

CHARACTER OF ROUSSEAU.

No man of his volatile age exhibits more amply the passing nature of popular fame than Rousseau. The times were made for the eminence of profligacy. Rousseau shot up in that region of busy darkness like a firework, glittered for a moment with a lustre that fixed all eyes, and was extinguished with the rapidity of the firework. He had been charged with labouring to overthrow the French government: the charge erred, only in its not being universal. He laboured to overthrow all governments, for he laboured to overthrow all society. His whole life was a series of hostility against the peace of mankind. He assailed it in all its forms. In his "Emilie," he broke down the principles of filial obedience; in his "Nouvelle Héloïse," he corrupted the union of husband and wife; in his "Contrat Social," he dissolved the allegiance of the subject to his King; in his "Confessions," he insulted all sense of religion by the blasphemy of invoking the Divine Being to be a witness of the deepest violation of his laws. By thus appealing to every evil propensity of man, he worshipped his only god—fame, and obtained for himself all the notoriety that belongs to violent partisanship on one side, and to the resentment of authority on the other. The leader who enlisted under his flag the whole profligacy of Europe, must become conspicuous; the victim who concentrated upon his head the wrath of all the great constituted interests of Europe, the priesthood, the tribunals, and the cabinets, must become memorable even by the means employed in inflicting the scourge. This sinless renown was his grand object, and he sought persecution with the eagerness of a man seeking for the nutriment of his existence. He fled from land to land, delighted at the flashes of royal and religious wrath which followed him; and compounded with their keenness for their illustration. When they had at length died away, he became his own persecutor. He loved so inveterately to think himself an object of universal fear, that all his artifice was employed to prolong the semblance of persecution. He now fled where none followed. He saw visionary swords pursuing him to his pillow, and exclaimed again oppression, when even justice had forgotten him. At length artifice failed; he found that he could neither sting the continental governments into giving him the celebrity of a martyr, nor persuade mankind into the conviction that he was born to be hunted down by a conspiracy of kings. He had now no farther business in existence. He married his mistress, sent his foundations to an hospital; made one desperate stab at glory, by predicting the hour of his death; and shot himself to accomplish the prediction. The only epitaph upon his tomb should be, "*Here lies the Slave of Vanity.*"

The life of Rousseau might be the history of the 18th century, for it touched upon all its features, religious, political, and literary. From his infancy he was wayward and insubordinate. At school he could learn nothing. Put to a trade, he was equally unmanageable. His father, a watchmaker, found him too unsteady for his own pursuit, and bound him to a solicitor. By this master he was soon sent back for idleness. Exhibiting some turn for the arts, he was next bound to an engraver. From him he ran away. But he was now a youth, and to return to the parental jurisdiction would have been too formidable an encroachment on his natural liberty. He became a rambler through the mountain country round the lake. When he was on the point of starving, he threw himself into the hands of a Popish priest in Savoy, to whom he probably gave some hopes of his becoming a proselyte from the "Heresies of Calvin," and the influence of twenty florins completed his new profession of faith at Turin. He again became a rambler, was dismissed from various households, and again returned to Savoy. He now adopted music, and remained at Chamberry as a teacher, for the longest stationary period of his life, eight years of habitual licentiousness. Disgust on both sides dissolved the connexion of the devotee and the proselyte, and Rousseau went to Paris, the common refuge of intelligence, poverty, and profligacy. There, in 1743, some accidental influence made him secretary to the French Legation at Venice. But his old temperament prevailed. He became restless, and involved himself in the ambassador's displeasure, and again returned to Paris. For a while he obtained a scanty provision by copying music; but he was at length to start upon the world. The question which he has made so memorable was, in 1750, proposed by the Academy of Dijon: "Whether the re-establishment of the arts and sciences has contributed to purify morals?" The circumstances of his essay on the subject are among the instances of the slight hinge on which the fortunes of individuals, and perhaps of nations, sometimes turn. Rousseau sketched a paper in the affirmative. He had at this time been employed in writing articles for the *Encyclopédie*. Diderot, its conductor, one day came into the room while he was busied with the essay. He took it up. "What is this?" he asked; "It is eloquent—nay, true; but it is foolish! You will never gain anything by it if a prize in Dijon. Write it for Paris—for Europe!" Rousseau remonstrated, but his adviser persevered. "Write truth, and you will soon be forgotten, perhaps never read; write paradox—stirrle old opinions—ridicule the past—flatter the present—be sublime and absurd—leave the world in doubt, whether they should laugh at you, or fall down and worship at your feet, and you will make your fortune." He took the subtle advice—threw his essay into the fire—produced a new one—won the prize at Dijon—became the talk of Paris—and from that moment commenced the showy, disturbed, and guilty publicity, which made his life a curse and a wonder to Europe.

