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## THE REAL IN THE INFERNO.

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Paper read before the Dante Class.

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Dante does not artlessly cause the blood-curdling descriptions of infernal punishment to pass before the reader's eye in such a way as to leave the impression that these horrors are, after all, nothing but the creations of his fertile imagination. No, for then these lurid, gloomy pictures would have no more power to move us than the dreams of a madman. But he so prepares the mind beforehand, and accompanies his descriptions with such accounts of his own feelings as lend the entire narration an air of reality; he speaks of these scenes and of his impressions of them with such downright earnestness, that it can hardly occur to the reader that they were otherwise than burning realities to the poet who describes them. The poet creates the atmosphere needed by the reader to see things the way he would have us believe he saw them.

Now, this is a perfection in every art. In music, in grand opera, as well as in epic poetry, the artist must dispose, and throughout keep the listener not only disposed, but compelled to grasp the thought as it flies upon the sound or flashes in the pen pictures. If he invite us to revel in ecstasies, to view supernatural worlds, he cannot ravish us in a common strain, nor make us believe in his visions of other worlds if he speak the language of a vulgar fakir, and not that of a prophet that sees. The prophet must be sure of himself, and in dead earnest. Dante is preeminently such; positive and impressively in earnest. He tells of the marvelous as one who beheld it, heard it, felt it, touched it; he tells of it in a language that sounds it, in a language that has borrowed its accents from the jarring discords of hellish disorder. What he saw was a vision, not a sight; he describes it as a seer, not as a sight-seer. This is what Taine means by the tribute he pays to the genius of Dante. "When Dante writes," says Taine, "he rasps, and his cries of anguish, his



transports, the incoherent succession of his infernal or mystical phantoms carry us with him into the invisible world which he describes. Ecstasy alone renders visible the objects of ecstasy."

And yet Dante often assures us that he does not relate one-half of what he saw, because language is powerless to describe the scene or express the emotion which the scene aroused in him. What a full magazine of reserve force in all these artful monitions that, notwithstanding all he has said, the end is not yet; that were the whole to be told, no human being could bear to hear the tale. The artist who is not thus in despair of ever realizing his ideal never accomplishes anything great. Let us hear Dante's complaints, those desperate wrestlings of genius in its attempts to make language say what the eye has seen, the heart felt, and the mind conceived. A few instances gathered at random will help to illustrate "the sense of the real" which runs through the *Inferno*.

In the first place, it is well to keep in mind that Dante himself is a real human being, and that it is as such he visits the under world, conducted by the gentle shade of Virgil. Already our interest is aroused at the thought of a mortal, one still in the flesh, passing the portals where all hope is to be abandoned, entering into the abode whence none e'er return; rapidly ushered into the realm of silent darkness, we hold our breath in our eagerness to find how a man will feel and speak who witnesses such wondrous sights. The poet does not deceive our expectation. He is in another world, and speaks as one in the midst of a wild waste of most unearthly horrors. That he paints boldly and vividly what he sees, that he tests the utmost power of human speech in saying what he saw and felt cannot be denied. Yet in spite of this he is conscious that he falls far short of the awful realities he attempts to reveal.

In the fourth canto, for instance, after rehearsing a long role of celebrities he met in Limbo, he warns us thus:

"Of all to speak at full were vain attempt.  
For my wide theme so urges, that oft times  
My words shall fall short of what bechanced."

After hearing from Francesca's own lips the pathetic story of her tragic love for Paolo, he thus describes the overpowering pity that seized him:

"While thus one spirit spake,  
The other wailed so sorely, that heart-struck  
I, through compassion fainting seemed not far  
From death, and like a corpse fell to the ground."



Further on, arrived at the gates of the city of Dis, entrance is denied the poets. A fallen angel, terrible of aspect, bids Virgil remain, and Dante return the way he came, but without his guide. Dante thus speaks of his dismay:

“Now, bethink thee, reader,  
What cheer was mine at sound of those cursed words.  
I did believe I never should return.”

After describing the forbidding aspect of the Furies who further hinder their entrance, he calls attention to the fulness of sense he attaches to these types of carnal pleasure and remorse, saying:

“Ye of intellect  
Sound and entire, mark well the lore concealed  
Under the close texture of the mystic strain.”

What impressive earnestness in exclamations such as the following, which escape the poet's soul after viewing the torments of the violent:

“Vengeance of heaven! Oh! how shouldst thou be feared  
By all who read what here mine eyes beheld.”

Or, again, in speaking of the little brook

“Whose crimson wave yet lifts  
My hair with horror.”

Further he beholds three spirits that run swiftly beneath the fierce tormenting rain of fire, and he exclaims:

“Ah me! what wounds I marked upon their limbs,  
Recent and old, inflicted by the flames;  
E'en the remembrance of them grieves me yet.”

