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"DEMOCRACY in LITERATURE."

By

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Motto:-- Fortiter et Recte.
It is the experience of the present writer that the words which are his to take as the title of the following pages, suggest, - and to the best of his reasoning legitimately suggest, - two wholly different and almost unrelated lines of thought. In the first place, they may invite to the consideration of that large section of ancient and modern literature devoted to the discussion and analysis of the civil and social life of men. They may point us to the "Politicus" of Plato, to Aristotle on the "Constitution of Athens," to Rousseau, Hobbes, Locke, and all the rest of the world's great political thinkers, down to Stuart Mill, and Sir Henry Maine; and so challenge information, not of democracy as it has been found to work in fact, but of democracy in literature as contradistinguished from this, - of democracy as it has appeared to the great students in their studies. To this demand the answer is an essay in the science of politics, an excursus in the history of social philosophy. We should require to remember the vast literature of Utopias; the innumerable works on the French and other Revolutions; the debates on the various forms of ecclesiastical polity; the socialist and communist philosophies and agitations. Many are the writers
who profess to recall the thinker from out the dust and glare of actual political strife, and to show him the true nature of democracy by the calm clear light of the study lamp. Albeit that with most of them the scientific motive and manner are but little more than a pretence, and they themselves are merely camp-followers of the army of political philosophers, it remains the fact that on no subject has the human mind been more unremittingly engaged than on that of democracy, and on no other are ancients and moderns on more completely common ground. Well may one ask himself, with such a literature before him, how the pictures of democracy to be found therein stand the test of subsequent political experience and of maturer reasoning. What has it established, and how much is still in debate? What tendencies of the human mind has the controversy on this subject most conspicuously evinced? To watch the idea as it beams more and more fully upon the world from generation to generation is perhaps the only way really to understand the thing. What then more profitable than to go back to the social philosophy of Plato and Aristotle, and to compare their notion of the demos, - its function in civil life, its plan in the economy of things political, - with the views of their successors
in the philosophical apostleship; always taking care to tread, not with the bated breath of antiquarian superstition which dares not criticise the ancient, but remembering in all modesty the sound Baconian sentiment, that if the appeal is to the ancients then it is we who are the ancients, and not they who lived in the youth of the world.

But the words of our title may have a very different force. For the problem with which on the second interpretation they bring us face to face, concerns the republic of letters rather than the literature of republics. It is the problem of literary criticism in its widest sense, - a cry for a philosophy of literature rather than for an historical critique of sociology. It seems to remind us that literature, whatever else it may be, is a pursuit, a sphere of human activity, which as such falls to be considered in view of a moral end. Art may have canons of its own which are not moral laws, and rules of thumb which are not the ten commandments, but for all that it has a moral significance, and brings with it a contribution to the general happiness. What, then, is the true end of literature? Does it not touch the life of the common people at some point? May we not say of it what
Froude once said of religion, that it "addresses the vulgar?"

May we not rest assured that often-times though technical laws of the literary art may be applied by critics learned and critics dilettantes, by superior persons of every shade and type, - in a word by the educated and pseudo-educated few; there is an appeal to a higher tribunal, one which can see in the music of men's thoughts other elements than mere technique, one which is not ashamed to give a patient and approving hearing even to those who know not how to pronounce the literary shibboleth correctly, or to use the ad captandum argument of la grande manière? Are not Crabbe, Hood, Burns, three names whose very sound makes us realise the sense in which the judgment and influence of the populace - ay, the vulgar herd, the many-headed beast - are in the very last degree important to a true and patient literary criticism? Is it not just possible that the republic of letters is really a republic after all? - this is a second question suggested by our title, as well worth examination as the first; for indeed there are few fundamental points in the philosophy of letters which might not receive some light from its agitation.

Now, the choice is forced upon us which of these two
lines of thought we shall pursue: our title may possibly mean either, it can not possibly mean both. The two subjects start up like hares before our face at the sound of the phrase "democracy in literature," but they run in different directions, and a forced cut across country from the one hunt to the other is out of the question. It is because we consider that upon the whole the second interpretation is somewhat the more natural of the two, that we will be found to have restricted ourselves to the question of democracy in literary criticism; thinking it right, however, that a decision which we find to be imperative should be at least explicit; and in the hope that the problem which we are about to handle may become the more clear by the open rejection of its competitor. For the rest, it may as usefully be introduced to the reader by this means as by any other.

It has often been remarked that the gravest danger which can threaten any church is the danger of forgetting the priesthood of all men, of identifying the church with the clergy, and so making it a onesided and top-heavy institution. There is in literature also just such an ever-present tendency to lapse into a false sacerdotalism, which leaves criticism to
be done by proxy, farms out the pleasures and duties of literary supervision to a select coterie, and allows a profession, some would say a cabal, to conjure with the name of the whole literary world. Certainly it is vain to say that as the deputy goes forth in the name of his principal so the critics are the representatives of public opinion, unless we can swear to it that their commission is duly granted, and their election conducted on an efficient system. It is essential that the critical bad coins should be called in occasionally: even politics would be timely worthless with never a general election. Representatives may watch over their constituents' interests in their stead, but not altogether in their stead; the constituents should keep their eye on the representatives. *Quis custodiet custodes?* is an ancient question and a test one, for democracy means the answering of that question by saying that the guarded must guard the guardians. This alone is real self-government, to have the power to keep an eye on your deputy. Whether in politics or literature, there is no democracy unless it be here. Otherwise self-government in literature is but a name and not a possibility; and self-government in politics is but the
right of that retired grocer who shall be elected to govern all other people within an area to be defined by the Local Government Acts.

