

think and speak and feel and act. They have soul. Hence the Novel, because it has more of the aesthetic, is legitimately entitled to the first place among the fine arts. What then is the central principle? Fortunately, it is something better than physical beauty—than even womanly beauty. It is more comprehensive. It comprises this element, and more. The central figure is embodied human interest—IDEALIZED HUMAN NATURE.

Human interest is the vitality—the very life-blood in the veins of Literature and Art. No book ought to be read that lacks it. No such book *will* be read long unless some false notion of duty enjoins it. It is a lifeless body.

Here may be found an explanation of the persecution, the abhorrence, which the novel has ever met with from certain classes. Some people imagine that human enjoyment and human interest are at bitter enmity with the Divine Will. That Heaven will be made brighter by making earth darker. That the spirit is chastened and made purer by persecuting the body. The barbarous philosophy of the Cynics, the pliancy of such zealots as St. Simon and the whole history of sacerdotal celibacy, asceticism, and self mortification, both modern and ancient, are but monuments of the same fatal delusion. The vice of the Novel is that it is too interesting. It is too agreeable to the palate to be a healthy spiritual diet. Some people are a kind of moral vegetarians—all rich and juicy meat must be rejected, one would sometimes suppose, simply because it tastes good.

We have already recognized the Novel as a fine art, with its life-giving principle—human interest. But if, with Dr. Swing, we pause here, we shall greatly deceive ourselves. The Novel has a higher office to fill, a nobler mission to perform than any mere art can attain. We have already caught a glimpse of this mission. It will come out stronger and clearer by a comparison with History.

History is a record of results. It treats of character and events objectively. History steps from epoch to epoch, from crisis to crisis, from great event to great event. The interstices are left vacant. She speaks of public character—she has nothing to do with private life. She has too much dignity for such things. But it may be justly replied, that History has not yet realized her full mission: that a perfect history must be a complete history of intellectual and moral progress—in fact a history of civilization. But even such a history would not touch the domain of the sensibilities—of the emotions.

In reality, history *as it is*, is a libel on human nature. It is a ceaseless stream of wars, carnage, and distorted human passion—abnormal phenomena—without ultimate causes assigned. The real causes she cannot reach. *History has no Imagination.*

Fiction, on the other hand, is a record of causes. She treats of events subjectively. She seats herself in the heart, and describes what passes there. You may follow Dickens, Thackeray—perhaps even, De Foe—through the slums of London, among the foulest scenes, into the blackest hearts, with scarcely more moral peril than you can read the chaste and elegant Macaulay, Fox's Book of Martyrs, or even the wholesale butcheries of the Old Testament Scriptures. Why? Because the characters live and act and feel before your eyes. You enter the heart of Florence Dombey, the Blind Nydia, Pen-

dennis, or even the Artful Dodger, and grow up with each, rejoicing in his joys, smiling in his mirth, and weeping over his sins and misfortunes. You learn Virtue's true lesson, and hear the real warning of vice. In history, virtue is often mistaken for vice, and vice for virtue.

History, like a concave mirror, gives us the real image, but it is *inverted*. The Novel, like a plane glass, gives us a virtual or fictitious image, but it is right side up, and shows us things as they really are. Indeed, so far as results go, History is often false in true statements, and Fiction the truth in imaginary ones.

Here then we reach the true character of the Novel—the perfected novel. From its very nature, must it not furnish us with a correct guide in human conduct? Is not its character really ethical? This then is its mission—that of the noblest of all sciences—Ethics or Moral Philosophy.

The Novel has two great advantages over theoretical Ethics. First, the point of sight. She leads you into the teeming theatre of the sensibilities, and bids you watch the players. The players, as was said in the beginning, are the motors of action themselves; while over them in majesty, directing and prompting, sits *Free Will*. In the second place, she has the advantage of all other sciences in that all her definitions are *real*, none of them nominal or logical. Everything is analyzed, dissected, and in its real nature revealed.

Such, we believe, is the grand destiny of the Novel—the future Novel. Its mission may never be absolutely realized—for human nature is weak, human power finite.

At present, much that is mawkish, poisonous and vile, is foisted upon it, and forges its name. But Geo. Elliot, Dickens, Thackeray, and many others, are weaving more and more of the deep questions of human interest into its fabric; while the sensuous—beauty—woman is sinking further and further into the background. May not the coming generation see the standard novel used as a text-book of morals in our Higher institutions of learning? Even now learned Doctors do not hesitate to quote copiously from novel literature to illustrate grave subjects.

What a marvel is here! The humble, last-born child of Fiction presides over the reverend and gray-beard sciences! Again has the stone which was well-nigh rejected by the builders, become the head of the corner! Imagination, bright-visaged, golden-winged Imagination, shall accomplish for us what the more honored and respected mental faculties were not able! All hail, omnipotent Imagination—Crown of the Intellect! G. E. H.

Public Corruption.

What does the term signify? What is its import when applied to our generous public? Are we, as a class of people, retrograding in the scale of morality, and at the same time making such rapid strides in education and industry? These two arguments seem to me to be incompatible.