Again, in describing the distorted figures of soothsayers and sorcerers, he thus adjures the reader, whose faith in the recital might waver because of the unspeakable awfulness of the things narrated:

“Now, reader, think within thyself, so God  
Fruit of thy reading give thee! how I long  
Could keep my visage dry, when I beheld  
Near me our form distorted in such guise  
That on the hinder parts, fallen from the face,  
The tears down streaming rolled.”

In the gulf of peculators he beheld the doomed spirits plunge back into the burning pitch at the approach of an horned demon with pronged hook in hand. He says:

“I saw, and yet  
My heart doth stagger,” etc.

In that dread exuberance of woe, that desert of serpents where, in the seventh gulf of the eighth circle, the robbers are punished, the poet, before speaking of the marvelous transfusions with human forms, exclaims:

"If, O reader! now  
Thou be not apt to credit what I tell,  
No marvel; for myself do scarce allow  
The witness of mine eyes."

Again, when in the ninth gulf, the sight of scandal-mongers and schismatics, all miserably maimed, breaks upon his view, the poet feels unequal to the task of expressing what he saw and felt. He opens this canto in these words:

"Who, e'en in words unfettered, might at full  
Tell of the wounds and blood that now I saw,  
Though he repeated oft the tale? No tongue  
So vast a theme could equal, speech and thought  
Both impotent alike."

And further on this remarkable passage:

"But I there  
Still lingered to behold a troop and saw  
Things, such as I may fear without more proof  
To tell of, but that conscience makes me firm,  
The boon companion, who her strong breastplate  
Buckles on him, that feels no guilt within,  
And bids him on and fear not. Without doubt  
I saw, and yet it seems to pass before me,  
A headless trunk, that e'en as the rest  
Of the sad flock paced onward."

It is noteworthy that the lower down the poet descends into the infernal abyss, the more he complains of his impotence to fitly speak of the dread things he sees. On the threshold of Caina, where in frozen Cocytus the betrayers of relatives are punished, he wishes for a lofty and tragic strain suited to the utterance of woe unutterable by tongue not weaned of childish simplicities. How well he prepares us in these opening lines to see what he is going to reveal:

"Could I command rough rhymes and hoarse, to suit  
That hole of sorrow o'er which every rock  
His firm abutment rears, then might the vein  
Of fancy rise full springing; but not mine  
Such measures, and with faltering awe I touch  
The mighty theme; for to describe the depth  
Of all the universe, is no emprise  
To jest with, and demands a tongue not used  
To infant babbling."



And his emotion reaches its climax, and the sense of reality most completely overwhelms the poet, when he enters Judecca, and his kindly guide bids him arm his heart with strength to view the arch traitors, and "that creature eminent in beauty once," now become emperor of the realm of sorrow, Lucifer, there held fast in ice and crushed beneath all there is of iniquity in hell. He says:

"Now came I (and with fear I bid my strain  
Record the marvel) where the souls were all  
Whelmed underneath. \* \* \* \*  
How frozen and faint I then became  
Ask me not, reader! for I write it not;  
Since my words fail to tell of my tale.  
I was not living nor dead. Think thyself,  
If quick conception work in thee at all,  
How I did feel."

Another feature which heightens the realism of Dante is his selection of well known places and events as a basis of comparison, and also his artful allusions to the descriptions of horrible scenes by other poets. For instance, in order to give an idea of the loathsome distempers which afflict alchemists and forgers, he says:

"As were the torment if each lazar house  
Of Valdichiana, in the sultry time  
'Twixt July and September, with the isle  
Sardinia and Maremma's pestilent few,  
Had heaped their maladies all in one foss  
Together; such was here the torment, dire  
The stench, as issuing streams from festered limbs."

So, too, when he draws the veil from before that wild waste of woe wherein robbers are stung, seized, enwrapped, constricted by, and even transformed into serpents, he exclaims:

"And then; the chasm  
Opening to my view, I saw a crowd within  
Of serpents terrible, so strange of shape  
And hideous that remembrance in my veins  
Yet shrinks the vital current. Of her sands  
Let Libya vaunt no more, if Jaculus,  
Pereas and Chelyder be her brood  
Cenchris and Amphisbaena, plagues so dire  
Or in such numbers swarming ne'er showed,  
Not with all Ethiopia and whate'er  
Above the Erythrian sea is spawned."



After relating the fearful transmutations he had witnessed, he thus artfully refers to Lucan and Ovid:

"Lucan in mute attention now may hear,  
 \* \* \* \* \* Ovid now be mute.  
 What if in warbling fiction he record  
 Cadmus and Arethusa, to a snake  
 Him changed, and her into a fountain clear,  
 I envy not; for never face to face  
 Two natures thus transmuted did he sing  
 Wherein both shapes were ready to assume  
 The other's semblance."

To appreciate still more fully the realism and earnestness of the *Inferno*, one may fancy himself living at the time the work was written and in the places described in the poem, or transplant the date of the events to the present time and change the names of the cities apostrophized;—for instance, in these lines put say *Chicagoese* instead of *Genoese*:

"Oh, Genoese! men perverse in every way,  
 With every foulness stained, why from the earth  
 Are ye not cancelled?" etc.

