THE COMMONWEALTH.
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Another Definition of Happiness.

M. A. B.

My views of happiness, you ask, the highest earth can give?
Those views to tell, an easy task—not so, those views to live.

To daily meet with those I love, to know they love me too,
To be convinced by words and deeds their love for me is true;
To daily work for those I love, and working thus to have,
To EARN enough for bodily wants, a little o'er to save;
And saving thus to save enough, the minds to feed as well,
That we mid music, books, and flowers, in leisure hours may dwell:
And dwelling thus, to daily learn something before unknown,
(Not slanders vile or gossips tales) but that rich lore alone
Which to the mind a wider range extends each passing day:
Tho' roaming o'er new fields of thought I would so pick my way
So study fellow mortal's weal, so kindly be and act,
That to my home a circle wide of friends I could attract.
And learning too, perhaps I'd know, or better understand
Why troubles form a part of every life that God has planned,
What's understood is easier borne, 'twould mar it so much less.
If we knew why, God thwarts our plans in search of happiness.
I ask not EXEMPTION here, from trouble, pain or woe,
I feel my Maker cares for me, and even now I know
Sunshine can't do the work of rain; of heat rain gives no treasure;
Pleasure can't do the work of pain, nor pain the work of pleasure,
Both to us will bear some gain—Experience—Wisdom—Health.
Without both the ore would hide in many MINDS of wealth.
But I ask that this great truth that "God does what is best"
May on my mind forever be indelibly impressed.
Without the light which this belief, casts o'er the varied scenes
Through which we pass from birth to death, we lack the only means
Of finding Happiness always alike through night or day,
For night will come, when nought but Faith avails to light the way.

—*Farmer & Mechanic.*

GRAY, THE HERALD OF A NEW DAWN.

BY THE REV. D. SHERMAN, D.D.

Thomas Gray, as noticed in a previous article, was intimately connected with the type of literature that had its origin in the Restoration. Dryden and Pope, the high priests of that intellectual development, were his models. With their clearness of thought, elegance of style, and taste for classic literature he was in entire sympathy.

But, unlike most of his associates and compeers, Gray sustained important relations to the future as well as to the past. He was the John the Baptist of the incoming poetic dispensation, with its freshness and spirit, with its flavor of nature and sympathy with man in his higher and nobler aspirations. If he failed to comprehend the full significance of the modern period, he gave expressive intimation of the impending change. Old things were waxing feebly and were ready to vanish away; new ideas and methods were coming to take their place. If mist and clouds still obscured the sky, the dawn was kindling on the horizon affording promise as the century rolled on disclosing its wealth of literary genius, of the full-orbed and glorious day. With Gray the revolution was not so much a perception or knowledge as an instinct. He rather felt than saw the great future that was bursting upon him. The "Elegy" was a lark-song a mouthful, as it were, of liquid melody, prophetic of the advancing chorus that was to fill the English world with its music.

The transition from the classic to the romantic or modern period in the history of our literature was rather gradual than abrupt. The periods like the geological ages overlap each other; so that, long before we reach the close of one, we have intimations in the stream of tendency, or occasional flashes of genius, of our approach to the other. Though unaware of the significance of his position and work, Gray was a foretoken of the modern era. With his eye most frequently turned to the past, he was borne by a deep undercurrent to the very borders of a more glorious future. This profounder current in English literature is traceable far back; in fact its flow was never entirely interrupted by the dominant literature at the Restoration. Simple English was banished from high places, but in obscure and neglected regions it continued to flow through all that period in many a sparkling and musical rill to freshen and beautify the garden of humbler society. In that marvelous prose poem, "The Pilgrim's Progress," Bunyan, in his simple, idiomatic style, his sense of the pure and beautiful, and his sympathy with men, anticipated the age in which we have the good fortune to live. Long neglected by the *elite* of literature, the genius of Bunyan was a crystal spring, which the Philistines of the Court were never quite able to close up.

