

heard echoes from the painting-rooms where the pictures were composed (what Egg spoke of while drawing "The Taming of the Shrew," and what model he used: how fond Leslie was of honeysuckles—how interesting then to find some painted in his "Vicar"), receiving at the same time many a lesson on tolerance, on the folly of hasty judgment by a modern standard of taste, and on reverence for the gods of one's youth. Hazlitt speaks, as you will remember, of the jealousy of the painters, one for the other. It is a trait which, for my part, I have failed to discover. Listen to an artist's talk of a brother artist's work and you listen to a skilled and most faithful opinion, without, as a rule, a touch of malice—but, perhaps, I am fortunate in having only those who have climbed to the top of the tree: the revilers, the envious ones, are those always on a lower level. As we went from one old-fashioned canvas to another, from Collins to Etty, from Creswick to Cooke, we seemed to be in quite a different world to that painted in the modern studios. Cooke's sea is by no means the same sea as that which Mr. Moore draws, neither are Etty's goddesses (cruelly described in the catalogue as *females*!) of the same flesh and blood as those of Watts, nor are the green, delicious meadows and lanes of Creswick like the country of Vicat Cole, and of Leader. And yet it was a land which, with all its faults, I should be sorry never to have visited—a land of pleasant lights and shades, of round-faced, blooming nymphs, of still, shining seas and neat little boats. One meets the Primrose family bedecked in costumes the like of which assuredly never were worn, and Sir Roger de Coverley in grave attire, and here a black-eyed model from the Seven Dials calls himself Peter the Great, or a hook-nosed, ancient lady in a ruff surrounds herself with a fairy-tale court, and announces herself as Queen Elizabeth. These canvases into which the dead painters put their very hearts, these triumphs and successes of a by-gone generation, merit, I think, a fairer reception than that with which they have met to-day. It is cruel to laugh at work which abounds with the excellent quality of sincerity; it is ungenerous to be hard on those modest pieces which seem to disclaim any desire to be placed in the foremost ranks. In a humbled frame of mind I turned off to the great Dutchmen, to Sir Joshua, to Romney, all ready in the other room to dazzle my eyes, feeling that the flippant witticisms with which the English school of the middle of this century has been assailed is neither right nor just, but that the words of my old friend, which I have quoted, are the words of a true critic.

Then we went to the charming graceful Watteaus, where ladies and gentlemen in the prettiest day that ever was seen sit under the trees with Harlequin and Pierrot in a country where there are no poor people, no east winds, no winter or death or sorrow of any sort, nothing but dancing and feasting and sunshine. The colour has faded, the light has fled from many of those pictures. These delicate pinks and blues were brighter once, the trees swayed greener in the glades. But the skilful touch, the beautiful, composition, these time cannot injure. I know of no finer Watteaus, except the ones in Dulwich Gallery (in a bad enough condition, those), and can appreciate them the more from being familiar with the engravings. Would not you like to join that smiling company, to look into that lady's downcast brown eyes, to dance a moment with her on the grass to the tune that he of the shining satin cloak is thrumming on his lute? M. Antoine Watteau must have painted in a marble Pavilion, music at his elbow, and a blue sky overhead. I think he had never a care. We know that he was the son of a Valenciennes carpenter, and that he died of consumption when only thirty-six years old, but few of the events of his Parisian life, of his visit to England in 1720 (how he must have hated our climate) have ever come to light. The *bourgeois* from the provinces treats of Italian serenades, of garden parties in the Champs Élysées, of masquerades, as if he, like his patrons, had had nothing to do but to laugh and sing and make love all day long. A touch or two from his magic brush and the Academy walls fall, and instead one sees the Elysian Fields, wherein wander, always young, and happy, and beautiful, the daintiest ladies, the gallantest gentlemen: and one seems to hear the airs to which they danced before ever the *Carmagnole* was heard of. As fairy tales are good occasionally, so this travesty of life, life as it's painted on a face, is good, too, if only for the sake of the contrast this serene, cheerful Watteau land presents to the London streets bathed in a London fog.

Not far from the Lancret's there hangs a Greuze, a pretty piece of a soft-eyed young girl crowned with a green vine-wreath, about which picture I heard the following:—"A few months ago Lord Wemyss, on going in to Colnaghi's spied this Bacchante, and liking her, asked the price. Fifty guineas, he was told, but eventually he became the possessor for forty pounds, which, to my mind, is exactly what it is worth. Since then he has been offered three thousand guineas for it (it is only 15½ inches by 12½), which offer he has refused, as he says he shall not part with it under five thousand. Can you imagine a Greuze to be worth such a sum of money to you? I confess that he gives me but very little genuine pleasure, for even if he succeeds in catching my attention—and nobody angles for it so openly as Greuze—he only keeps it a very short time before I am tired to death of his tricks and his manners.