Or suppose *New York* instead of *Florence* were the butt of the following ironical salute:

"Florence exult! for thou so mightily  
 Hast thriven, that o'er land and sea thy wings  
 Thou beatest, and thy name spreads over hell.  
 Among the plunderers, such the three I found  
 Thy citizens."

Thus might texts be multiplied indefinitely, not only from the *Inferno*, but from the other parts of the *Divine Comedy* as well—passages which show how admirably the poet preserves that high tension of earnestness so indispensable in one who discourses upon the marvelous. For any poet to do this is to accomplish a rare feat in the treatment of any subject, and especially such a subject as the one Dante chose.

Considered from the standpoint of art, and not from any theological, philosophical, or political standpoint, it is striking, and forcibly so, that the entire *Divine Comedy* is a most serious strain, and that the *Inferno* has about it a peculiar vividness, is made to stand out as an objective reality, with dread horrors that are real, and not mere mental figments, phantoms of an imagination gone mad.

Imagination at white heat could not have preserved the equilibrium of guilt and punishment. Art demanded that like-



lihood be regarded. Hence the division of the abyss into circles corresponding to various classes of sinners; hence the modes of punishments varying according to degrees of guilt. Art wants proportion, symmetry. It is there. This constant correspondence between the gulfs of pain and the deserts of those therein engulfed, is one of the noteworthy elements of artful likelihood, of that reality for which the *Inferno* is remarkable. Thus the lighthearted sinners who have allowed themselves in their mortal life to be carried along by the fitful gusts of lustful passions are ceaselessly borne along on the sweeping surges of the hot stormy blasts of hell; the avaricious and the prodigal are seen in the pit spending mighty efforts in uselessly rolling in contrary directions huge bags of money and mutually upbraiding each other; fortune tellers, who would have seen into the future, have their faces and legs reversed so they can but see and walk backward: murderers suffer in rivers of blood; schismatics who have rent society are cloven in twain, their wounds healing only to be eternally reopened; traitors are fixed in the ice of their proud selfishness with the arch rebel, Lucifer, the flapping of whose leathern wings freezes the very ice which holds him and his imitators captive.

It is a hell of demons, fallen angels of varying degrees of consent in rebellion—all finished types of perversity, agents of special pain inflicted for special sins they have urged mortals to commit. It is a hell of human souls, disembodied it is true, yet wearing enough of fleshly substance to be sensible to agencies of physical pain.

Moreover, it must be granted that the characters whom Dante brings upon the scene, the persons referred to or expressly mentioned in the poem are not imaginary personages, not mere straw men who will be burned up as sacrificial offerings to the personal hatred or political spite of the hungry Exile of Florence. No; though he had provocation enough and genius enough to dig a hell in which to consign the Lilliputian souls that had wound around his great and sensitive heart all the chords of sorrow, yet he was greater than all this, and infinitely above such petty vengeance. His hell is the hell of offenders against God, society and self. The few who rise to the surface from out of the tumultuous multitudes that surge in the abyss are types of sinners of all times and the world over. Some of these, whom he recognizes, are people whom he had known and loved, as for instance Francesca, whom as a child, he had danced upon his



knee, and Brunetto Latini, the kind paternal shade in whom he recognizes his devoted preceptor. These were no mere fancy characters. They had lived before his very eyes. The spirits of Clement V, Nichols III, and Boniface VIII were those of real men who all lived in Dante's own time. No less well known and real were such characters as those of the unfortunate Count Ugolino, and of Vanni Fucci, the sacrilegious Pistoese robber. Judas, Brutus and Cassius, Caiphas and Annas are historical characters as well known as the world renowned rulers, Caesar and Cleopatra, the sages Aristotle, Plato, Socrates, Cicero and Avicenni, the world poets Homer, Horace, Ovid and Lucan, all of whom we meet in Dante's hell, judiciously distributed throughout the circles from Limbo to the frozen pit.

Of course, one will be allowed to say by way of parenthesis, that when we rest upon the reality of these characters, the likelihood of Dante's hell, we speak of likelihood. Dante's judgment need not be accepted as infallible and final, one with which the Almighty must comply. But Dante had foundation enough upon which to build his judgment and does not condemn to eternal pain any character for any good it did. Many of the historical personages mentioned are known chiefly for the evil they did; and the poet, as he read history and appreciated actions, motives and persons, gave these a place in his poem. The likelihood remains.

Nor will it avail to object that, perched on every fiery summit, or concealed in every gloomy recess, or guarding every entrance, or patrolling every arch that spans the frightful chasms, are seen all sorts of Furies, Gorgons, Harpies, Centaurs and other mere mythological creations. All these evil deities the pagans had invented. Dante found them already made. Their names and the functions ascribed to them, he merely translates to the evil spirits of his own hell. There's no reason why the poet should be refused the privilege of baptizing demons, rebel angels, when he found such appropriate names to call them by.

