

thought, expression and expedient, we are met by an insuperable obstacle. I mean the difficulty of transposing our existence by those wretched routes and gilded vehicles through countless decades back into remote times, and trying to feel the influences that controlled, not only nations, but communities and sects, and individuals, whose language and sentiments it is absolutely necessary to understand, to correctly interpret the true meaning of their words and actions. This stupendous undertaking is universally shirked or adroitly smoothed over to suit the purposes of partisan writers and relic-mongers who go back and prepare the way for pleasure parties of marvel-loving excursionists—and these, we may add, not requiring to be transported bodily, are spirited about through the medium of a species of "half hour series" in which the hungry student, in the dreamy ecstasy of an appetizing imagination, is enabled to compass the events of centuries in a space the size of a refined sandwich and to swallow the tempting repast of an exhumed dynasty at a gulp. The literary gastronomers who dress and serve these bits of mummydom to suit the fastidious taste of modern epicures, are men who glory in the mission of reclaiming the hidden treasures of bygone days; and this superhuman task, notwithstanding it is in direct violation of the laws of nature, they not only profess to have achieved, but with a generosity, sanctified by their own mental destitution, have bequeathed the invaluable store to posterity. So it is, like thieves in the night, we sneak in by stealth and gorging ourselves with all they can carry, strut abroad with the memory loaded down with