If the view of the present paper be at all correct, there is not only room for democracy in the literary world, but such democracy can be and ought to be made real. Real, be it observed, for we do not say unbridled; indeed, its proper sphere is very difficult to define with exactitude, and its limitations need careful exposition. The swaggering dogma of democracy is in literature as elsewhere but tyranny with a red cap on: one might even say that to be a fanatical democrat is, in the literary more than in any other sphere, to be beyond the pale of reason. "Democracy," said Sir Henry Maine, "is a form of government;" and he did well in insisting upon this as a proposition which many men have yet to learn. Government, in politics or literature, is a means to an end, an instrument of happiness or blessedness in some form or other, which form is still, we are afraid, to be settled by moral philosophers. In politics the single question is, Does a democratic government make for peace and prosperity or does it not? We at least shall keep clear of theories of natural
rights in whatever form, nor try by resuscitating Paine to
justify anything by speculation which is condemned by the
facts. In literature the position is the same. Does demo-
cracy in literature tend best to realise the end of literature?
Does it tend to produce and appreciate the highest and wor-
thiest? Is it fair and efficient in enforcing the canons of
the several species of the art? These are the lines on which
any justification of it must be accomplished, for assuredly
if these questions must be answered in the negative no anti-
quated metaphysic and no clap-trap, however popular, will
avail to save the position. An intelligent preference for
democracy is not necessarily a wavering one because it is less
extravagant than ordinary. We believe that it has a function
in literature though we hold also that there are vast areas
of literary production from which it ought to be rigidly ex-
cluded. Few things require more elaborate justification or
more careful modification. "On the whole, the dispassion-
ate student of politics, who has once got into his head that
Democracy is only a form of government, who has some idea of
what the primary duties of government are, and who sees the
main question, in choosing between them, to be which of them
in the long run best discharges these duties, has a right to
be somewhat surprised at the feelings which the advent of De-
mocracy excites." (Maine, Pop. Govt. Ess. II.). This is
precisely our feeling on the literary question also, and we
avow that the approval likely to be accorded to our discus-
sion from bigotry of belief in the name democracy will be
small indeed when all is done. So thick do prejudices gather
about the idea, so misty is the conception for very many, so
explosive in its effects on many others, that the renuncia-
tion of all aid from the popular conceptions on the matter is
a condition of any serious thinking. In different matters
different forms of government are necessary; government is
the instrument of an end, and a form of government is but
the instrument of an instrument. If the immediate ends of
politics and letters are different, the general political ex-
perience or creed will take us no length at all towards the
solution of the literary problem. We shall have to challenge
the whole democratic idea or ideal as regards some branches of
literature, and to state with many a careful qualification
how far, and in what sense, the nature and end of certain
other forms of literature do in our judgment afford scope for
democratic influences.

There are, however, two remarks which are called for in order that this position may not be misunderstood. The first is that while political prejudice may not be imported into the literary question, no method of treatment is likely to throw more light upon the latter than that which proceeds by deliberate comparison and contrast between the conditions of the respective spheres. It is one thing to jump from political experience to literary conclusions. It is another thing to find out the characteristic points of each case; their main differences and resemblances, their respective ends and canons, with the view of finding out how far that basis yields a right to draw analogies, how far a right to frame antitheses. In objecting to the airy assumption of analogy we do not affirm that they differ "by the whole diameter of being." For many things in the political world may remind us quite correctly of similar conditions in the literary. Much speculation and much keen analysis has been bestowed on the question of the nature of the democratic ideal in the abstract, in connection with political applications. Great help may be derived from this, and it becomes important
accordingly to make it clear that no such considerations are ruled out of court.

The other remark is that there is an obvious necessity laid upon us to undertake some preliminary classification of literature which may be appropriate to the point of view from which we are at present surveying the literary field. This after all is the important point. All literature is not of one kind nor has it all the same immediate end. Not only is the test of one sort of writing not the test for another but the merit of one sort is the vice of another. There are specific canons for the different departments, which canons alone have any interest or any great importance. The rules that can be laid down for all literature indiscriminately are merely superficial caveats against certain errors of taste easily recognised as such by the veriest tyro, if attentive. They can be taught in the schools; at no very advanced stage of education their violations may grate on the ear like a creaking hinge. They are like the notice that is posted up in the sleeping compartments of a certain Continental railway "Passengers are requested not to go to bed in their boots;" or like the injunction in a book of etiquette which we have
seen, 'It is extremely rude to spit upon the floor.' So too the purely general and absolutely universal rules of literary art may be summed up in the injunction to remember that your reader is a human being after all. "There is such a thing as grammar;" "there is such a thing as decent carefulness required in the exposition of your subject;" "do not sandwich a parenthesis of a page in length between a subject and its predicate;" "apply that common-sense psychology of attention which you must have learnt from observation of your own mind." No, we must classify and specify if we are to find the really important literary canons. The different forms of literature have different ends and cannot have a common standard in consequence.

Thus, consider the innumerable tomes which record the sermons of the great Puritan divines. To us they are as insufferable as random extracts from the Pharmacopoeia, as unedifying as a recitation from the London Directory. To get the most select literary democracy to read them through would be to make the circle blush that it had not been squared. Yet who can condemn them? No one certainly who remembers Carlyle's vivid insistence on the fact that the contents of
those dusty volumes - to us as dry, as stale, as unprofitable
as the old refinements of the scholastic metaphysic - were
heard with bated breath and fevered interest by the honour-
able members of the Long Parliament and the Rump.

Again, are there not impressive examples nearer home?
Few divines had a more successful career than Blair, the pre-
decessor of Aytoun in the chair of Rhetoric at Edinburgh.
He had the reputation of a Baxter, the success of a John Knox.
So widely were his sermons bought and read that now there is
not a bookseller in all Scotland so eccentric as not to have
more copies of his works than can be disposed of gratis. And
yet, we ask again, did he fail? Surely not. It is no slight
success to uphold and comfort one whole generation of one's
countrymen even if only one, to move them to better things,
to point them to things still better.

Such cases may make clear what a Saturnalia of literary
injustice might take place if we refused to discriminate be-
tween one literature and another, between the ends of the
respective kinds. There are some species of literature of
which we may say "literature is - what it does;" a class
far larger than people think, and in regard to which, chiefly
if not exclusively, democracy has an important place. Here literature which is uninfluential is literature which stands condemned, and that which is \textit{de facto} appreciated is \textit{de iure} justified. Thus exhortation which persuades is the best exhortation; that which exhorts in vain is a peculiarly irritating form of noise. And if what De Quincey would have called \textit{Eloquence} as opposed to \textit{Rhetoric} yields a test case of this kind of literary merit, it is no less clear that the literature of science is furthest removed from every such criterion. The whole world may have hissed a Galileo or a Darwin without diminishing in the least the lustre that surrounds their name for us. "Things and actions are what they are," said Bishop Butler, "and the consequences of them will be what they will be; why, then, should we desire to be deceived?" The true is the necessary, i.e. it is that which we are compelled to accept from our senses and our powers of reasoning. Men differ in skill of enquiry, and the most skilful seekers become recognised as an aristocracy of science; but he who first finds out a scientific truth is in a very different position from a governor of men, however much knowledge of his new truth may affect men's actions. He compels
the man in the street to accept truths at his hands but he does not voluntarily decree anything which others must obey. He too only obeys - the object, and to rebel against him is to kick against the pricks of fact. It is only reasonable to imprison Galileo if he maliciously turns the handle that works the earth. There is real meaning in Carlyle's gospel of fact, wherein no challenge was more often reiterated than this, - What is the use of a Democracy decreeing one thing if the Fates have already decreed the reverse? What point is there in pulling one way if "the eternal fibres of the Universe" are pulling in the other? To bark at the heels of scientific pioneers is a more impious act by far than any serious speculation can possibly be, however erroneous. He who speculates extravagantly but commits a mistake, violates only the ἀρετὴ ἑιδωλική; while the democracy which would bully science declares war against the gods, tramples the θεικὴ ἀρετὴ under foot.