All this it is certain contributes to give to the *Inferno* the air of reality which can be claimed for it. Unutterable though these terrors are said to be, yet the expression of them is ever carefully guarded from any extravagance; there is always masterful force and withal careful reserve; there are such unearthly horrors and yet such clearly human pangs, that the whole infernal waste with its flame illumined gloom, its horned devils, its fleshy spirits, its constantly devouring yet never consuming



fires, stands out before us as some dread and unaccountable reality which one mortal saw with his own eyes and returned to earth to tell of.

The *Inferno* is one of those great triumphs of perfect art. To handle such various, strange and weighty materials, to blend all the moral discords of the world into the harmonious whole of hell called for a supreme artist such as Dante.

E. L. R.

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#### THOMAS DE QUINCEY.

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Among the eminent English writers who have illustrated the nineteenth century by their literary fame and by the brilliancy of their talent, few are more worthy of admiration and careful study than Thomas De Quincey.

He belongs to that rare class of individuals, whose inheritance from nature is genius, and who seem destined by their achievements to call forth not only the highest tributes to praise, but also to be the models which all future aspirants to literary distinction must imitate, and thereby win in turn the unperishable laurels that must forever crown merit. De Quincey from his early boyhood evinced that strong passion for learning that we find so deeply implanted in forthcoming geniuses, and so strikingly displayed throughout their youth, as the infallible mark of their future eminence and greatness. One of the most delightful occupations of his youth was study, at which he labored with uncommon ardor and success, till he finally rose to such a degree of perfection in classical learning that, although not yet fifteen, he had already mastered the languages of Demosthenes and Cicero. So great was his proficiency in Greek that one of his professors said of him, speaking to a visitor: "This boy could harangue an Athenian audience better than either you or I can an English one."

At Oxford we find him a diligent student ardently occupied in training his powerful mind in various branches of learning, and particularly in mastering the great English classics, whence evidently he derived that nobility of his stately prose and that fullness of his poetic thought for which he is so preeminently noted in our language. It was at this venerable seat of learning that he laid the basis of the vast erudition which marked him out as one of the most learned men of his time. But in the midst of the splendid success that was rapidly



crowning his noble efforts, he unfortunately fell the victim of a pernicious drug, to which he resorted in order to assuage the pains of rheumatism, but from the moment he first experienced its wonderful effects, he was the slave of opium. After a long struggle, however, he overcame his besetting habit, but it was too late. His literary career was wrecked. De Quincey was surely a man of great genius; his mental capacities were really extraordinary, being adapted to the most diverse kinds of studies, this is made clear by the manner in which he handled such subjects as metaphysics, theology, political economy, and philosophy. As to his scholarly acquirements they were indeed wonderful and of the most exquisite refinement; his fund of general information was as prodigious as the gigantic proportions of his vast intellect. Had De Quincey never had recourse to that enervating drug, opium, undoubtedly his natural powers would have been the object of a more thorough development on his part, and his attainments would have surely reached that supreme degree of excellence to which his magnificent mental endowments called him, and very probably his mighty genius would have contributed to literature, productions more sublime and more famous than those to which he was confined, owing to his want of steadiness and to the complete paralysis of his mind. Notwithstanding, however, these mental and physical disorders, he holds a prominent rank among the writers of his time, and his restless imagination left to perpetuate his fame some of the finest productions of their kind in the language. From the first De Quincey was convinced that prose was his forte, and he devoted himself entirely to it—that “impassioned prose,” as he himself styled it; however, he had not a little of that poetic genius, so favorable to the prose writer when bordering on the pathetic and sublime. It was evidently to this poetic spirit, so strong in him and so conspicuous throughout his writings, that he owed the rhythmic flow and the musical cadence of his harmonious sentences, truly he wrote in prose, but “in the prose of a poet.” The crowning glory of his writings is their style, so original, so polished and elaborate, so rich, so magnificent, and so full of “involved melody;” at times we meet with passages clothed in such charming beauty of expression that our mind is irresistibly moved, and loves to linger over them, apart altogether from the matter they contain. “His sentences,” says Leslie Stephen, “are so delicately balanced and so skillfully constructed that his finest passages fix themselves



in the memory without the aid of meter." De Quincey's writings possess many other notable qualities that will always stand as a high proof of his rare talent and merit, among these qualities, those already enumerated give a fair idea of the author's excellence by indicating some of the most striking beauties of his style, like so many gems sparkling with a fiery lustre on the splendid robes of some oriental prince. To conclude this brief essay on De Quincey we may infer that he is truly an author of considerable merit and worthy of the highest appreciation, and his works, notwithstanding certain defects, will always excite deep wonder and admiration.

R. RICHER '03.

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### THE TRAVELLER.