The true successor of the Bedford dreamer was Defoe, whose sympathies were invariably ranged on the popular side, and whose felicitious fictions more facinate the reader than the most attractive histories. These men of superb genius did something to hold in honor the people's English in days when it was despised and spit upon by the lordly masters of the Restoration. In spite of contempt and aspersion, they fought their way to recognition, and to-day the productions of even the proudest of their enemies appear mean beside "Pilgrim's Progress" and "Robinson Crusoe." The one dealt in beauty of form, which passes away; the other in substance, which endures.

By some the place of honor, as the precursor of the modern age, would be accorded to Thompson, the author of "The Seasons," rather than Gray. But Thompson belongs essentially to the Restoration period. He wrote, indeed, in a simple, elegant style, and with a genuine, though not profound, appreciation of nature. His pictures of scenery, often striking and beautiful, are a play on the surface; the color does not penetrate the material, and gives one little idea of the substance below. Like all those of the Classic Period, his pictures are objective and distant. The autobiographic element, so pleasing in Cowper and Wordsworth, is entirely wanting in them. In reading his descriptions the soul never warms and glows. He is clear and elegant, but it is the clearness and elegance of a white cloud or an aurora whose corruscations suggest distance and a rigorous climate. But in reading Gray's "Elegy" you begin to "glow and ethuse; the author comes to you; the picture is tinged by his own life's blood and wet with his own tears.

The position of Byron is, in some respects, similar to that of Gray; though he did much to hasten the revolution in English poetry, he never came into full sympathy with the new movement. "None of the writers of this period," says Macaulay, "not even Sir Walter Scott, contributed so much to the consummation as Lord Byron; yet he contributed to it unwillingly and with self-reproach and shame. All his inclinations and tastes led him to take part with the school of poetry that was going out against the school which was coming in. Of Pope he spake with extravagant admiration." He, in fact, belonged to both the old and new schools. With tastes for the one, he was, like Gray, drifted toward the other. In his best poetry Byron is autobiographic. You feel the man with his spleen and misanthrophy; you hear his wails and are horrified at his curses. Extract this personal element and the charm of his writings will have disappeared. In a word, Byron came only late to a position atained by Gray a half a century before.

But the first to emerge consciously and of set purpose into the new age of English poetry was William Cowper, who despised the languid manner, "the creamy smoothness," and the meretricious ornamentation of the classic school. He turned from form to substance. Instead of classical subjects, he glorified, by the corruscations of his genius, the things of common life. In deep and tender sympathy with nature, he infused into his descriptions his own spirit. The poems became, as it were, passages in his own biography. All the chief characteristics of the new school appear in his writings. Gray was the Moses who had marched across the desert, and came in full view of the Promised Land; Cowper was the Joshua who bravely crossed the flood and displayed his banner on the other side. The stream once passed, an army of fellow-poets marched in to obtain full possession of the discovered territory; Burns, that magic child of Scotland, who gave voice to the humbles. things; Goldsmith, an innocent abroad; Byron, an inspired demoniac; Sir Walter Scott, "the wizzard of the North;" Campbell, Moore, Rogers, and, above all that Big Thunderer, Wordsworth, with his "Lake Poets," including Coleridge, Southey, De Quincey, and Wilson, a magnificent band, who joined in the chorus of the new song. What the meek and undoubting Joshua was unable to no, was accomplished by these princes of "the vision of the faculty divine." They went through the length and breadth of the land; they put the Philistines to tribute, and destroyed the sons of Anak.

Without stopping here to characterize these individual writers, it may be proper to notice the broad lines of distinction between the new school and the old. In place of the classical themes cherished by the poets of the Restoration, the new *regime*, like the older bards of Chaucer's and Queen Bess' times, turned with ardent sympathy to nature. But it was nature in her broader and common aspects, as well as in her marvelous forms. Cowper sang of the prosiest matters—the sofa, the old clock behind the door, the garden. One of his tenderest pieces is that on his mother's picture, in which his ever-sad life is strangely interwoven with the memories of his mother. Wordsworth glorified out door nature. Under the magic touch of his pen field and forest, river side and lake, the dusty roadway and meadow take on freshness and beauty. Until one reads these modern revelations he hardly realizes how inlaid with beauty are the vulgar things about him. Rufus Choate, the great advocate, the elegant scholar, on going into the country exclaimed, "The common things, after all, are the best." So thought our poets, and their office was to open their excellencies to untutored eyes and uninspired brains.