He next devoted himself exclusively to the cultivation of his new popularity, and wrote for the French stage his "Devin du Village," a little opera, whose Swiss airs delighted the Parisian audiences. He was now in the way to his predicted fortune; but his vanity again threw him back. He wrote a pamphlet to prove to the French amateurs that, from the nature of their language, they were incapable of vocal music! He soon found the hazard of returning to truth. The whole nation felt the imputation as a mortal affront, and he was forced to fly beyond the frontiers. He took refuge in Geneva; and as his faith was not firmer than his morality, he attempted to propitiate public opinion by renouncing Popery.

But he was at length to signalize himself by a production which combined all his talent and all his profligacy. Its groundwork was an event of his early life, in which, having basely abused the trust reposed in him as a tutor, he had been expelled the family with scorn and shame. This work was his "Julia, ou La Nouvelle Héloïse." Diderot's advice had made a powerful impression. It never quitted him during his life. He prefaced his volumes by a declaration worthy of the highest flight of paradox; that the female who read a page of them was inevitably undone; that he looked upon it as a misfortune that the age no longer existed in which such works were the subject of public justice; and that every woman should, as an act of essential precaution, throw the book instantly into the fire. If Diderot knew mankind in general, Rousseau shewed, in this instance, that he knew the nature of French women well. The profligacy, the danger, and the romance, in one, formed a stimulant which the national curiosity found irresistible.

The Nouvelle Héloïse was instantly in every female hand in France; it was universally adopted as the model of manners, feelings, and language; and the author of a work, infamous in all objects, was blazoned by all the voices of a volatile people, as the first writer of Europe!

The artifice had thus achieved its purpose, and the records of literature have never given an example of an artifice more required by the innate deficiencies of a work of fame. This celebrated romance realizes the saying of a witty profligate of Versailles—"If it were not for the vice, it would be the dullest spot in the world." The new Héloïse, if it were not for its guilt, would probably never have been endured. All higher taste is as much revolted by it, as all higher morality.

The masculine effrontery of the heroine—the gross insensibility of the husband, and the mingled meanness and exaggeration, the cold treachery, and the dry formality of the half-mendicant, half-pedagogue, who acts as the seducer; leave us only to be astonished at the chances which give celebrity. It is true that it contains passages of French eloquence, and therefore eloquence in no other land or language of earth; ostentatious appeals to improbable emotions; laboured amplifications of common-place thoughts, and overflowing raptures on skies and stars, winds and waters; and all those by a man whose only delight was in the lowest sensualities of a life at war with every feeling of purity and nature.

Having thus given his contribution to the private shame of society, he was only the fitter to assist in its public ruin. The double apostate in religion, and the corrupter in morals, he was by instinct the Jacobin.

He now turned from profligacy to politics, and showed that the change of subject had not diminished his venom. He published his "Social Contract," a work which declared that freedom was incompatible with all governments—but a Republic.

The times were threatening, and the advocate of

rebellion could not expect to meet with impunity in the days when kings were in peril. He was driven successively from France and Switzerland—again stole into Paris, where he fantastically assumed the disguise of an Armenian; and from France, in 1776, on the instigation of his brother atheist Hume, came to England. Here he soon grew weary of the decencies required by English life; felt that the first attentions of curiosity and partisanship were passing away; unable to live without perpetual food for his vanity, invented a plot for his own assassination, and under cover of his imaginary peril, found an excuse for flying back to Paris once more.

But he had already exhausted his fame; other men had filled up his place, and the subterranean voices of war and revolution were too loud for the public to listen to the querulousness of a half-maniac of sixty, who had insulted every benefactor, and whose only enjoyment

was that of continually exclaiming that he was betrayed by all.

He now became domestic, and married his housekeeper! His five children by her, the man of sentiment had previously sent to the foundling hospital, never to see them again. He was nearly forgotten, when the eccentric Marquis Girardin gave him a place of refuge in the grounds of his chateau at Ermenonville. He enjoyed this liberality but for a few months; in July, 1777, he was found dead in his chamber, the victim of his own hand!—*From Croly's Life of Burke.*

ANECDOTE OF A DYING FATHER.