Pass Hogarth's wonderful portrait group, and Angelica Kauffman's stiff, hard work, and the most beautiful Romney, of Lady Warwick and her children, that I ever saw, and you come to the Rembrandts, of which the finest are, I think, the "Painter's Portrait" and the "Shipbuilder and His Wife," which belongs to the Queen. What an artist! How is it possible adequately to express one's

admiration of such a genius as Rembrandt? Words of praise, impertinent criticism, sound absurd before these immortal Dutch burgomasters, who care nothing for the commendation of a people to whom Art means so little. Before the canvases one should be mute, so immeasurably is the painter our superior.

And so I went on to the Holls, to the sad, sad pictures of funerals, of pawnbrokers' shops, of misery of all sorts, not one of which would I possess for untold gold, and we lingered in front of the portraits, and I heard how the Duke of Cleveland was always falling asleep as he sat, waking up suddenly with the half-angry expression the artist has caught so well. My friend's frequent emphatic praise was interrupted again and again by his sorrow for the irreparable loss the Academy had sustained in Holl's loss, and as I looked about the rooms and noted, for instance, Lord Spencer, Lord Dufferin and Signor Piatti, I felt how much in the future we shall miss his able hand. It seems last week only that I saw in his painting room the clever, dreadful "I am the Resurrection and the Life," and could hardly believe that the date really was 1872, though I knew it was before the days of Fitzjohn's Avenue. Yesterday I saw in the beautiful studios in St. John's Wood "Lord Hampden" and "Mr. Carbutt." To-day the busy fingers are still; nothing remains but these canvases. Truly, as the Spanish Monk said to Wilkie of the pictures in the Church, "They are the substance, we are the shadows. The key note of sadness struck, for my guide, among the neglected Leslies in the first room, vibrates here among the Holls in the last; and so melancholy did he become that he had hardly mind to show me the incomparable Turners in the water colour room which, acting like a tonic, soon restored him to his natural cheerful disposition.

WALTER POWELL.

VALENTINE.

LIKE children folded in a mother's arms,
Safe in the heart of earth the flowers sleep,
And dream of spring's soft showers, of summer suns,
Of white-winged clouds in skies of azure deep.
They soon will wake and lift their faces sweet
To greet us as we pass with careless feet.

Anew God's love will beautify the earth,
Another spring will open wide her gates,
Our vanished birds will come to us again
And sing their songs of love and choose their mates.
So choose I thee, to thee my song of love I sing,
Within thy soul may its soft cadence ring,
And bid thy dreaming heart waken to mine
And be forever my true valentine. A. L. T.

GOVERNMENT OF GREAT CITIES.

THE Mayor opened the proceedings of the City Council of Toronto for the current year with an address which, in length and importance, mounted towards the proportions of a budget speech. Its contents naturally revive the question, Is our civic administration, as at present constituted, adequate to the magnitude of these numerous works, and to the wise expenditure of these vast sums of public money? Public opinion in Toronto is distinguished by a certain languor which manifests itself in connection with this subject. It is easier to join in decrying those who propose reforms as theorists than to concentrate thought upon the necessity for, and the benefits that might arise from, changing the existing institutions. Let the reformers, it is said, drop their theories and devote all their efforts to working the system as it is. Whether the system greatly impedes the well meaning in the performance of their duty, whether it imposes unfruitful sacrifices of time, whether on that account it forbids many well-qualified citizens from offering their assistance, whether it so confuses responsibility for the acts of administration that municipal electors have difficulty in meting out censure or approval among their representatives—these questions, it appears, are not thought worthy of being worked out to a determination. The apologists of the present system seem to borrow their philosophy from the theologians. City government, with all its imperfections, is to be accepted, very like the world itself, as a place of probation, sufficiently well contrived for the purpose of evoking human virtue under difficulties.

The semi-official public discussion of this subject recently had under the auspices of the Legislative Committee of the Toronto City Council, was a much more fruitful event than would be supposed from the newspaper reports. The gentlemen who by official invitation were present and addressed the Committee were all citizens who either possessed a large personal experience of municipal affairs or had devoted special study to the subject. They had approached the question independently of each other; and this, the first opportunity for a serious conference, ended in bringing views, which had in some respects diverged, to a remarkable degree into harmony. Though no formal vote was taken, the results in most cases seemed to command the assent of the Committee.