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Of all Goldsmith's literary productions perhaps none has been less appreciated than "The Traveller." Treatises on literature, whether text books or otherwise, seem to regard it with a depreciation bordering on contempt. The following are a few of the comments given on "The Traveller:" "In 1764, Goldsmith published The Traveller." "In 1764 Goldsmith's poem The Traveller appeared." "The Traveller; or a Prospect of Society, is a poem by Goldsmith." "The Traveller is truly felicitous in thought and expression." "The Traveller is a meditative and descriptive work embodying the impressions of human life and society which he felt in his travels and in his early struggles. It contains little that is very new or striking in the ideas or imagery, but it is exquisitely versified and in beauty of expression has never been surpassed." Yet if we examine this poem we will find that it is not only exquisite in versification and unsurpassed in beauty of expression, but also excellent in scenery and philosophical reflection.

The design of the poem is thus set forth by himself: "Without espousing the cause of any party I have attempted to moderate the rage of all. I have endeavored to show that there may be equal happiness in other states though differently governed from our own; that each state has a peculiar principle of happiness, and that this principle in each state, and in our own in particular may be carried to a mischievous excess."

While our poet sojourned in Europe it seems he received from some people—the Cerinthians especially—very unhospita-



ble treatment. He thinks of his native land's hospitality and pictures to us his condition as follows:

"But we not destined such delights to share  
My prime of life in wandering spent and care;  
Impell'd, with steps unceasing, to pursue  
Some fleeting good that mocks me with the view  
That, like the circle bounding earth and skies  
Allures from afar, yet as I follow flies;  
My fortune leads to traverse realms alone  
And find no spot of all the world my own."

Now seated on the Alps he proceeds:

Ev'n now where Alpine solitudes ascend  
I sit me down a pensive hour to spend;  
And placed on high above the storms career,  
Look downward where a hundred realms appear;  
Lakes, forests, cities, plains, extending wide,  
The pomp of kings, the shepherds humbler pride.  
When thus Creation's charms around combine,  
Amidst the store, should thankless pride repine?

\* \* \* \* \*

Ye glittering towns, with wealth and splendor crowned;  
Ye fields where summer spreads profusion around;  
Ye lakes whose vessels catch the busy gale;  
For me your tributary stores combine;  
Creation's heir, the world, the world is mine!

The meter and description of the preceding lines prove conclusively that our author has a knowledge of the art of versifying and a poetic imagination. It now remains for him to show how well he can form an estimate of "comparative happiness."

"Nature a mother kind alike to all  
Still grants her bliss at labor's earnest call;  
With food as well the peasant is supplied  
On Ida's cliffs as Arno's shelvy side.

\* \* \* \* \*

From art more various are the blessings sent;  
Wealth, commerce, honor, liberty, content."

He now casts a glance over Italy:

Could Nature's bounty satisfy the breast,  
The sons of Italy were surely blest.  
Natural products "here disporting own the kindred soil,  
Nor ask luxuriance of the planter's toil."

Italy is not wealthy, but she has that which no wealth can purchase, and her sons know how to appreciate her treasures.



"Yet, still the loss of wealth is here supplied  
By arts, the splendid wrecks of former pride."

Now the poet turns from them

"To survey  
Where rougher climes a nobler race display,  
Where the bleak Swiss their stormy mansion tread,  
And force a churlish soil for scanty bread.  
No product here the barren hills afford  
But man and steel, the soldier and his sword."

Even in this condition there is a source of pleasure,

"For every want that stimulates the breast  
Yet still, even here content can spread a charm,  
Redress the clime and all its rage disarm.  
Cheerful at morn he wakes from short repose  
Breathes the keen air and carols as he goes."

There are not many poets who so clearly portray the characteristics of peoples among whom he has dwelt for only a short time. He is perhaps even more happy in his description of France.

"To kinder skies, where gentler manners reign,  
I turn; and France displays her bright domain,  
Gay, sprightly land of mirth and social ease,  
Pleased with thyself, whom all the world can please."

But France has her faults:

"Ostentation here, with tawdry art,  
Pants for the vulgar praise which fools impart."

He concludes his description of France by the following verses:

"They please, are pleased; they give to get esteem,  
Till seeming blest, they grow to what they seem."

Of which the judicious Campbell says: "There is perhaps no couplet in English rhyme more perspicuously condensed than those two lines of the "Traveller," in which the author describes the at once flattering, vain, and happy character of the French."

After picturing the sum total of human affairs in Holland, the author's "genius spreads her wing and flies where Britain courts the western spring." Having described England's goods in a rather sarcastic manner, he gives her the following tribute:

"Thine, Freedom, thine the blessings pictured here,  
Thine are those charms that dazzle and endear."



He then begins to narrate the evils here:

Each wanton judge the penal statues draw,  
Laws grind the poor, and rich men rule the law,  
The wealth of climes where savage nations roam  
Pillaged from slaves to purchase slaves at home.