If then it is evident that we must discriminate among the species of literature, it is no less evident that the capital distinction which falls to be made is De Quincey's distinction between the literature of knowledge and the litera-
ture of power. The one aims at teaching truth, the other at producing emotion and influencing action. Each sort has its proper excellence according to its end. A sermon full of platitudes, all of them unexceptionally true, may be the worst sermon possible. A textbook of biology which is ever and again trying to "improve the occasion" by moralising on the phenomena of life or sentimentalising about the loves of guinea-pigs, is equally an abomination. In certain branches of the Mental and Moral Science this error is extremely common; partly, no doubt, because of the high authority of Aristotle, who in his "Ethics" insists that the study of Moral Philosophy is to be conducted as a means of improving the moral character, and professes only to treat of it so far as necessary for guidance in conduct. From the fact that in one of his published lectures on Butler, Matthew Arnold assumes this view as axiomatically true, we rather presume that an Oxford tradition to the same effect obtains. It is a view much more in accordance, however, with the latter day spirit, and, we unhesitatingly affirm, a truer view, which denies that one can be both a rhetorician and a scientist at the same time, any more than one can run in different direc-
tions at the same time. Thus Political Economy is wrongly regarded by those who seem to think that it consists in the exposition and delineation of the interesting feelings produced in their minds by contemplation of the miseries of the submerged tenth. The late Professor Henry Drummond's book on the "Ascent of Man" is an example of the endeavour to mix up science and rhetoric not without an occasional grotesqueness. Even in theology you may be sure that that is no serious work on Protestantism in which the phrase continually recurs: "to hell with the Pope." These examples may show the opposition which necessarily subsists between the affecting and the instructing literature. It is the difference between what Lord Bacon called "dry light" and light which is ever "infused and drenched in affections and customs." To feel strongly and to make other men feel strongly is the stamp and hallmark of the orator, the leader of men. His business is not to inform but to persuade, and any information which he may convey is such as tends to affect his audience in the way desired. So too with the tragedian, according to that greatest of all works in the philosophy of literature the Poetics of Aristotle; his business is to "purify men's pas-
sions by pity and fear." The key-note here is subjective; that of science is objective. The appeal of science is to "the mere discursive understanding," whereas the literature of power "speaks ultimately, it may happen, to the higher understanding or reason, but always through affections of pleasure or sympathy." "What you owe to Milton is not any knowledge of which a million separate items are still but a million of advancing steps on the same earthly level; what you owe is power, - that is, exercise and expansion to your own latent capacity of sympathy with the infinite, where every pulse and each separate influx is a step upwards, a step ascending is upon a Jacob's ladder from earth to mysterious altitudes above the earth. All the steps of knowledge from first to last carry you further on the same plane but could never raise you one foot above your ancient level of earth: whereas the very first step in power is a flight - is an ascending movement into another element where earth is forgotten." (De Quincey, "The Poetry of Pope," Vol. XI. ed. Masson). Were it worth while to collect from other literary figures sentiments which go to corroborate De Quincey; were the matter one which could be carried by scrap-book, decided by authority;
many names might be brought up with ease. Let one quotation from Saint Beuve suffice to show how in literature, at least, power takes the foremost place. The question being answered is "What is a classic?" and Saint Beuve defines him as an "author who has enriched the human mind, who has really added to its treasure, who has got it to take a step further; who has discovered some unequivocal moral truth or penetrated to some eternal passion, in that heart of man where it seemed as though all were known and explored, who has produced his thought or his observation, or his invention under some form no matter what, so it be great, large, acute, and reasonable, sane and beautiful in itself; who has spoken to all in a style of his own, yet a style which finds itself the style of everybody - in a style that is at once new and antique and is the contemporary of all the ages." It is obvious that the same aspect of literature struggles to depict itself in these dicta from such very different persons.

But let us not misapprehend the nature of the distinction. Is history literature of knowledge or of power? Of knowledge, it may be said. Yet surely the historian always adds that indefinable "something more" to the bare chronicle
and makes a history different from the materials for a history. Again, as a learned historian recently demanded, Who can think of the life of Mary Queen of Scots and keep his head quite cool? After all would history be really history apart from all moral interests and dramatic excitements - in a word without "that humid light which clothes itself in the mists and glittering iris of human passions, desires, and genial emotions." Will the human element in the subject-matter ever cease to call out to the human element in the student? Surely not. Knowledge and power are both present in all literature, though in some cases one element is liminal in amount and the other at its maximum. De Quincey himself admits that "a vast proportion of books - history, biography, travels, miscellaneous essays, etc. - lying in a middle zone confound these distinctions by interblending them;" and we suppose the most severely scientific textbook on astronomy may affect a beginner with the novel feeling that after all he has not quite exploited all the mysteries of Providence. But it is also true that these elements are "repelling forces;" the more scientific, the less affecting, and vice versa. The question is one of the main motive of a work, and it is a hybrid and worthless
production indeed, of which it is not evident whether it is meant for the library or the boudoir. Our distinction must not be thrown aside because it is not a cast-iron one; no valuable distinctions ever are.