A gentleman of sincere and ardent piety, was nevertheless entirely unsuccessful in the religious training of his family. In spite of all his anxious efforts, they grew up, before his eyes, to man's estate, without at all yielding to the impressions which he so strenuously laboured to make. Though they held their father in the highest respect, they still resisted every endeavour and every fond art by which he essayed to draw their hearts to God; so that from day to day he had to take up the lamentation of the prophet, "They have made their faces harder than a rock; they have refused to return." Foiled in every attempt at success in what was, next to his own salvation, the leading object of his wishes, at last he fixed his heart on one remaining hope: it was this—that when he came to die, and when his children, softened by sorrow for a parent whom they loved, would be disposed to listen with peculiar reverence to his dying counsels—that at that solemn and impressive moment God would give him strength to bear such a testimony to the reality of religion, to the truth of its promises, and to the power of the Gospel, as could not but effect what all his living exhortations had failed to accomplish. In a word, the constant object of his prayers to God was, that, for his children's sake, he might be blessed with what is called a triumphant death. He came then, at the allotted time, to that dread hour which awaits us all. But here also he experienced the utter failure of his expectations. As will often happen with God's most faithful and favoured servants, (and, perhaps, in this case, as a salutary contrivance to his will, and check to his presumption), the sun of this much-tried Christian went down in clouds. His disease apparently overwhelmed and absorbed him. To human eyes all was dark and gloomy. "He died—and made no sign." Who would not be ready at once to say that the prayer of this good man had, by an inscrutable Providence, been clean cast out; and that on that death-bed he had bid farewell to his cherished hopes for ever? Who would not anticipate how such an exit of such a father must have strengthened his children in their unbelief; and led them to apply, in a spiritual, no less than in a natural sense, those remarkable expressions—"That which beareth the sons of men, beareth beasts; even one thing beareth them; at the one die, so dieth the other; yea they all have one breath; so that a man bath no pre-eminence above a beast?" But no. "God's ways are not our ways!" The result was altogether the reverse. This awful and distressing scene produced, upon the minds of the survivors, the happiest effects. They were struck with alarm at so unexpected a termination of their father's earthly course. "If these things," thought they, "are done in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" If death be this King of terrors to one who served God diligently and faithfully, as our father did, what will it be to us? If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" Such was the substance of their mutual counsels and reflections. And such was the effect produced upon the hearts and consciences of these young persons, that, though too late to gladden their father's last hours on earth, "his people became their people, and his God their God." And thus the prayer which the Lord refused to answer in the letter, he abundantly granted in the spirit. And He who "chose the weak things of the world to confound the mighty," was pleased to accomplish, by the withdrawal of succour and support, all that human wisdom had anticipated, as a consummation to be attained by a victorious and triumphant death alone.—*From the Sequel to the Shanamite, by the Rev. H. Woodward.*

SIR SAMUEL ROMILLY'S RECOLLECTIONS OF HIS YOUTH.

Upon receiving so large an accession to his fortune, my father removed out of his country lodgings into a house, still however at Marylebone; though, by the

increase of the new buildings, it had ceased to be the country, and was merely the outskirts of London. There our whole family now resided throughout the year, what had been our town-house being appropriated entirely to business. Our new house was in High Street, and, to judge from its external appearance, its narrow form, its two small windows on a floor, and the little square pieces of ground behind it, which was dismissed with the name of a garden, one would have supposed that very scanty and very homely indeed must have been this our comparative opulence and luxury. But those who had mingled in our family, and had hearts to feel in what real happiness consists, would have formed a very different judgment. They would have found a lively, youthful, and accomplished society, blest with every enjoyment that an endearing home can afford; a society united by a similarity of tastes, dispositions and affections, as well as by the strongest ties of blood. They would have admired our lively, varied, and innocent pleasures; our summer rides and walks in the cheerful country, which was close to us; our winter evening occupations of drawing, while one of us read aloud some interesting book, or the oldest of my cousins played and sung to us with exquisite taste and expression; the little banquets with which we celebrated the anniversary of my father's wedding, and of the birth of every member of our happy society; and the dances with which, in spite of the smallness of our rooms, we were frequently indulged.—I cannot recollect the days, happily I may say the years, which thus passed away, without the most lively emotion. I love to transport myself in idea into our little parlour with its green paper, and the beautiful prints of Vivares, Bartolozzi, and Strange, from the pictures of Claude, Caracci, Raphael, and Corregio, with which its walls were elegantly adorned; and to call again to mind the familiar and affectionate society of young and old intermixed, which was gathered round the fire; and even the Italian greyhound, the cat, and the spaniel, which lay in perfect harmony basking before it. I delight to see the door open, that I may recognise the friendly countenances of the servants, and, above all, of the old nurse, to whom we were all endeared, because it was while she attended my mother that her health had so much improved.—*Memoirs of the Life of Sir Samuel Romilly.*

The Garner.

