



Gems.

SERVICE.

Small service is true service while it lasts;
Of friends, however humble, scorn not one:
The daisy, by the shadow that it casts,
Protects the lingering dewdrop from the sun. —[Wordsworth.

LIFE.

We live in deeds, not years; in thoughts, not breath;
In feelings, not in figures on a dial.
We should count time by heart-throbs.
He most lives
Who thinks most; feels the noblest;
acts the best. —[Bailey.

PERSUASION.

There is a way of winning, more by love,
And urging of the modesty, than fear;
Force works on servile natures, not the free. —[Jonson.

THE TOUCH OF TIME.

Time's gradual touch
Has mouldered into beauty many a tower
Which when it frowned, with all its battlements
Was only terrible. So creeds that once
Shook monarchs on their throne, crumble to form
Our children's games. The Beautiful and True
Live through all the ages, while the False dies out. —[Moore.

VANITY OF PRAYER.

We deem this life too narrow for our needs,
And so demand heaven's high felicity.
Yet of an after-life what sign have we?
In vain man prays and tells his futile beads. —[Martin.

Improvement of Mankind.

BY HORACE SEAVER.

TO attempt to improve mankind on any other principle than by a close, accurate and undeviating attention to facts, is as absurd and unavailing as to expect that man, immersed in ignorance and surrounded by every vicious temptation, shall be better, wiser and happier than when trained to be intelligent and active amid circumstances only which would perpetually unite his interest, his duty and his feelings. The state of the world will never be materially improved until knowledge shall be more generally diffused and the multitude are taught to act from a just sense of their own interest, rather than from passion and prejudice. Hitherto, mankind have scarcely come to the investigation of the condition of their being, with half of their reasoning powers; the residue have been absorbed by a legitimized superstition, begotten in youth on their ignorance, matured by precept and example and confirmed by surrounding bigotry. The ideas of men are acquired, and these ideas are enlarged, cor-

rected and strengthened by intelligent intercourse; they can advance only by degrees—can attain to no state of knowledge but by a progression more or less slow. After many defective attempts they are enabled to distinguish, by comparison, that which is well or ill of every kind; so that what is called an art is but the result of reason and experience reduced to a method. Whatever savors of religious superstition, either in the arts or in speculative science, can only seserve the purpose of their restriction, and impede their course and their progress. The reason why the sciences have not advanced more is that scholars have been afraid to depart from the ideas entertained by the schools, lest they should sacrifice their prospects or draw down upon them the ire of old-fashioned professors; and if a man dare to advance a sentiment with regard to morals or religion at variance with the doctrines whipped into his grandfather a hundred and fifty years ago, it is immediately said: "He is wise beyond what is written," and he is represented as that terrible monster—an Infidel.

While authority, prejudice and power have pertinaciously contended that it is necessary to restrict freedom of inquiry; that there might be too much boldness of opinion, and too much liberty of intellectual enterprise—the strong necessities and genuine interests of mankind have slowly and steadily urged them onward to an indefinite perception of their rights and a corresponding assertion of claims to the natural exercise of their privileges. It is much to be lamented that too many people even yet conceive that there are some opinions which ought not to be tolerated, as they imagine that the free expression of them would tend to disorganize society by subverting what they believe to be the foundation of virtue. How can danger possibly arise from the unrestrained expression of any opinion whatever, where reason and truth are left free to combat it? It is time the world had done with such apprehensions: they have been sources of infinite mischief in all ages and in every country. Such people appear to breathe the very spirit of despotism, and act as if they want to communicate it. It is impossible not to infer from their apprehensions that as men increase in knowledge they must see reasons to disapprove the systems established. How can that mind be

constituted which contemplates the progress of human knowledge as a matter of regret or fear? The wider the diffusion of knowledge, the better the people are informed, the more they understand—the more likely they are to see and comprehend what is for their good, and the means by which that good is to be attained, the more likely they are to abstain from such means as would be prejudicial in their operation, and calculated rather for the prevention than the attainment of that good.—[Occasional Thoughts.

Justice.

IN FIVE PARTS.

BY F. L. OSWALD.

PART I.—LESSONS OF INSTINCT.

MORAL philosophers have long conjectured the distinction between natural and conventional duties, and only the full recognition of that distinction can reconcile the conflicting views on the natural basis of ethics. On the other hand, the defenders of the theory of "Intuitive morality" claim the existence of an innate moral conscience common to all nations and all stages of social development, while, on the other hand, we hear it as confidently asserted that the standards of virtue are mere standards of expedience, and vary with circumstances as fashions vary with seasons and climates. There is no doubt, for instance, that religious bigotry has begot a sort of factitious conscience, shrinking from the mere idea of devoting the seventh day of the week to physical recreations, while the devotees of the joy-loving gods of paganism thought it a solemn duty to celebrate their holidays with festive revels. Marriage between persons of adventitious relationship (such as widows and their surviving brothers-in-law) is prohibited by the statutes of one creed, and not only sanctioned, but distinctly enjoined, by those of another. Speculative dogmas that would deeply shock the followers of Abd el Wahab are tolerated in Constantinople and venerated in Rome. But such contrasts diminish, and at last disappear, as we turn our attention from conventional to essential duties. A Mussulman bigot, who would slay his son for drinking wine in honor of a supplementary god, would agree with the worshippers of that god that theft is a crime and benevolence a virtue.

The innkeepers of Palermo obey their church and spite heretics by selling meat in June, but not in March. The innkeepers of El Medina spite unbelievers and honor the Koran by selling meat in March, but not in June. The Buddhist innkeepers of Lassa sell only salt meat, imported from China, and spite Infidels by refusing to kill a cow under any circumstances. But Sicilians, Tibetans and Arabs would agree that no innkeeper should be permitted to spite a personal enemy by salting his meat with arsenic. Nations that totally disagree in their notions of propriety, in matters of taste and in their bias of religious prejudice will, nevertheless, be found to agree on the essential standards of humanity and justice. The "instinct of equity," as Leibnitz calls the sense of natural justice, has been still better defined as the "instinct of keeping contracts." A state of Nature is not always a state of equal rights. Skill, strength and knowledge enjoy the advantage of superior power in the form of manifold privileges, but the expediency of "keeping contracts" naturally recommends itself as the only safe basis of social intercourse. Those contracts need not always be specified by written laws. They need not even be formulated in articulate speech. Their obligations are tacitly recognized as a preliminary of any sort of social cooperation, of any sort of social concomitance. "Give every man his due;" "Pay your debts;" "Give if you would receive," are international maxims, founded on the earliest impressions of social instinct, rather than on the lessons of social science or of preternatural revelation. The first discoverers of the South Sea Islands were amazed by a license of sexual intercourse that seemed to exceed the grossest burlesques of French fiction, but they were almost equally surprised by the scrupulous exactness of commercial fair-dealing observed by those incontinent children of nature. An islander, who had agreed to pay three bagsful of yam roots for a common pocket knife, delivered two bagsful (all his canoe would hold) before the evening of the next day and received his knife, as the sailors had about all the provisions they could use. But the next morning, in trying to leave the coast by tacking against a fitful breeze, they were overtaken by a canoe, containing a desperately-

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