If we connect it with what Matthew Arnold has said on literature we find an even deeper meaning in it than before. Arnold's great creed was the necessity of knowing the best that has been thought and said upon the great subjects of human interest, and in this sense he took the word Culture for his battle-cry. Being taken to task by Huxley for failing to give due prominence to the necessity for scientific knowledge and study he gave in his Rede Lecture in the Cambridge Senate House a very admirable and philosophical apologia for his beliefs. His culture crusade was not intended to result in a "superficial humanism," to use a phrase of Renan's, which treats all men as though they were without exception going to become poets, and statesmen, and orators. A genuine humanism will be scientific also, in the sense that it will rest upon knowledge systematically laid out and followed up to its original sources. But the difference between scientific literature and what the last generation had a way of calling "belles
lettres," appears "when we set ourselves to enumerate the powers which go to the building up of human life." There is in the generality of mankind a perpetual tendency to relate to one another in diverse ways these four powers, which roughly speaking compose the human character, - the power of conduct, the power of intellect and knowledge, the power of beauty, and the power of social life and manners. We repeat that the point to be noticed about these is that they cannot be kept in isolation. Give a Darwin his books and his specimens and he may ask for nothing more, but pure and simple naturalists are very rare indeed. "The vast majority of mankind feel the need of relating what we have learnt and known to the sense which we have in us for conduct, to the sense which we have in us for beauty" - a necessity which can only be explained by reference to the great fact of "the desire in men that good should be for ever present to them." Here then is the ultimate rationale of the distinction between scientific literature and humanist literature, between the literature of knowledge and the literature of power, between the didactic and the affecting. Conceivably the former might put the world into a syllogism so neat and comprehensive as to contain it all. It might formulate that one proposition which alone is cate-
gorically true because it alone leaves nothing out of account. It might attain that "completely unified knowledge" which Herbert Spencer rightly holds out as the ultimate intellectual ideal. It might get to know the "flower in the crannied wall" and so "what God and man is." Would that suffice us? Would it give us a completely rounded life? No, says Arnold. "Still it would be only knowledge that they give us; knowledge not put for us into relation with our sense for conduct, our sense for beauty, and touched with emotion by being so put; not thus put for us, and therefore to the majority of mankind after a certain while, unsatisfying and wearying." The sole function of literature is not to teach. Writing is a means of human intercourse like speaking, and it is as false to think of literature in general as didactic as it would be to assert that tongues are given us to deliver lectures with. "Though I have all knowledge," in Paulian phrase, there may be much I have not got; and conversely there have been those whose knowledge in the ordinary sense has been very limited and who have yet made their mark upon the world's history. For this reason men who cannot read everything may well prefer "polite letters" to scientific literature; "letters will call out their being at more points, will make them live more."
shall find, as a matter of experience, if we know the best that has been thought and uttered in the world, we shall find that the art and poetry and eloquence of men who lived, perhaps, long ago, who had the most limited natural knowledge, who had the most erroneous conceptions about many important matters, we shall find that they have in fact not only the power of refreshing and delighting us, they have also the power, - such is the strength and worth in essentials of their authors' criticism of life, - they have a fortifying and elevating and quickening and suggestive power, capable of wonderfully helping us to relate the results of modern science to our need for conduct, our need for beauty." Who will not recognise in this a marvellously true perception of the aim and end of literature? Think of the Iliad, the Agamemnon, the Alcestis; think of Hamlet, Macbeth, King Lear, Othello; think of the Paradise Lost and the Ode to the Morning of Christ's Nativity. If these were powerless to move the popular mind whenever they were studied, would they not be worthless mockeries of their real selves? Unknown to many, they have the Σπουδές of mighty thoughts for all. This is what we mean when we say that such literature is what it does, that a much larger part
of our best literature than is generally recognised, is literature of which the real test is not objective, that for this part mere science can never be a substitute. Arnold is in this a true son of his illustrious father, who once said: "Rather than have it the principal thing in my son's mind," - he was talking of physical science, - "I would gladly have him think that the sun went round the earth, and that the stars were so many spangles set in the bright blue firmament."

The grand mistake of regarding all literature which is not purely frivolous as written de haut en bas will now be apparent. Strictly speaking, only the knowledge literature should be so regarded, for it is certainly true that a scientific book is written to teach, and that the critic of a scientific book at least pretends to teach the teacher. Otherwise his criticism is impertinence, and would be recognised as such by all of us at once, were it not that what are called critiques and reviews are often merely descriptive, or else confine themselves to the question of arrangement, grammar, and style in the superficial sense. Really valuable criticism of the scientific subject-matter of any book never proceeds from a comparative ignoramus. In this sense the literature of
science is aristocratic or hierarchical, and while we use the word science we include in the same category "all teaching which is systematically laid out and followed up to its original sources," as Arnold explains. History belongs largely to this type; so does philosophy and all the moral sciences; and so does theology.

Let us now endeavour to appreciate the enormous inlet for democracy which is caused by the recognition that the great bulk of that which is most characteristically "literature" is not didactic. According to De Quincey indeed it is difficult to see how the classics of a literature can ever be didactic, since only the power-literature lasts, the knowledge-literature being superseded by the very advancement of science which it promotes. This, however, is an exaggeration due to confusion between science in the narrow sense and science in the wider sense, in Arnold's sense. If for example philosophical speculation, which is and of right ought to, be purely unbiased search for truth, had been considered; it would have appeared that all knowledge literature is not ephemeral. Hegel's "Phenomenology of Spirit" will not be superseded or re-written. Even so very antiquated a writer as Hobbes is read now and
always must be read for himself. People will read Hume as long as they will read anything, though his language is occasionally little less than ridiculous to the trained student of more modern times. Need we say also that a world in which the Patristic literature should cease to be read, and that purely in the interests of theology, is inconceivable? It is wrong therefore to say, as De Quincey does, that "the very highest work that has ever existed in the literature of knowledge is but a provisional work: a book upon trial and sufferance and quamdiu bene se gesserit. Let its teaching be but partially revised, let it be but expanded, nay even let its teaching be but placed in better order, - and instantly it is superseded." It is not at all necessarily superseded in the sense of being simply "cast into the furnace." A "superseded" book in the literature of knowledge may be read for many a century. It is to deceive oneself with one's own rhetoric to say that the further discoveries of La Place "effectually threw" Newton's Principia "into decay and darkness." Not only so, but it might be maintained - and if carefully, successfully, - that the case is just the other way very often; that in the literature of power a really successful work may
be flung into oblivion most easily. Witness the examples already cited from the literature of exhortation which is pre-eminently and entirely power-literature. The truth is that it as often happens that the end of exhortation is ephemeral as that the exposition of a scientific truth is provisional. It is not necessary to cheat the didactic literature of its staying power, in order to affirm that what is most completely literature is the literature of power. Here only do we come "ad homines maxime homines et liberos maxime liberos."