But with our modern poets nature is animate with beast, bird, fish, insect; above all, with man, the under lord of this terrestrial paradise. The Restoration literature magnifies titled men, the upper class, the *elite*, and makes them honorable; the new learning recognizes the people. In the age of Dryden there were no people. After lifting their heads for a moment under the commonwealth, the returning Stuarts scornfully trample them under foot. None of the great writers of the period addressed a general public; they wrote for the coterie. But with Gray a change began, and all after Cowper addressed themselves to the great modern democracy. The people's English takes the place of the King's.

Again, under the old school, form took precedence of substance; under the new, the substance is set forth in a style borrowed from the old and improved. The older poets were cold, haughty, supercilious, often scoffing at the most sacred things; the new are warm, gentle, and reverent. The arctic winter which prevailed during the age of Dryden and Pope was softened by the warm wave which swept over England in the eighteenth century. The religious revival was like the breath of Spring, which brings greenness to the fields and fills the groves with the music of birds.—*N. Y. Christian Advocate.*

CHINESE AND AMERICANS.—A CHAPTER OF CONTRARIETIES.

BY THE REV. SELAH BROWN.

On the opposite side of the globe from America is a nation of people who are not only our antipodes in geographical position, but they differ from us in a multitude of ways. Not only are they asleep when we are awake; not only is their midnight our noonday, and their sunset our sunrise; but their peculiar manners and eccentric customs form a very amusing chapter. Perhaps, however, we ought to remember, when we call them a peculiar people, that they call us the same, and say that we are the ones that do things contrariwise. Still, to us they are a very odd people.

We shake hands as a salutation; a Chinaman shakes hands with himself; that is, he stands at a distance, and, clasping both hands together, he shakes them up and down at you—a good idea when one thinks of the numerous skin diseases among them. Instead of saying, "Good morning," or "How do you do?" they say, "How old are you?" or "Have you eaten your rice?" We uncover the head as a mark of respect; they keep their heads covered, but take of their shoes as a matter of politeness. We shave the face; they shave the head and eye-brows. We have the patriarchal beard before; they have the long "pig tail" behind. We cut our finger-nails; they consider it quite aristocratic to have nails from three to five inches long, which they are obliged to protect in silver cases. When broken off, they are used as medicine.

In matters of dress John Chinaman finishes where the rest of mankind begin. His waistcoat is outside his coat, and his drawers outside his pants. We blacken our shoes; he whitens them. Our ladies compress the waist; theirs the feet. Our women wear long dresses; theirs long sleeves. In China the men carry the fans, and the women wear the trousers.

In eating, their customs are in striking contrast with ours. We have soup as a first course, and dessert at last; they have dessert at first, and soup at last. They ignore knife and fork and spoon, and eat with two "chop-sticks," both held in the right hand. They abominate beef, milk, butter, and cheese; but eat puppies, cats, rats, bird's nests, shark's fins, and snails. Americans want their wines ice-cold; the Chinese drink theirs scalding hot. In our land we drink our beautifully colored "Young Hyson;" in the land of tea they leave out the indigo and prussian blue, and wonder at the depraved taste that demands "doctored tea." They not only leave off the coloring, but always leave out the milk and sugar.

