

soul advancing,—fairly rising over the foolish greatness of a boy's long thoughts; but immediately lose your confidence in the hero's ability to climb, Napoleon like, over difficulties, when you read—"when I have forever lost her,"—and see by that that his enthusiasm is the apparent outcome of a foolish heart set in conjunction with a powerful mind. We pass over many incidents that are of apparently little worth, (though they all aid in the one object), viz.: His attending the theatre at Hockdorf; his arrival in the sweet little town where he met Philina, and some actors, associated and picnicked with them, until we find him in conversation with the stranger who personifies the parson during their pleasure-excursion. Speaking of educating,—the manner of,—the stranger is made to say: " \* \* the man commonly styled a genius, labors under greater disadvantages than he who possesses only ordinary talents, as the one can be more easily misinstructed and driven more irretrievably in a wrong direction than the other." At this we are reminded of Byron, and the discussions that have arisen over the distemper that was born, and seemingly partly bred in him by a foolish, fond parent. "But will not genius save itself?" asked Wilhelm, "is she not competent to heal her self-inflicted wounds?" " \* \* \* No one should flatter himself that he can overcome the impressions of his early youth," replied the stranger. This would throw many a weight upon blameless souls, if it had ever been the cause of a paralysis of the efforts talent continually makes, in this age of freedom, to throw off the enthrallment of inferior youthful associations. "Happy those whom Fate protects and educates according to his talents," said Wilhelm. "Fate is in truth an excellent, but a dear instructor. I should rather rely upon the understanding of a human teacher," said the stranger; which would lead us to the prosaic life of imitation, and kill all experience, good or bad, make homely youths of us all, with homely wits, to boot. But then again, he talks so soundly when he adds, "Are not many things very mighty in their beginnings, which after all, terminate very absurdly?" Wilhelm is plainly in the dark here, for he suggests, "You jest." With Fournier, he vainly imagined that the "attractions are proportioned to the destinies;" but with Emerson, he was yet to see that Destiny lies with Deity, common sense with man. His enthusiasm was of the poetic kind, but he found himself at a loss when he came to converse with experience. He had not yet learned that pedantry consists in strictly adhering to technicalities; oblivious to the end in view through a too careful inspection of the means; and that genius must not neglect the means to greatness, fearing pedantry. All this talk was not wasted upon him, however. He often found shelter in silence, but we cannot see, at his next conversation, be it with whoever it may, that he has not bettered himself somewhat. But his inability to defend himself from the plunderings of his so newly made and readily accepted friends, is boyish in the extreme. We have no means of knowing his exact age at this time, but would think him about 22 years old. Old enough at least to discriminate between characters, and to discern an object in every man's encroachment upon his pocket-money. But here again, we find that our hero was himself bound, and fairly set in the stocks, of early associations. Melina was a prince,

in form; and though distasteful to Wilhelm from his small minded insinuations, yet, Wilhelm could not resist his repeated entreaties to invest in the theatrical stock. His disgust at Philina is only temporary. He fairly likes Laertes. Is mystified by Mignon. Has formed no opinion whatever of Frederick. And his sudden fancy for the old harper is surely a characteristic action of an impulsive mind that knows no obstruction to the attainment of its fancies. The pathos of the author is nowhere more copiously expanded than in the scenes between Wilhelm, the old Harper, and Mignon. There is some sentiment, too, in the old man's songs, though much of their beauty is lost in translation.

But a person of Wilhelm's stamp could not possibly be stayed in middle classes. It does happen, in aristocratic countries, that ability will rise above custom, though it is not ordinarily so. His introduction to the countess, and his actions during the time, indicate plainly his former associations. His slight embarrassment, in conversation with the countess, tells us that she was the first lady of refinement that he had ever met. And the doings of the company after their engagement by the Baron, makes them no wiser than those of the same profession in the nineteenth century, that is, "they ordered a better dinner than they had lately been accustomed to enjoy." This, of course, is the company Melina has managed to collect at the tavern where they were all stopping. But Wilhelm debated with himself some time before concluding to visit the castle with the troupe. The fascination of the glimpse at higher life his short talk with the countess had given him, overcame any reasonable objections he might have had to allowing the company to play at the castle with his assistance. His "great object was to study mankind." That is, it was, at that particular moment. But his knowledge in that direction rendered him little wiser. He was just as apt to be swindled by Melina, cozened by Jarno, or led into a pitfall, at the end of his career, as at the moment he exclaimed: "What ease, what a natural grace is theirs, who are born to hereditary fortune!" His marriage with Natalia justifies this assertion. In that case, reason affection would have well-nigh crushed him, but for the foolishness of crack-brained Friedrich, and the solicitations of Lothario. In this he seemed almost as entirely disinterested as, at the outset of his career, he was in his association with the troupes of actors he so frequently met. His discomfort at the castle, keeping himself with the rest of the company, when his bearing might have secured him better quarters, are the actions of one who has not yet found the faculty of foisting himself to his full height among men. He could not yet command. The culture of the higher life baffled his discrimination. Those in the higher life were as Gods to him. Like Dian's temple as viewed by those of the present age across the vista of 18 centuries. This mind we can plainly see, will never cry out impatiently at the "utter lack of men in Italy," as did Napoleon when he petulantly remarked that there were but three *men* in the entire peninsula. Wilhelm was undoubtedly superior to his associations; else why the attention of the Countess at first sight. She found in him the man of ideas, not of actions. One who should have been set in a more exalted sphere. Refinement knows refinement; vulgarly knows it only as pride. Melina