We have said that it is just in this literature that democracy must have room made for it: strange to say, it is also with this that what is called literary criticism is almost entirely concerned. It is on this platform and no other that the critic has posed, and bullied, and dictated. He knows little enough in all conscience of Kant and Leibnitz, the Fathers, and La Place. Like a kite he moves most readily to all appearance in the air. He revels in mental analysis; he has introspected till from much turning inwards his eyes squint out at things at the most curious angles. He thinks, in a word, that it is the subjective test he has mastered, not the objective. Hence the necessity for proving our thesis that
subjectivity is twin sister to democracy. This will be apparent on the mere examination of the abstract ideas, to which it is now proper to proceed.

Government, says Plato, is a science. On this fact much democratic enthusiasm breaks down. For whatever qualities may be attributed to the δ''. as characteristic that of knowledge is not one of them. The capacity requisite for governing well is the rarest and not the commonest thing in the world. For the mere reason that it takes all sorts of men to make a state, government by the average man can never be government by the best or ablest. Democracy in its very idea is the deification of the mediocre, not seldom that of the worse than mediocre. Is not the best government, government by the best, and are not the best the few? How then can it be right to make the commonness of an idea the very test whether it should prevail? Verily the torch-bearers are many and the mystics are few! Little did Plato think that whole nations would try to find political salvation by impaling themselves against the shaft of one of his most biting satires. So far as government is a science democracy is an abomination. That two and two make four is not more clear.
But then the great work of government always is done by the few. The utmost that what is called democracy in politics ever means is that the choice of those few shall be in part determined by the people. Democracy is a way of trying to secure benevolent despotism; for once elected the government is a government over against the people. The electors have to obey it - the master of the polling-day is servant all the rest of the time. As the slave who has a choice of masters they are free. As a workman who need serve no man in particular but who yet will starve if he do not work for some one, they are independent. After all, government is government whatever else it is. This we say not to minimise the benefits of democracy in politics but to avoid misunderstanding of its nature. Our heads are all so full of the constitutional theory of the case that the bare fact appears indecent. Nevertheless if you watch the actual methods by which law is put in operation you find that there are two parties set over against each other in a certain opposition; those, namely on whom the law is imposed and those who prescribe the nature of the law and by whom it is enforced.

Now the same theory holds in literature. So far as
literary criticism is a science involving much labour and knowledge, and much natural aptitude and preparation, democracy in literature must be out of place. To deny this is to make more of it in literature than is ever conceded to it even in the political field. We have seen that so far as the work of government is concerned democracy in the strict sense comes to much less than is generally thought; it is a much smaller affair in fact than in theory. Not what is done by, but what is done under, a democracy is important, — this is a proposition which has the assent of such good radicals as Mill and de Tocqueville. If literature is more a matter of special knowledge than are the general political facts, we must be even more careful not to exaggerate the possibility of democracy in literature. Obviously the knowledge-literature affords it very little scope, and even in the power-literature there must be many limitations. To feel an author’s power does not always mean to be able to give a rational account of the elements which go to make that power. Consciousness is not necessarily accompanied by keen and discriminating self-consciousness. Hence while the author of an epic poem who could not at all appeal to the average man might be pretty
safely dismissed, the average man could not place him in his proper niche in the halls of Futility, could not point out the real causes which make him unimpressive. There is undoubtedly room for the critic who has a wide knowledge of literature, some idea of elementary psychology, a facility of expression, and a sound aesthetic sense. By his means definite comparisons are made, the rules of literary art demonstrated and illustrated; and so an aristocratic or oligarchic superstructure becomes reared upon the foundation of those sensibilities which are common to all humanity. The great mass of men are dumb on such subjects not because they cannot feel but because they cannot express their feeling in a public and worthy manner. The work-a-day world thinks of many an object for every time it dives into its own breast. Hence in literature as in politics the value of the average man is that he is the corpus vile of the psychological experiments of the law. The people's feelings, wishes, and ideas are valuable to a government and require to be known and sympathised with by it, not at all because they are necessarily noble or right or true, but because of their de facto existence as portentous actualities. Public opinion is itself a fact and must be reckoned with as such,
apart altogether from its truth or falsity. "We count heads" - not because they have anything in them particularly worth while troubling about, but "to save the trouble of breaking heads." The demos is not particularly intelligent - by definition it is only averagely intelligent - but in the last resort with it resides the physical force. There are many reasons for democracy's existence. The fact that it is inevitable is one.

Now there is one very instructive analogy between literature and politics. The reading public has a function admirably illustrated by the jury system. In extremely complex and difficult cases the average jurymen is only satisfactory because he so very generally adopts the suggestions and hints from the bench; much in the same way as the average notion of the respective merits of literary figures is largely taken on trust from those who are supposed to know best. But there is one class of cases where a jury is almost indispensable, - not cases where there is a difficulty as to the facts, for the criticising of evidence is the last thing for which a jury is competent, - but cases where a certain common-sense ethical instinct is required. If a man loses his leg in an accident
for which some other person is legally responsible, the question of the amount of damages arises. But there is no possible means of equating such and such a sum of money with so much pain or so much loss of capacity of enjoyment, though for loss of capacity to earn wages a perfectly definite method of computation might be hit on. For these other things however real injuries though they are, the law is compelled to make an appeal to the moral instincts of a body of men who are reasonably representative of the community. As we said a moment ago the law makes them the corpus vile of its own psychological experiments. There are many questions of this nature — damages for breach of promise of marriage, damages for injury by defamation, etc. So also the law of Scotland discriminates between crimes of murder and of culpable homicide by admitting the fact of provocation as one element which may suffice to reduce the crime to the lower category. But what degree of provocation does it require and how is it determined? The answer is that the only definition which the law lays down, is that the degree of provocation must be such as to affect the passions of the jury to an extent sufficient to induce them to consider that the culpability is materially
reduced. In other words the law keeps in touch with the common-sense of the community by declining to give any definition of its own and by experimenting directly upon a body of representative citizens. It is not irrelevant to observe, however, that since ancient times there has been a steady limitation of the amount of democracy in trial by jury. Maine has shown that the whole populace in primary assembly used to hear both parties and the case was decided by the amount of applause which followed the speeches of the advocates. Gradually a judge with the strongest powers to control procedure has been set over them, their number greatly limited, questions of law taken entirely out of their hands, a whole body of law devoted to restricting and regulating the evidence that may be taken. All this is but an illustration from experience of the fact that so far as administration is a science, democracy is weak, and works badly till tempered with despotic elements; whereas in so far as existent feelings are important not because of their worth but because of their existence and strength democracy has a peculiar and impregnable worth. Heartily must it be granted that the counting of heads has produced a real addition to happiness as a whole, but we repeat that it is
not because in a multitude of counsellors there is safety, but because in a multitude of thwarted counsellors there is danger.