Their books are also quite dissimilar to ours. Theirs begin just where ours end. We read in lines; they in columns. We read horizontally, from left to right; they perpendicularly, from top to bottom. Our footnotes are on the bottom of the page; theirs on the top. We print on both sides of the leaf; they on only one, but their leaves are always double. We set our volumes up on end in our libraries; they lay theirs down. We print with metal type; they with wooden blocks. In writing we use a pen; they a brush. We hold our pen obliquely; they perpendicularly. Our ink is a fluid; theirs a hard cake. Their language has no alphabet. The written language is not spoken, and the spoken language is not written. Two men can converse in writing when they cannot understand a word of each other in speaking. A Chinese school is a perfect Babel. The pupils study out loud, each one at the top of his voice, and all at once. When a scholar recites he turns his back to the teacher. This they call "backing the lesson."

In America, young people prefer to do their own courting, and engagements for marriage are made by the parties most concerned. In China, the parents, with the help of "go-betweens," select husbands and wives for their children, and the parties often never see each other till the wedding is over. After marriage, instead of a wedding trip, the bride is shut up as a prisoner in her husband's home, and does not go out for a month. In China, wives are always sold; in America, sometimes the husband gets "sold."

In China, the funeral customs are often directly the reverse of ours. In our country, a coffin would not be considered a very appropriate present; in the "Flowery Kingdom," a coffin is often given to a parent or a friend, while they are yet in perfect health. This is kept in the house for years, and often used as a table or bench. We go in silence to the grave; they with great noise and confusion. We deposit our dead in cemeteries; with them each family has its sparate place of sepulture. We bury in the earth; they on its surface. We put our inscriptions on the top of a coffin; they on the end. We choose a shady place for burial; but no shadow must ever fall on a Chinese grave. With us, black clothing is a badge of mourning; with them, white garments indicate the loss of friends.

But where shall we end this chapter of contraries and oddities? In that land of opposites it is the old men that fly kites, play marbles, walk on stilts, and play shuttle-cock; and to keep up their odd way of doing things they play the latter with their feet, instead of their hands. In China, women do men's work, and men are the milliners, dressmakers, and washerwomen. With us the right hand is the place of honor; with them it is the left hand. In dating letters we place the year last; they write the year first. Instead of saying, "North-east" or "South-west," they say "East-north" and "West-south." They always speak of the mariner's compass (their own invention) as pointing to the south. Here, a mother shows her affection for her child by kissing it; a Chinese mother smells of it. We locate the intellect in the brain; they in the stomach. We pay our physician when we are sick; they pay the doctor while they are well, but as soon as they get sick the pay stops. Here, men kill their enemies in revenge; a Chinaman gets "sweet revenge" by killing himself. They mount a horse from the right side, and when they want him to go they say, "Whoa." The men ride sidewise, and the women astride. We use lanterns in a dark night; they carry more lanterns at full moon than at any other time. We place a candle in a candlestick; they put the candlestick in the candle. Their detectives sound a 'tom tom" at night to give thieves and rogues notice of their coming. We ride in railroad cars; they in wheelbarrows. We draw canal boats with horses; they with men. We sell wood by measure, they by weight. We vaccinate in the arm; they in the nose. We use a soft pillow; they a block of wood. Our store signs are horizontal; theirs are perpendicular. They launch ships sidewise, ring bells from the outside, and actually turn their screws in the opposite direction from ours.

HOW TO SPEND SUNDAY AFTERNOON.