After fear, pity, justice and indignation swell his heart, growing "half a patriot" and "half a coward," "he flies from petty tyrants to the throne," and curses "that baleful hour when ambition struck at regal power." Here, he pathetically but moderately (probably for prudence sake) tells of the miseries which English misrule has brought upon unhappy Ireland:

Have we not seen round Briton's peopled shore,  
Her useful sons exchanged for useless ore?  
Seen all her triumphs but destruction haste  
Like flaring tapers brightening as they waste,  
Seen opulence, her grandeur to maintain,  
Lead stern depopulation on her train,  
And over fields where scattered hamlets rose,  
In barren solitary pomp repose?  
Have we not seen at pleasure's lordly call  
The smiling long-frequented village fall?  
Beheld the duteous son the sire decayed,  
The modest matron and the blushing maid,  
Forced from their homes a melancholy train  
To traverse climes beyond the western main.

Having thus selected from *The Traveller* and inserted in this paper such verses as seem to us most indicative of its real merit, we feel justified in saying that this poem has been depreciated to a degree calculated to entitle many of its critics to the first place in our reprobation. Let us conclude that many a well-meaning critic has condemned himself to the disapprobation of posterity, not because he undervalued or overestimated works of art, but precisely because he drew his knowledge, not from a just examination of the work that unfortunately fell into his hands, but from the injudicious remarks of some prejudiced critic.

P. J. GERAGHTY.



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## EDITORIAL.

### INTOLERANCE.

There are few words in the language used so loosely or so frequently used in a wrong sense as the word intolerance. To say that a community, an institution or a society has been intolerant, is, in the opinion of many men, to pronounce its condemnation. In fact, when these men wish to bring an institution into disrepute or to excite the hatred of their fellow-men against its acts, they believe they will most surely attain the end intended, by showing that the institution in question is, or was intolerant. The thoughtless multitude, without knowing very well what intolerance means or why it was exercised in a given case, are carried away by a few high-sounding phrases, and condemn, without appeal, every appearance of intolerance.

But a little less empty declamation and a little more serious reflection soon convinces us that there never has been, nor ever will be, a society or a nation which must not, to a greater or less extent, be intolerant. This has been the verdict of all past history, and by the very nature of things, it must be the teaching of all future time. It would not be difficult to show the truth of this proposition by examples drawn from the history of ancient and modern nations, but I will content myself with presenting a few facts from American history.

I suppose there have been few, if any nations, more tolerant than the United States. In fact it is our boast that never before was such a large measure of liberty granted to the individual. Here then, if anywhere, intolerance does not exist. Yet such is far enough from being the fact. There are innumerable things which are not tolerated even in this country. I need only refer to the case of Roberts, who was recently expelled from congress because he was a practical believer in the tenets



of Mormonism. It did not take us long to make the Chicago anarchists understand that they would not be tolerated when they began to propagate their pernicious doctrines. Because Booth believed he was ridding the country of an odious tyrant, when he shot Lincoln, did his belief (honest or not) avail him much before the law? There are many other things which would not be tolerated in this country, even though they should appear under the guise of religion, no matter how honest or sincere their teachers should be. Suppose some misguided fanatics should seek to re-establish the monstrous religion, requiring human sacrifice. Would we tolerate them? Of course not, because we cannot permit such abominable crimes for whatever motive committed. But then we would be intolerant, because we would violate the consciences of others by proscribing as a crime what in their eyes is a homage to the divinity. Thus thought many nations of old, and thus think a few even yet. We do not tolerate polygamy, although the Mormon believes it to be of divine origin, and pretends to find scriptural warrant for its practice. He is wrong, of course, and we are right in proscribing polygamy, even though we are obliged to be utterly inconsistent in doing so. It is difficult for a man of ordinary intelligence to understand how a people who profess to believe that each individual has the right to interpret the Bible for himself, can consistently condemn those who, acting on this principle, deduce polygamy from their reading of the scriptures, wrongly it may be, but in many cases at least honestly. If I am the ultimate judge as to what the Bible teaches, what right has my neighbor to impose his personal interpretation upon me? But whether consistently or not we certainly do not allow the Mormon to practice polygamy, and are in so far intolerant.

I think sufficient has been said to show that every institution and every nation must be intolerant to a certain extent. And yet what notable commencement orations have been delivered on the sanctity and inviolability of human thought and the inalienable right each individual has to follow his honest convictions. How eloquently indignant these young orators become when they hear that the death penalty was inflicted on certain heretics during the middle ages. They do not at all understand the conditions that then prevailed or perceive that those who were then called heretics and punished under that title, are now called by other names and punished just the same. Anarchists would be called heretics during the middle ages and suffer as



such, now they are looked upon only as disturbers of social order, but their change of name does not exempt them from death or imprisonment. Thus it becomes evident that, in certain respects and for various reasons, every institution and every nation is and must be intolerant.