Just so it is that in the literature of power the body of the reading public has a function but a modest one. It is no judge of the niceties of artistic workmanship and it cannot give for itself a reasoned and discriminating explanation even of those qualities which it can in its own way appreciate. Its sentiments must be voiced, its soul laid bare by others. But once let there come upon the literary stage a man who can play on it like an instrument, who can seize its attention, command its interest, open the flood-gates of its tears, and force it into lines of action at his will - and not all the critics in the world, not all the literary canons in the world, can keep him from the ranks of the immortals. They stultify themselves if they attempt it; not merely because they over-rate their powers but because they mistake their rights, and exaggerate their authority. We are speaking, be it remembered, of works of power as such, and we say that the superior value of the critic's judgment consists solely in the fact that his is the more clear and careful introspection, the
greater knowledge of the mechanism of literature, the greater wealth and facility of expression. One thing he has no right to do, to assume the greater intrinsic value of that which appeals to him, because it appeals to him, over that which appeals to the average man. And here we come to the heart of a very far-reaching controversy on what we may be allowed to call generally the philosophy of art.

Emotions of every kind may stir us as we gaze on a picture, actions of every kind may be prompted. Whatever is the product of the human mind, and has its sole and ultimate end in an influence upon the human mind, must be an object which to the careful thinker gives rise to considerable philosophical difficulty as regards criticism. There is no criticism where there is no standard; and the notion of a standard is the notion of objectivity in this sense, that independence of any one particular mind must be attributed to the criterion. "An objective standard" is in fact a tautology; but as objective in this sense must be carefully distinguished from "external" or "physical" it would appear that the only possible standard must be one which is recognised by all minds, which is the common property and the common obligation in consequence.
Here we are in our thousands all members of the great republic of letters and yet not two with the same training or capacities or aptitudes or likings. We study a work of art and each of us has his own feelings; our hermit spirits ever range apart; "the heart knoweth its own bitterness and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy." None of us can accurately describe more than a small portion of what we have indubitably felt. But worse than all there is no guarantee whatever that these feelings may not in any case differ from man to man toto coelo. An art student goes into raptures, a dock labourer is bored, a factory girl giggles, a clergyman becomes morose. The adjectives fall to be varied according as it is a book or a building, a painting or a statue. But there we are, all of us affected differently because all of us affected according to training and the rest of what we call the accidents of life; and all of us - here is the point - of equal worth and importance.

Let us examine this last point for a moment. When you ask what is the end of art you ask a question in moral philosophy or else a question in history. In the one case you ask What ought the artist to endeavour; in the other, What does
this or that artist past or present, or all artists past or present, or all artists of the present merely, endeavour. The former question is the one with which we are concerned. We must assume, by the way, that art for art's sake is a perfectly hopeless conception, since as surely as artistic production is a branch of human conduct, the vain imagination that it can in some way be exempted from valuation by that which is the test of worth and the rule of guidance in human action, is quite beneath any elaborate consideration. This of course does not mean that a novelist is entitled to be for ever preaching, or that the sole aim worthy of an artist is to illustrate the biblical. On the contrary, the novelist who preaches Christianity, - otherwise than in the sense in which there are sermons in stones, - is second in futility only to the novelist preacher of Socialism. The gospel of Emancipation was the burden of Uncle Tom's Cabin, but the success is largely due to the indirectness of the preaching. This was the high-watermark of such literature, not even excepting Kingsley's gospel of Sanitation. As for that example which occurs to us as next in importance, - we mean Hughes' "Tom Brown" - the simple truth is that however impressive to a boy, the story becomes immediately grotesque upon the introduction of that sorry
young colporteur, of Low Church tendencies, who is the embodiment of the ideal which the author desires to press upon his readers. Oh! it is impressive and inspiring when one is in short jackets - so is Farrar's "Eric" for the matter of that; but they are neither of them, we fancy, possessed of much staying power in the affections of educated men. Let us be thankful that we have not to choose between "art for art's sake" and literature such as this. There is another position, that art must have a moral end and that it fails to fulfil it when it adopts the methods of the inferior pulpit. The canons of art are special rules which prescribe means appropriate to the particular ends immediately desired, and at the violation of these the phrase "art for art's sake" is intended to strike, but these immediate ends are themselves means to greater, or as the phrase goes which Mill made familiar, to "ultimate ends." That being so we seek in vain for any sound reason why one man should be preferred to another in art, if morally everybody ought to count for one and nobody for more.

Take a man like Ruskin and compare him with "the man in the street." The one, starting life with certain aptitudes, is led to study the principles of art and so becomes a man of
cultured taste; with the result that what he admires most people cannot appreciate, and what pleases the average man in many cases quite disgusts him. A court in Saint John's College, Cambridge which looks extraordinarily like a factory yard, secures his encomiums; while a chapel at King's which strikes most people as magnificent appears to him like a dining-table turned upside down.

Or take Matthew Arnold's satires on the doggerel hymns of his dissenting friends. The fine sentiment which appeals to him is so much verbiage to the Philistines, and anyone who will be listened to by the Populace will require to violate many of the rules which Arnold holds most dear.