It may be safely said that a person whose brain is wearied with intellectual work during the week, or whose nervous system is exposed to the strain of business or professional life, ought to sleep, within an hour or two after his Sunday's dinner, if he can. It is surprising how much like a seven day clock a brain will work, if the habit of a "Sunday nap" be formed. Nature will take advantage of it as regularly and gratefully as she does the night's sleep, and do her best to make up lost time. People, on the other hand, whose week of toil is chiefly physical, may well give their mind activity, while their body is resting. Two sermons and three or four hours solid reading are a real rest to some on Sunday, while to some such a course amounts to positive Sabbath-breaking. Sunday is a day of rest—not a day of work, religious or otherwise; it is a day for repose—not for exhaustion. But what the dogmatist on one side and the illiberals on the other are apt to overlook is the fact that all men do not rest alike any more than they labor alike, and what will help to save one may aid in killing another. After the Sunday dinner, then, one should seek rest, innocent recreations, helpful happiness, sleep, or read, or go and help, instruct and interest a mission school, or visit the sick and suffering, according to your needs and your gifts. We Americans havn't yet fully learned the art of domestic enjoyment, any more than the law of service to others. More men ought to relieve their wives of the sole care of young children on Sundays, by taking them out to walk or ride, and inviting the mother to go as company, or leaving her at home to enjoy unmolested a much-needed season of quiet. In suitable weather a portion of the day may be profitably spent out of doors. There is nothing in the example or teachings of Christ—nothing in the nature of His religion, of God's requirements, or of man's needs—which declare that the Sabbath can only be kept holy in doors. It is to be honored and hallowed, but its highest observance is a ministration to man's highest needs. We hope and believe that the day will never come when Sunday will be secularized or turned into a gay holiday in America, as it is in Europe; but the progress made toward a rational Christian enjoyment of the day within the past fifty years, shows that the superiority of man to the institution, as proclaimed by the Savior, is coming to be apprehended.—*Ex.*

MAKE FRIENDS.

Young man, let us give you a hint. Make friends. Do not play the demagogue, now or ever, but make friends. Do not have an enemy in the world if you can honestly avoid it. Any friend is a good thing to have, even if it is a friendly neighbor's dog. Do not fawn, or bend your self-respect, or sacrifice a principle, but act on the principle that it is your duty—a God-requiring duty—to produce all the happiness in the world of which you are capable. What will the result be? First that you will be happy and better yourself. A man that is all the time trying to do good very rapidly grows to be a very good man. Secondly, it will give you business success and promotion. A young man who has cultivated the friend-making spirit and manner is a treasure to any business house; and if in business for himself it gives him great advantage over competitors. But there is a class of young men who are so fortunately situated in life that they do not feel the necessity for personal popularity, and yet it is highly important and desirable to them as to any others. It is important as vastly increasing their influence for good. It is desirable because in a country of free institution, like ours, the choisest minds are not content with success in business and the accumulation of wealth. There are honors and pleasures of the most exquisite quality which wealth can no more purchase than it can purchase heaven. Let a man win such a place in the confidence and affection of the public that his fellow-citizens will, in emergencies, turn to him as to a tower of strength, and ask the use of his name for a position of great honor and trust; and though he may be unwilling to accept political preferment, he may find it not only a duty to them to do so, but he will have plucked the brightest and sweetest flower of earthly happiness. Make friends for your own better nature's sake; make friends for the extension of your influence for good; make friends for the good of your fellow-citizens and your country. It cannot be done in a day. A man must make a good friend to others of himself before he can make good friends to himself of others. A needless offense to another does not die. It is nearly impossible to kill it, and it is sure to turn up at some wrong time:

For if we do but watch the hour,
There never yet was human power
That could escape, if unforgiven,
The patient search and vigil long,
Of him who treasures up a wrong.

—*Selected.*

NOTICE!

BY virtue of an order of Halifax Superior Court made at Spring Term, 1883, in the cause therein pending between Angelo Garibaldi and others, as plaintiffs, and Wm. H. Randolph as defendant, I shall proceed to sell at public auction at the Court House in Halifax, N. C., on Monday, the 7th day of May, A. D., 1883, that valuable tract of land situated in Halifax county, N. C., lying on Roanoke River at Pollock's Ferry, formerly belonging to Thomas P. Deveraux, deceased, known as the Ferry Conoconary tract, and containing about two thousand acres of land. Parties desiring to invest in land would do well to examine this tract before sale.

Terms: One half cash. Balance in two equal installments payable January 1st, 1884, and January 1st, 1885, respectively. Title retained till all of the purchase money is paid. Possession given January 1st, 1884.

For further particulars, apply to Mullen & Moore, Halifax, N. C.

J. M. MULLEN, Com'r.

April 2, 1883.—3t.