Certain as this may appear, yet there are many college students and even older men, who seem to imagine that any and all intolerance is condemnable. We read recently in one of our exchanges an oration on the benefits which the reformation has conferred upon the human mind, and among other meaningless verbiage the orator said: "The reformation has struck from the human mind the shackles of slavery with which Rome had bound it, and has taught that universal tolerance found in modern nations," etc. It would be difficult to find more nonsense compressed into as few lines. This young man does not perceive that to speak of any institution holding the human mind in slavery is sheer nonsense. The mind, when rightly balanced, is always a slave to the data presented to it. Its value as an instrument for ascertaining truth, consists precisely in its lack of freedom. If the mind were free to say that two and two make six or ten, its reign of usefulness would be over. And so if you tell me that John owes you two dollars and Henry seven and I am free to conclude that both together owe your fifteen dollars, my mental freedom would not commend itself to most sane men. We have already seen what the other high-sounding phrase, "universal tolerance," is worth.

This is of course a very incomplete exposition of the subject, but it is more than sufficient to show the folly and utter stupidity of most of the *clap-trap* about toleration and the freedom of the human mind so freely indulged in by young men who have never given themselves the trouble to understand the meaning of what they say.

W. J. COSTIGAN.

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#### EXCHANGES.

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A college journal should not only teach students how to write with ease and elegance, and help them to form a taste for good and healthy literature, but it should also aim at inculcating a love for truth. Nothing, it seems to us, can be more pernicious and reprehensible than the practice which prevails even among certain college journals of putting forth assertions which,



not only cannot be supported by facts, but which are evidently opposed to the known truth. The editorial in the *Sunbeam* of Whitby, Ontario, is a striking instance of this disregard for truth and recklessness of assertion—so much so, indeed, that if the word Boer were substituted for Briton and *vice versa* it would perfectly accord with the testimony of every impartial and unprejudiced mind. But as it is, it would be difficult to conceive anything more glaringly false and impudent.

*The Fordham Monthly* for April is a very interesting number. There are several good essays interspersed with short poems. "The Light of Men" deserves special mention for the purity and elevation of the thoughts contained in it. "Gerald Griffin" is a brief but well written narrative of the life and works of that sweet singer and charming writer of fiction who as the writer well says, "in the prime of his manhood and in the zenith of his glory, surrounded by all that is supposed to make life valuable, devoted friends, worldly renown and great success—took off his laurels, laid them modestly on the altar of religion, and clothed in the humble garb of a Christian Brother, prepared to devote his life to unostentatious charity." In reading the life of Gerald Griffin one is forcibly struck with the close resemblance it bears to that of Goldsmith both in his works which like the latter are characterized of a chasteness and simplicity of style, and in the privations and sufferings which he endured. "Educational Notes" are quite interesting inasmuch as they contain the views of some of the leading writers and thinkers both of the past and present on the much debated question of education. Some of these views, as we might expect, contain some sound and practical suggestions while others are neither sound nor practical, if not absurd.

*The Tamarack* is one of those exchanges in which one is always sure to find something worth reading. The April issue is no exception to this rule. "The Conspiracy of Pontiac" is a very interesting piece of history. "The Filipino" is thoughtful and well written. In the "Photograph of the Holy Shroud" there is given a most interesting and instructive description of that precious and sacred relic.

*St. John's University Record* for April contains a very good paper on "Imitation in Style." The writer treats his subject in an original and interesting manner. His own choice diction happily illustrates the point he wishes to make. The essay on



the "Baneful Influence of the Reformation," seems to us to be very faulty both as to form and argument. In the first place the subject is one of vast scope, yet the author despatches it in a few short pages.

Besides, in our opinion, he indulges too much in exclamation and assertion and offers but few weighty arguments in support of his thesis. A phrase like the following is unpardonable—" \* \* \* it almost cannot help." There are a few sentences which come dangerously close to inconsistency. In the first part of his essay the author writes—"How they dare assert that the Reformation had a beneficial influence upon arts and sciences is almost beyond comprehension." A few lines farther down he says—"There is indeed much that tends to favor the Reformation." He then proceeds to enumerate a few of the things which, in his opinion, give plausibility to the arguments of the reformers. It is not easy to perceive how he reconciles these statements. We think it is far better to leave such subjects untouched unless they are well handled. We were all the more surprised to find such a loose piece of composition in the *University Record* because it is usually a carefully edited journal. A poem in this number entitled "Allelujah," is a beautiful bit of verse. Both the language and thought are truly poetic. The printers made a bad jumble of the editorials. On the whole we think this number of the *Record* falls far short of its usual merit. Perhaps this is one of the penalties of having set yourself a high standard of excellence.