Now to most people it goes without saying that Arnold and Ruskin have, in their respective spheres, the right to more attention than the whole immeasurable majority of men with whom they contemptuously disagree. The bare conception of democracy in art, and in the literature of power so far as art, seems to go by the board at once. But surely there is a grave philosophical difficulty in this. If a poem produces pleasurable emotions in the breasts of a whole army of middle-class Philistines, and disgusts merely the coteries of men of
taste, and if on that account it falls to be condemned, surely art has been made something more than a means to the bettering of human life. This test, seemingly so ultimate and so high, is yet too low for some. One production may have moved a world; yet another which has merely looked pretty to a few is put before it. What, then, is the principle on which a higher worth and a greater right to consideration accrues to a man, because he goes through an elaborate process of "cultivating his taste?" Why is this rare and factitious type of mind made the standard of artistic merit? Is there not a confusion with the authority that a scientist attains by labour, which accrues because the test of such writing is the test of truth and is undiminished though not another human being should appreciate or understand it? But if the appeal in art is to humanity, why is humanity not the judge? What is the moral defence of a theory which makes the end of art, not the greatest happiness, nor yet the greatest moral elevation, of the greatest number, but the greatest happiness and ennoblement of the few with cultivated tastes? Abandon all democracy in the literature of knowledge if you like; is there not in the power-literature, that literature which by definition has its
sole end and aim in its subjective affect on men in general, a sphere from which democracy can never be truly ousted? When all possible credit has been given to the critics who can best express the popular appreciation; when we come face to face with the ugly fact which remains, that critics and populace may be in irreconcilable disagreement; and when we see the critic turn round to his constituents and rate them soundly on the badness of their taste; then, it appears to us, there arises that very pressing question, whether there is really any good and bad in the matter in the sense in which the critic thinks. Is the elevation of his soul a higher end for the artist than the elevation of mine? When men differ on a question of feeling can the matter be decided by an academic examination of attainments? Would you say that a dock-labourer's grief for his father was less to be respected than Matthew Arnold's in his Rugby Chapel? Would you say that his pleasure in his enjoyments, or his pride in his work was less to be fostered and admired? Then why is it that to appeal to the one man is good art, to appeal to the other bad; and in particular why is it, that the great majority of men are those whom to stir deeply is more likely to be compatible with bad
art, than is it to affect the cultivated few?

We do not, of course, suggest that there are not several conceivable answers to this question. One thing, however, we may take leave to lay down bluntly in the meantime, and that is, that be it good or bad as art, whatever influences for the better a large number of men is good of its kind. Art can do no more, for in no ethical system with which we need trouble ourselves is any special value put upon the culture of a man, so as to make it be said of him that there is an extra-special joy in heaven when he repenteth. The raising of the low is at least as important as the helping of the exalted to attain still higher heights of moral worth.

With this proviso, then, may it be said that while art has for its end the ennobling of human minds every mode of attaining this result is not art; and no literature is good art, or in other words is literature in the strictest sense, unless it uses a particular means to this great universal end, works out this result in a special way. Here it is, perhaps, that the idea of beauty must be introduced, and we may say that art is that department of human activity, in which, working under the limitations imposed by the aesthetic sense, men
seek to raise others to a higher type of mind. Much literature may be powerful and not be art; or, otherwise stated, much writing may be powerful and not be literature.

This however only repeats the difficulty. What is meant by "beauty" save the power to appeal to a certain sense in man, the power to induce a certain pleasurable emotion? Is there any objective test here any more than before? Can you answer the question here which was unanswerable before: If I think a thing beautiful and another man thinks it has many flaws, what is the reason for the preference given to his opinion? Why should the beautiful be what pleases him because it pleases him, and the ugly what pleases me? Observe that it cannot possibly be said that a thing may be beautiful in itself in the sense that it need have no power to please. Again the question must be pressed, Is the study of pictures, paintings etc. so superior a method of spending one's life as compared with all other activities and professions, that the business of art is to appeal to him: to confer its pleasurable and improving emotions, not on the greatest possible number, but on the man who has a whole code of laws, canons, and requirements generally, obedience to which is a condition of
his approbation?

In every age there is a comparatively cultured class busy making pronouncements of its own opinions on art of every kind. There is a class, - a very small class, - above it, and another, - a very large class, - below it. We call these separate classes because we mean that the way art products appeal to them is appreciably different with each body. The highest class, the art specialists, are nearly all engaged in propagating their opinions. A very small number of representatives of the second propagate the middle type of criticism. The lowest class is indifferent, unskilled, and practically dumb. Take these three broad divisions or types of the effect which a work of art, be it literature or painting, produces. In general it will be found that the difference between the first two is compromised in this way, that the second toady the first. They think what they think they ought to think, and as there are always differences between numbers of what we should call one class the lines of division between the first two classes become dimmed. Hence the idea that there is some objective standard agreed on by all springs up. A middle zone of orthodoxy becomes recognised within which one is everywhere
safe but the nearer to the centre the better. An outlying zone of people who are poor critics encircles the other, - people who are thought to be not so important in such matters, and who vary from the one true faith in such a manner as to make them fit subjects for missionary effort.

But did there once rise before the eyes of the complacent dogmatists who assume that feeling has a standard of worth other than moral worth, - a standard, that is to say, of artistic worth, - the vision of the enormous mass of persons absolutely outside both of these zones, they would see that the consensus of such opinion as is known to them is a much smaller affair than they had imagined. They would see that men are not all of one stamp, and that the business of literature is not merely to appeal to a middle class which is being bullied by a more "cultured" into saying that it likes what bores it. The literature which could appeal to the third and largest class of all would appear to be obviously more valuable than that which tickles the fastidious palates of the refined. This other class is equally entitled to its instrument of improvement: that instrument is equally respectable. As surely as literature has an end, and as surely as the end of one
large part of literature is purely subjective, literary dogmatism is wholly out of place as regards that part. You may expound the effect of a work on yourself, and people may read this because they agree with you in general, or because they want to know you, or for any other reason. No interest, no curiosity of such a kind would we forbid to anyone: critics and criticism have in this and certain other respects their important uses. It is when a man tells us what we ought to like, when he begins to say that literature should appeal most to the man who most studies literature, that there is a peculiar merit in catering for the jaded palate, and a particular demerit in offending the most critical even though all the rest of the world could never find the error till they were told, - it is then that we must confess to feeling that they strain any right of precedence they ever had. It becomes important then to examine the whole aim and idea of literary production; and having found the end of a great portion of it to be that elevating and improving state of mind which alone is the test whether "the good has been present to us," we conclude that as regards that portion of our literature whose purpose is thus completely subjective, there is no room for
any domineering in the matter.

