

done ! how deep we are in the world's lore ! how free from foolish prejudices ; how far above ancient objects of veneration ?" Those who enjoy this consciousness of inward strength naturally look not, as the inexperienced of former ages looked, for advice and encouragement from some whom they respected or revered ; but on the other hand, they are willing enough to bestow it ; thus their elders are saved a world of trouble ; may have guidance if they will accept it, dismissing the old-fashioned hobbling guide called experience. It is time they should acknowledge that in place of one Minerva, whom Athens was proud of, we have a whole generation born ready armed for every conflict ; whose swaddling-clothes are a panoply of wisdom. No wonder that they go their way rejoicing. They know everything except their own ignorance and the few things that may chance to hide, and divine everything except the feelings which these peculiarities of theirs are apt to excite in differently constituted minds. Nor, as we said above, are they chary of their superior wisdom, but willingly impart it ; the misfortune is that the terms in which it is expressed are not always clear to the uninitiated, to the decrepit understandings whose culture was mostly effected while slang was denied the privilege of decent society ; so that a new dictionary must needs be compiled before the sagacity of the fast school can be usefully digested into a new proverbial philosophy for common use and guidance.

"*Nil admirari* is almost necessarily the motto of such a school. It has been at all times the resource of fools aping wisdom ; but now we believe it is not a mere affectation, but a sadly genuine state of feeling. Various causes have combined to wither the poetic element in the young mind, and with it naturally decays the faculty of admiration, the source of some of our truest enjoyments and most elevating emotions. The youngest can rarely be content now to see, and feel, and enjoy ; they must also, or rather first, judge, compare and criticise—a process all the more rapid the fewer the grounds passed for comparison and judgment. Many would seem to have been born old, so completely has the gloss of life worn off before the fulness of life has ever been tasted. They come from country homes, and London seems quite commonplace to them. They go to the theatre for the first time, and are perfectly composed ; for ever a *la hauteur des circonstances*, they criticise the arrangements, the acting, the getting up, and the audience with the aplomb of an habitué. They go abroad and no contrast seems to prompt an inquiry, or waken an emotion of surprise. They see the grandeur of nature, or the marvels of art, or the triumphs of science, and they may approve, but not wonder ; they may express a judgment but not ask a question ; they may be satisfied, and gratify science or nature by saying so, but not be wrought into that state in which fuller minds feel overwhelmed by the presence of the sublime, and yield themselves with a sense of fuller life to the emotion which finds no utterance. Never, perhaps, were such varied excitements presented to eye and ear as in the present day ; but it would seem that, in the absence of the pure and simple spirit of enjoyment, the excitement itself is the sole object. It is not the music, or the scenery, or the riding which is the attraction, but the party with whom these pleasures are to be enjoyed, and the dinner or the dress involved, according as it is a male or female imagination that dwells upon the prospect. It follows that there is little medium between