*The Criterion*, Columbia College, S. C., has an excellent number for April. With the exception of "A Sketch of Maum Sue, an Eastern Carolina Darkie," there is not a dull article in the journal. This sketch has neither plan nor purpose; wit, humor nor consistency and very little sense. It should not have been given a place in such excellent company as the remaining articles of the *Criterion*. The paper on the "Ideal and the Real" is full of beautiful and elevated imagery expressed in charming diction. "The Character of Hamlet From His Speeches" is an essay that would have graced the pages of a magazine. The writer has evidently made not only a careful study of this great Shakespearean character, but has also succeeded in grasping the philosophy of the whole play. This number contains also a sensible and carefully written editorial on "The True Sphere of Woman."



## VIATORIANA.

- Breezy Willie —
- Gymnasium fellows —
- Oliver drove the first stake —
- Tell me—what on your liver —
- 1st. What have we for desserts?  
2d. Ginger snaps, as usual.
- Button, button, who has the button?
- Tie up that dog in the refectory.
- Say, I'll bet you can't jump over your collar.
- Vivo's voice was frozen telephoning to his betrothed.
- Big Boy. What's the main squeeze in a sausage mill?  
Little Willie. Putting tights on the sausage.
- The grammar class has a for-get-me-not for their favorite flower. The teacher gives them often to his pupils.
- Who constituted you the corporeal mouthpiece of these animated organisms?

## BASE BALL.

Finding so many base ball enthusiasts, it was necessary to call an extra meeting of the Athletic Association to form a league, which consists of six teams. Much rivalry exists among the teams, caused by the end in view, namely: a delicious banquet.

The standing of the teams is as follows:

Captains.	Played.	Won.	Per cent.
Moran.....	2	2	1000
Benadon.....	3	2	666
Caron.....	3	2	666
King.....	4	2	500
McShane.....	4	1	250
Nugent.....	2	0	000

Umpire, George Bergeron.

Scorer, L. Finnegan.



Whoever enunciates these sophistical propositions, I unhesitatingly denominate a propounder of unmitigated absurdities.

We have among us a mighty twirler, to whose zig-zags and lightning shoots eighteen of the best batters in the west succumbed in four innings, at least so he says. He is slightly out of form just at present, but when he again works himself into good condition, the day of woe for all visiting teams will have come. He is also a peerless foot-ball player, as his suit liberally stained with red ink amply testifies.

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### BASE BALL.

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STREATOR REDS, 13. ST. VIATEURS, 3.

Sunday, May 6, the base ball season opened up very unfavorably here. We were defeated by an outrageous score; but, conquered as we were, there is still consolation in the contemplation of yet being the victors, for the team has good material, and with a little development, and less individual playing, all will be well. Martin and Caron, the battery for St. Viateurs, showed up exceedingly well, and held the visitors with five singles till the fifth inning, when the team lost courage, caused by Jacobson's wild throw to first on the third out. Eleven shattered the atmosphere around home plate, in vain attempts. The other features of the game were the fielding, and second base playing of Tom Legris.

The game in detail: The Streator Reds were retired in the first inning. The second hits by Proud and Hall, and a wild throw by Legris, allowed the two men to cross the plate. In the third Anderson flied out to Legris. Pincul made a single, stole second, and was advanced to home base by the base hit of Hall. The fourth and fifth were a repetition of the first. The sixth was the turning point of the game. Hoban struck at the air viciously, thrice, whilst his brother Jim did somewhat better by making a hard drive to second, but was the number two out. McAllister followed and made a slow grounder to Jacobson, who made a wild throw to Legris. This caused discouragement in the team, and, laboring under such a difficulty, the college boys



allowed five runs to be scored against them. Martin was batted fiercely, six hits being made. Martin and Caron retired as battery in the eighth to the Legris battery, but not without two more hits being gained.

ST. VIATEURS.

	AB.	R.	1 B.	SH.	PO.	A.	E.
E. Legris, lf .....	4	1	0	0	2	0	0
A. Caron, c.....	4	1	1	0	1	1	1
T. Legris, 2b.....	4	0	0	1	2	1	1
A. Martin, cap't, p .....	4	1	0	1	0	0	0
L. Jacobson, 3b .....	4	0	0	0	1	3	3
J. Legris, 1b .....	4	0	0	1	0	1	1
C. Moran, ss .....	4	0	1	0	2	3	3
W. Carey, cf .....	3	0	1	0	0	0	0
E. Marcotte, rf .....	2	0	0	0	0	0	0

STREATOR REDS.

	AB.	R.	1 B.	SH.	PO.	A.	E.
McAllister, cap't, 3b.....	6	2	2	0	1	0	0
Grogan, lf .....	6	1	0	0	1	0	1
Anderson, ss.....	6	3	1	2	1	1	0
Pincul, 1b .....	6	2	4	1	0	1	0
Jones, cf.....	6	1	1	0	2	0	1
Proud, 2b .....	6	2	2	0	1	3	0
Hall, rf .....	6	2	3	1	0	0	0
Jno. Hoban, c.....	4	0	0	1	0	0	1
Jas. Hoban, p .....	5	0	0	0	0	5	0

Hoban struck out 10

Martin struck out 11.

Umpire, Hayden.

Scorer, St. Cerny.

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