looked to replenishing her scanty exchequer; Laertes appeared to have no particular aim; but Wilhelm was devoting himself to what Werner would call idleness of the worst sort; but what was in reality lifting him to a level with himself. To be a successful middle-class man, one must be self-interested, overcoming ideas by actions, being made active by necessity as well as by combustion of thought. Accumulation builds up reputation, with them. But with the class Wilhelm was about to enter, there was no dependence upon pecuniary welfare. They were devoted to culture, and the study of the arts—what Antony would call "base imitation." They were devoted to culture from sheer necessity of their situations. But it killed actions of any particular magnitude. They never allowed themselves to be carried away by an idea; else they might possibly have risen above imitating imitations, and studied with the Gods themselves. Their affluence unconsciously bore down their strength. Doubtless they would look now upon the self-made heroes of modern days, with as much desire to compete in worth, as did Wilhelm upon them. They looked, to him, like the golden lining of a cloud, whose richness of hue contained the storm that was hid beneath. If the same scenes were set for to-day, they could look at him, with his sturdy, courtier-like form, and uncommon brilliancy of mind, and perceive the extra acknowledgments he would receive from the men of learning and the world in general, after he should have attained the topmost round; simply for the reason that performance has shown itself to be in the man, not in his situation. How much better is he that baffles envy, struggles with destiny, to grasp a crown, than whom Fortune sets upon an high hill, even the high hill of aristocratic security. He shall have more perfection, for he must have suffered greater self-denial.

KABUS.

(to be continued.)

### Scraps from my Note Book.

#### XXIV.

#### OID ON DEVELOPMENT OF LIGHT AND HEAT.

There are two prominent hypotheses as to the source whence the sun derives its light and heat without apparent diminution of its mass. The first of these asserts that there are vast streams of meteoric substances, (such as the earth crosses twice in its annual orbit,) constantly falling into the liquid ocean of everlasting flame that surges over the solar surface. This hypothesis is the more commonly received. The second maintains that the light and heat of the sun are the result of *pressure* only, and mathematical calculations are made, that, to many minds amount to demonstration.

Of these two hypotheses, the latter is accounted the more modern. But, turning over a copy of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, a few days since the following verses, beginning with the 69th, Book I, struck me as having probably suggested his line of argument to the German scientist, to whom we owe the notion that pressure, such as God alone can bring to bear, is the source of solar flame:

"Vix ea limitibus disceperat omnia certis,  
Cum que presset diu massa latere sub illa,  
Sidera coeperunt toto effervescente celo."  
[Scarcely had he separated all these within certain limits, when the stars, which, pressed, long lay hidden under that mass, began to grow fervent in the whole heaven.]  
Where did an old Roman poet, who died

before the Christian era, obtain the thought herein so clearly expressed? Was it a happy accident, a guess, or a religious tradition? A religious tradition, I think it must have been; for, in writing of the creation, an ancient poet, who was clear of all purpose in the interest of science, would have set forth the things commonly believed. It may have been one of those legends floating down the ages from the time when man conversed familiarly with the angelic beings who instructed him for his destiny, and that died out with the subjugation of primitive races.

It also seems to me that Ovid's account of the Four Ages, of the Battle of the Giants, and of the Deluge, is but an imperfect statement of what Moses relates more clearly. Everything stands in its order; the steady lapse towards utter wickedness, the giant brood of robbers and murderers, and finally the Deluge for renovation.

#### XXV.

#### PLATO, OF MOSCOW.

Catherine II., of Russia, having invited Diderot to visit her, at her capital, proposed to amuse herself one day by having him bait Plato, the highest church dignitary of her empire. Accordingly, having given Diderot some hints of the line of conversation he was to pursue, she sent for Plato, and introduced him to the Frenchman. As soon as all parties were seated, Diderot abruptly addressed the Primate with the exclamation "*Non est Deus!*" Quick as lightning Plato responded in the words of the Psalmist, "*Dixit stultus in corde suo, Non est Deus;*" and there the conversation ended.

The method of Plato's notification of his elevation to the Primacy, was characteristic of Catherine's levity. In the ritual of the cathedral service at Moscow there is a prayer for the Metropolitan. Upon the death of Plato's predecessor, it had been determined to raise him to the vacant dignity; but the matter was carefully concealed from him, and the priest who was to conduct the service for the day was instructed by the Empress to introduce Plato's name into the prayer for the Metropolitan. His start of surprise, when he heard his name in that connection, was an object of such amusement to Catherine, that she had Plato's portrait painted as at the moment of listening to the ill-timed announcement, and to-day it may be seen in the Bethany convent.

The Empress once had a sheet of paper sent to Plato as he was ascending the pulpit, and asked him to read the sermon therein contained. The paper was blank; but the ready-witted Metropolitan did as desired, and preached a most impressive sermon, commencing thus: "God created the world out of nothing." These stories I glean from Dean Stanley's *History of the Eastern Church*.

#### XXIV.

#### ILLEGITIMACY AND REVOLUTION.

It is a source of wonder to most people that Paris is so full of communists, and always ripe for revolution. Since 1789, no government in France has lasted longer than twenty years; and the question that plagues every ruler is, How to keep the dangerous classes of Paris under control.

But one glance at statistics clears up the mystery. In 1848, at the time of the overthrow of the Orleans dynasty, the population of Paris numbered 1,050,000 inhabitants, of which 300,000 were of illegitimate birth. The proportion is about the same to-day. One-third of the people