At the outset the discussion cleared the subject of some floating ideas which somewhat intercepted the view of the real points. Municipal reform was disentangled from one idea, which seems to have been connected with it in some minds, of asking a special charter for the City of Toronto, granting more or less enlarged powers to its government. Not a greater independence of legislative oversight, but merely the improvement of those general

provisions of the Municipal Act which affect large cities, it was universally agreed, was the thing desired at the present time.

Another floating idea, that of government by "a Commission," also received its *quiescent*. Such phrases operate simply as dams in the way of practical thought. From what source shall the administrators of the local government derive their power? This is the real question, let their name or number be what they may. Shall the Commissioners be appointed by the citizens, that is, by election, or by an outside body? An outside body means the Provincial Government; and appointment by the Provincial Government would simply be a dangerous extension of the opportunities of party patronage. Civic electors, apathetic and blundering as they may be, are at least more likely in the long run to have a single eye to the good management of their own practical interests than any outside political authority.

Municipal government, it was agreed, must continue to be a government carried on under the supervision of representatives of the ratepayers. Are better modes of electing the mayor and council required? can a better working distribution of their powers be effected? to these questions the discussion practically narrowed itself.

A distinct principle, it seemed to be unanimously agreed, was to be regarded as underlying municipal government. It is, in substance, an organization of local property owners for the purpose of raising revenue and expending it among themselves for certain practical local objects. It follows that the forms of government should largely be framed to answer the requirements and responsibilities of a financial administration. The true model for such an administration is to be sought in the bank or the joint stock company, as much at least as in the political parliament.

The commercial corporations mentioned also are representative governments. The great body of their shareholders are obliged to commit their interests to the supervision of elected trustees. By what means do these electorates, as a rule, command so much ability and character to administer their affairs? What safeguards do they erect against inefficient service? How do they seek to protect themselves against dishonest employees?

Differences there are between a commercial and a municipal corporation, chiefly two: the number of the individual corporators, and the relative unity of their interests. If a commercial company could be broken up into a series of local, religious, political and other cliques, whose respective jealousies, sympathies, and private objects were capable of overshadowing the perception of their own stake in the general well-being, then the government of a Company might come to be conducted on the same principle as a City government, and would probably lead to the same results.

The first great aim of municipal reform, therefore, must be to minimize this overbearing influence of cliques and parties, by drawing the attention of civic electors to what are the real, and therefore ought to be the paramount, objects of municipal administration.

Here appears a reason why amendments to the Municipal Act are required in relation to large cities, although they may not be necessary for strictly rural municipalities or even for small towns. Professor Bryce, in his recent great work, *The American Commonwealth*, reports, as the result of an exhaustive examination of the facts, that the "Ring" and the "Ward Boss" seldom make their appearance in cities under 25,000 inhabitants. With increased population they increase in influence. "The smaller cities are not favourable to such kinds of control. Men know one another too well." (P. 93, Vol. II., Am. ed.) Permanency of residence and homogeneity of interests belong to rural municipalities, in contrast to the shifting population and social inequalities which prevail in cities. In great, and particularly in continually growing cities, joint action is very difficult for the general mass of citizens. Permanent electoral organization from year to year seems to be only maintainable under some banner of party prejudice or of special private interest. In Toronto these conditions are aggravated by an antiquated ward distribution, which has become extremely unequal and inconsistent with any principle of proportionate representation, whether based on assessed property or on population. The result of the elections, year after year, seems to prove that it is highly favourable to personal and other clique interests.

The recent discussion resulted in marked progress towards unanimity of opinion in regard to the remedy for this primary and generally admitted evil. The remedy some have strenuously advocated was not a redistribution of the wards, but the total abolition of those divisions. The whole list of aldermen, it was urged, should be elected by general vote from the city at large. The argument was that the larger constituency would exact men of greater prominence and of a more generally acknowledged ability than the accustomed "ward politician."

The objections to this *scrutin de liste*, or entire abolition of wards, urged at the City Hall conference, were felt to have such force that the proposal was frankly and definitely withdrawn, with the full concurrence of those who had advocated it.

The kind of prominence and ability that most often, unfortunately, prove effectual in so large constituencies are prominence within a political party, and the ability to pull the wires of a far-reaching "machine." Hence the adoption of the *scrutin de liste* into city elections might banish the small ward politician, but it would be at the risk of importing the party politician, and thus introducing similar evils on a more formidable scale. Rings and parties would still be at an advantage over independent citizens, and the