GOD'S ALLOWANCE FOR CONSTITUTIONAL DIFFERENCES.

No doubt but God in the judgment which he passes upon men, makes allowance for the difference of their constitutions; for He knows whereof we are made, and remembers of what dust it is. He considers that every man's composition inclines him strongly, some to one, and some to another passion: and do we think that he expects the same kind of performances from both? This is making him a hard master indeed, and not content with what our talent will naturally produce. This is expecting interest from us, not according to our ability, but according to his arbitrary will.—Do we think, for instance, that he expects the same temper of mind, the same evenness, and steadiness of spirit from a sanguine man, as does from the cold-blooded phlegmatic? The Scripture examples do not tell us so. Or do we think that he requires the same fervent zeal, and flights of devotion, from the phlegmatic, as he does from the warm and sanguine? The phlegmatic would be sorry to have it so. Though both are bound to struggle with their infirmities, yet nature wills nature still, and make us sometimes apt to fail. And it is some excuse if we fall on the right side; I mean, that side to which our nature most inclines us: and that will not only be a good plea for obtaining our pardon, but will make us amends some other way. For if our constitution leads us to some certain sins, let us follow it a little farther, and it will equally incline us to some certain virtues; and if we weigh the one against the other, the balance of our nature will be even. But for men to cross their constitution, and sin against the current of their nature,—for a phlegmatic man to be intemperate, or a sanguine man to be indecent, to have all the evil of our passions, and nothing of the good,—this is indeed an unpardonable thing.—*Bishop Hickman.*

SIN AND DEVONIAN INCOMPATIBLE.

This is a truth which cannot be impressed upon the mind of youth too early, too frequently, or too forcibly. *Sin and devotion cannot long subsist together in the same breast.* Where one is predominant, it will assuredly expel the other. Vice, like other habits, commences from small beginnings; and only by almost imperceptible gradations continues to subdue our better feelings, and to assimilate them to itself. But the stated recurrence of prayer stands directly in the way of the growth of such habits; and, by turning up the soil from time to time, prevents the evil weeds sown in our hearts by the wicked one from taking deep and effectual root. By prayer of course I mean that fervour of the spirit, and earnest and unrestrained communication to the Almighty of our inmost thoughts, which constitute its essence. A mechanical and cold recourse to stated forms at stated seasons may be dignified by the same appellation, but is much too weak an instrument to defend us against the assaults of the formidable spiritual enemy with whom we have to contend. But we may confidently assert, that the heart which commences and closes its daily occupations with a sincere and fervent performance of the duties of religion, can incur little danger of any very fatal lapse in the intervening period. It will indeed, after all, have many sins both of omission and commission with which to reproach itself; and it will equally incline us to some certain virtues; and if we weigh the one against the other, the balance of our nature will be even. But for men to cross their constitution, and sin against the current of their nature,—for a phlegmatic man to be intemperate, or a sanguine man to be indecent, to have all the evil of our passions, and nothing of the good,—this is indeed an unpardonable thing.—*Bishop Hickman.*

REASONS FOR HALLOWING THE LORD'S DAY.

That we should keep this day holy to the Lord would appear obligatory, because it was a day on which the Apostles and early Christians assembled themselves together. The passage in the Acts, independently of others, confirms this, where we read, "Upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread." Because also a distinguishing title had been given to it, as denoting its institution by Christ. St. John tells us in the Revelations, "that he was in the Spirit on the Lord's day." Because too, that down from the Apostolic age its observance has been the uniform practice of the church—that however great the divisions, and violent the disputes of that church on other questions, this has ever remained undoubted and undisputed.