People will admit that we, as a nation, possess advantages over every other country, and acknowledge our superiority over the world in natural resources and endowments by the Creator, and at the same time play upon the wild, wiled harp strings of discord and discontent, and send a mournful wail throughout the land, its plaintive notes pleading corruption at every door. But then, every man, like every little boy, must hide his hobby, and some make Public Corruption a theme

upon which to expose their horrors and fantastic ideas. Shakspeare hit the mark exactly when he said—"Get thee glass eyes, and like a scurvy politician, seem to see the things thou dost not." This is the main point. People imagine they see things they do not, and then raise the hal-lucinating cry of the corruption of republican misrule. They say our republic is fast approaching destruction; but when were we stronger? They tell us that our immorality is fast hastening us to a premature doom; but when was there a nation more pure? Was it a hundred years ago when we began our history as a nation? Was it when a Benedict Arnold and an Aaron Burr swayed their sceptred power? Was it still further back in the annals of our infancy, when we swung from every limb, innocent men and women accused of witchery? We think not. It is true that we then had a Washington and a Henry; and it is also true that we now have a Shurtz, a Blaine and a Bristow. Perhaps our reformers will cite you to European monarchies as models of purity, and dwell in glowing terms on the beauty of Centralized power; but where are they if there ever were any? France, Spain, Austria and the Sicilies, have been impoverished and priest ridden by Catholicism for the last three centuries. Their courts have been defiled by the impiety of their Kings and Queens, and the sanctimoniousness of their Popes, priests and monks. The aristocracy of England today displays the same unalleviated brutality towards the poorer classes which they always did. They crush them under their infamous heel and grind them down into the dust of ignorance and starvation, while their piteous appeals are quieted through fear of the lash.

Again, these model reformers tell us of the Beecher-Tilton scandal, and point that out as the great bugbear to morality, but the Prince of Wales has been accused of the same gross crime. The difference is, *there the Press is under control and subjected to authority, here the Press is free.* This accounts for our appearance of crime. Not a defeat, not a fault in any one, but that is hunted out and published to all the world. We are bound by the same inseparable links of corruption, continent to continent, nation to nation, and man to man, until the whole world is chained in common unison, each working out for himself his own salvation.

In looking over the annals of history we find that our country has been making rapid and unflinching marches toward the goal of our ambition for the last hundred and fifty years; and yet, as each year, each month and each day passes, we still add new laurels to our brow, and press on with unabated ardor, keeping pace with the combined world, and impressing on them an idea of the grandeur and magnificence of our republican institutions.

Religious fanatics become fewer and fewer, because they are being continually educated up to a higher sense of morality, and leave their superstitious ideas in the background to cope with things of the past. Of course fanaticism has not entirely disappeared, but there in the place of the butcheries of Paris, the torch of John Calvin and witchery in our own country, we have come down to the milder forms of Moody and Sankey. If a system of peace and absolute honesty, virtue and integrity, is necessary for the perpetuity of our institutions, we are afraid those halcyon days will never come. Great Britain has preserved her existence for over fifteen

hundred years, through a list of Kings whose only ambition was self-aggrandizement and whose only desire was the attainment of their own selfish ends. Surely we, a people who are comparatively pure, and with a thousand advantages over the British dominion, should preserve our dignity as long as any that now claim a place in the union of nations.

Grecian, Roman and South American have faded away under the keen edged old scythe of time. Their blushing rosebud of prosperity had scarcely bloomed ere the destructible plowshares of opposition grasped it by the roots and tore it relentlessly from its firm old bed, and scattered its slender tendrils here and there upon the beautiful sward, only to await the slanting sunbeams which soon came pouring down in brilliant floods of light, and the fragrant young flower, magnificent to behold in its simplicity, is no more. But *these* had nothing upon which to build, and *we* have everything. The Creator has bountifully showered our land with every necessary article, and with an eye single to our advancement and welfare, he has most graciously bestowed upon us his choicest laurels.

We were once weak; we were driven here by the stinging lash of England's aristocracy and hewed out for ourselves an asylum in the forests of North America, with no shelter but the blue canopy of the heavens, and no companion but the untamed savage. England forged slowly but surely upon us the fetters of slavery and subjection; but the blood of Englishmen still flowed in our veins, and our haughty spirit was yet unconquered. We rose up, to a man, and with indomitable energy burst from our shoulders the accursed shackles and flung them forever aside. Now we walk hand in hand with our mother country, each working for the other's welfare. The mighty gulf that once yawned so terribly between us, but a century ago, has been gradually narrowing until the line has become almost imperceptible, across which are closely interwoven the lights and shadows of brotherly friendship. W. H. N.

—At a regular meeting of the Ladies' Literary Union, the following list of officers were elected to serve next term:

Miss Townsend,	President
" Gray,	Vice President
" Scott,	Secretary
" Olmstead,	Marshall
" Watson,	Treasurer

—At a special meeting of the Palladian Society, the following officers were elected for the ensuing term:

J. F. E. McKesson,	President
E. P. Unangst,	Vice President
A. U. Hancock,	Rec. Sec.
Miss Josie Scott,	Cor. Sec.
Miss Alice Barker,	Chorister
Albert Joyce,	Treasurer
A. W. Field,	Critic
W. A. McAllister,	Historian
E. P. Holmes,	Usher

—The following are the officers elected in the Adelpian society, for the spring term:

H. H. Wilson,	President
Miss Maggie Lamb,	Vice President
Alfred Platte,	Rec. Sec.
Miss Alice Frost,	Cor. Sec.
" Carrie Holt,	Chorister
Charles Stratton,	Treasurer
C. W. Rhodes,	Critic
G. E. Howard,	Historian
W. E. Stewart,	Marshall