, it has its waywardness, its follies, its eccentricities; but these are lost in, or perhaps only enhanced by, the charm of its

truth, its earnestness, its humility. Yes, genius is true; it is a reality; it has truth to inculcate, and work to do, were it only to bring down a sense of beauty or a power of vision to closed hearts and filmy eyes. Genius is earnest; it flutters not like the white-winged wanderers of the summer, idly and uselessly, from flower to flower; but, like the bee, it perceives, and earnestly extracts, use with the beauty, food with the perfume. Genius is humble; striving after something far higher than itself, which it never reaches, gazing into brightness and into beauty which it cannot emulate, it forever sees its own littleness, its own darkness, its own deformity, and shrinks from occupying the pedestal assigned to it by its day and generation. Of course, these qualities form the golden setting of the real gem, fresh from the depths of the ocean or the recesses of the mine, for never do they surround the mock jewel, created out of the dust and tinsel of the world.

It is not, however to the fulfilled thoughts, and words, and works of great men—it is not to their name and their fame throughout the land—it is not to the incense showered upon them in the halls of the crowned and the circles of the beautiful—that our hearts turn with the deepest understanding and sympathy. No, it is to their homes and their hearths, to their joys and their sorrows. Yonder are the walls which have looked down upon the midnight vigil and noonday languor. Yonder is the window whence the eye, gazing up to the heavens, has caught something of their inspiration. Lo, here the board which has echoed to the sweet sounds of household jest and homely tenderness. Lo, there the sleepless couch, where the sufferings of life, if not more bravely borne, have been more deeply felt, than by other men!

It has been our lot to catch occasional glimpses of the homes of great men, and, perhaps, our readers may not weary for a little of the oft-told tale, while we recall these memories of 'a long time ago.'

One May morning, we found ourselves at the door of a small dwelling, cheerless and commonplace looking, like most houses in the streets of gloomy London. We passed within, and there was a change: the fresh green of the stately Park trees, and the flowers and shrubs of the little garden which had once harbored pet nightingales, looked brightly and kindly upon us, while the early summer's sun came smiling through the windows, lighting up and glorifying the choice and beautiful pictures, and what was better than pictures, the genius-lit features of an octogenarian poet. A social and hospitable board is spread, and surrounded by some of kindred spirit. Men of science, men of genius, men of practice are there, gathered from the northern Tweed banks, and from the lands beyond the Atlantic. Gravely and gaily does the converse hold on its way, now hither, now thither, like the bird amongst the forest branches; one moment in the recesses of the heart's sympathies, the next sporting on the parterre of wit and anecdotes, and again soaring into the region of intellect. But, ever and anon, there was