Because it is very natural and very consistent that the greatest of all events that could affect the interests of a Christian world—that could fill with the sublimest of its joys—that could awaken the language of its proudest triumphs, should have its own day of commemoration; and that he who ascended up on high, leading captivity captive, bearing on his brow the crown of three victories over sin, over death, and over hell—who thus brought life and immortality to light—who thus consummated his great work for which he travelled through the agonies of the body, and through the agonies of the soul, being delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification—that He should thus have a dedicated day to the honour of his name, to the expression of our holy gratitude for his marvellous love—to the keeping of his ordinances—to the assembling together of his people—and for the immediate propagation of his cause, and to the spreading of his glories.

THE WORLD OVERCOME.

The world is never wanting in versatility, and Satan never loses a soul through defective ingenuity in varying the method of attack. If he cannot alarm by opposition, he will lull into security; where threatenings have been powerless, blandishments may be effectual: but whatever the method of assault, if successfully resisted, there is a time of belief that Jesus is the Son of God. We look at men who are engaged in all the bustle of commerce, or slaving day by day at a money-making occupation; we see them carried away by the lust of gain; they are tempted to push their speculations on the right hand and on the left; and we live in such an atmosphere of profit and loss that it is hard to preserve ourselves from the miasma of covetousness around us. Here we perceive a collision between the world and the Christian man of business. The world promises to sweep its wealth into his coffers, only bargaining perchance that he practises some of its underhand shuffling; but he will overcome by "believing that Jesus is the Son of God." He will keep his desires within proper and honest limits; and, believing that He who is divine will support him, and that He said, "Commit thy ways unto the Lord," will keep him in all his paths, he will maintain the most unwavering rectitude. It is not because a commercial trick would be certain to pass unnoticed that he would use it; and it is not because a dexterous innovation is sanctioned by the practice of others in his profession that he will introduce it into his own: for his faith bids him to follow the multitude in doing evil. But, in such exigencies, it becomes his earnest desire to keep the balance true, and the ledger accurate; and the world is overcome in the shops, in the market, the exchange; and faith wins the trophies of the victory asserted in our text (1 John v. 5) as much in the dealings of traffic as from the death-beds of saints.—*Rev. H. Melville.*

RECREATIONS.

Recreation is a second creation when weariness hath almost annihilated one's spirits. It is the breathing of the soul, which otherwise would be stifled with continual business. We may trespass in them, if using such as are not forbidden by the lawyer, as against the statutes; physician, as against health; divine as against conscience.—Spoil not the morning (the quintessence of the day) in recreations. For sleep itself is a recreation; add not therefore sauce to sauce; and he cannot have properly any title to be refreshed, who was not first faint; pastime, like wine, is poison in the morning. It is then good husbandry to sow the head, which hath lain fallow all night, with some serious work. Chiefly intent not on the Lord's day to use unlawful sports; thus to spare thine own flock, and to shear God's Lamb.—Let thy recreations be ingenious, and bear proportion with thine age. If thou sayest with St. Paul, "When I was a child, I did as a child," say also with him, "But when I became a man, I put away childish things." Wear also the child's coat, if thou usest his sports. Refresh that part of thy body which is most wearied. If thy life be sedentary, exercise thy body; if stirring and active, recreate thy mind. But take heed of cozening thy mind, in setting it to do a double task, under pretence of giving it a play-day, as in the labyrinth of chess, and other studious games. Choke not thy soul with immoderate pouring in of the cordial of pleasure. The creation lasted but six days of the first week; profane they, whose recreations last seven days every week; rather abridge thyself of thy lawful liberty therein, and their recreations shall both strengthen labour, and sweeten rest; and we may expect God's blessing and protection on us in following them, as well as in doing our work. As for those who will not take lawful pleasure, let them be feared as they will take unlawful pleasure, and by lacing themselves too hard grow awry on one side.—*Fuller.*

GOD THE FOUNTAIN OF TRUE HONOR.

God is the fountain of honor, and the conduit by which he conveys it to the sons of men are virtuous and generous practices.—But as for us, who have more immediately and nearly devoted both our persons and concerns to his service, it were infinitely vain to expect to fit upon any other terms. Some indeed may promise themselves high matters from full revenues, stately palaces, court interests, and great dependencies. But that which makes the clergy glorious, is to be known in their profession, unspotted in their lives, active and laborious in their charges, bold and resolute in opposing seducers, and daring to look vice in the face, though never so potent and illustrious. And lastly, to be gentle, courteous, and compassionate to all. These are our robes, and our maces, our escutcheons, and highest titles of honour; for by all these things God is honoured; who has declared this the eternal rule and standard of all honour derivable upon men, "that those who honour him, shall be honoured by him."—*South.*

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