But it will be said, with great appearance of truth, that we are democrats in literature because we are sceptics in all art. Though each man has his own feelings there is something common to all men both as regards reason and sentiment. The appeal of art, it will be maintained, is to the man in men, to the self within the selves of all men. To this therefore we may justly turn, and get an objective standard for the literature of power as for other things. Men are, so to say, concentric circles; men are men even when we could call them eccentric men; there is a body of truth, of sentiment, of reason, which belongs not to one man, or to a few men equally, but to all men. Not, we imagine it will be said, to all men equally, for in some men the purely idiosyncratic ideas have more preponderance than in others, and it is Culture alone which can place this eccentric aspect of our nature in a subordinate position. Hence the paradox of criticism is explained; we see a sense in which the sole possession of the few is yet the common heritage of all humanity. "To all men, not to all men equally." Culture means the development of the objective or concentric element in our life; as regards that part it
brings out what was before implicit and unnoticed. It makes a man more a man; more natural, so to say, and not more artificial; it realises the τηλεσ which is none the less the prīus of his personality. What is in bad taste is not merely what certain people dislike, but what all men ought to dislike; that is to say, what all men would dislike were their faculties trained and not stunted, their true inner nature developed, the accidents of erroneous education stripped off.

This, it will be seen, is an attempt to treat all art as dealing with truth. It is a way of giving a meaning to "artistic truth." All sorts of effects may be produced on all sorts of persons in any degree of intensity. The notion of power is but the conception of the production of an effect; it is "mere weather," which may have any virtue or all the vices. But De Quincey's distinction is inadequate if it does not go beyond this in specification. The power-literature moves men, but to what? This must in each case be considered before we can pass any judgment. The populace may know when it is affected; it may not know what effects are good for it; and it may not be at all affected by what ought to do so, not having sufficiently developed its "true nature" so that it
can properly respond. Good art is that which appeals most effectively to the rational element in man.

Now however impossible it may be to put these considerations fully, without transgressing for a longer time that we are able the field of general philosophy, it must be evident at once that they are of real weight. The truth of the literature of power becomes on this theory an intelligible phrase, not only in the sense that in so far as the discursive understanding is appealed to conformity with facts is a desideratum; not only in the sense that the production must be clean and wholesome morally; but also in the sense that the manner, the sentiment, the emotion should be in accordance with the true end of art and so with the aesthetic wishes of "the fit and few." Let it be said frankly that the first two meanings must be allowed without any question. We are not sceptics in knowledge or in morals, and the latter part of the objection which we have just stated proceeds on this misunderstanding. All people do not know what is morally good for them any more than what is so physically. The only question is whether there is any sense in talking of a thing as "aesthetically good" for people who do not appreciate it. Art which is not
condemned by the laws of fact or of right, and which does appeal to many men, is nevertheless to be on this theory oftentimes condemned for lack of a still further species of truth enforced by the cultured; and this apparently on the ground of a distinction between accidental and essential elements in men's sentiments; because a certain type of mind is to be enforced which shall like and feel in a manner not sufficiently defined by the laws of truth and ethics. To save us from scepticism, anarchy, or democracy in art, this theory finds it necessary to set up as an end in itself a mind with certain particular characteristics as regards its very likings in things morally indifferent.

Where to find support for such a theory we do not know. The violent divorce between the normal, and the prevalent appears in the region of feeling to be incredible. How can the man in men belong conspicuously to a few in a case where all the rest differ from them. It is simply a device for surreptitiously introducing an ought where there is no obligation. It is the few saying to the many when tastes differ:—

"You must like what we like in opposition to your present preference because we most truly represent yourselves, your inner
selves, your higher selves." Is not the answer clear, "What you call my inner which manages to be in de facto opposition to my de facto total self, is not even a third cousin." Of many things the cultured may persuade the boor, but they will never persuade him that where he totally differs from them in his judgments they represent his real self. This is but an equivocal name for that hypothetical self which would doubtless have existed had things been as they are not; in fact, had he lived a life like theirs. They say they are at a higher stage of evolution and in many senses of the word "higher" the claim may be admitted; in no sense that will yield an "ought," impose an obligation upon others. Still less can such language be allowed to play fast and loose with the obligation that the artist owes in point of ethics to society as a whole. This objective or standard self is a mere imposture - a mere hypostatization of what never was particularly respectable even as an abstraction. The alternative position may not be without difficulties but nothing will excuse resort to this. There is a hopeless obscurantism about any theory which fails to find the end of all power literature as such in the subjective effect which it produces; and a hopeless dishonesty about
any which represents the body of agreement among all men as of any large extent. Given these propositions it seems impossible to affirm the "authority of experts." All such theories labour under the fatal malady that, in order to establish their rules as binding, they require to appeal to the consent of the whole world of rationals, whereas the device by which their regulum is arrived at loses its last vestige of plausibility, the moment that it is attempted to abuse the great majority of men for non-conformity therewith. The only other way is to set up a new theory of caste based upon intellectual distinctions in place of the much more catholic and reasonable doctrine of the ultimate equivalence of human beings, a doctrine not found only in Bentham, but found also in Kant and Hegel, to say nothing of the current theologies and popular philosophies.

Much sympathy must from this point of view be accorded to what is the theoretical position of Ruskin himself, that "the art is greatest which conveys to the spectator, by any means whatsoever the greatest number of the greatest ideas." Let the materials be what they may - and who shall say what may not be pressed into the service of art, that production
must have value which winces what Arnold called "the high seriousness of absolute sincerity," what Swinbourne described as "the splendid and imperishable excellence of sincerity and strength." The appeal is to "the imaginative reason," the aim is to call out the being of the student at most points.

Now it is the Addisonian test of imaginative excellence from which democracy derives its most ample justification. "It is only by the application of this test," says a recent writer (Worsfold), "that the experience of the booksellers can be harmonised with a belief in the validity of critical principles. By the application of this test we can discern merit in works of literature, which, being entirely defective on the side of construction, yield no reply to any test of formal or artistic canons. Defective in all else, they have yet this one virtue of stimulating thought by appealing to the imagination of the reader." The most humble artist feels, that in trying to satisfy the general sense of mankind, he is obeying an authority of higher validity than is that of the most accomplished critic. The vindication of democracy in literature to be found in Elizabeth Barrett Browning's "Aurora Leigh" is as sound as it is noble:
"And whosoever writes good poetry,
"Looks just to art. He does not write for you
"Or me - for London or for Edinburgh;
"He will not suffer the best critic known
"To step into his sunshine of free thought
"And self-absorbed conception, and exact
"An inch-long swerving of the holy lines.
"If virtue done for popularity
"Defiles like vice, can art, for praise or hire,
"Still keep its splendour and remain pure art?
"Eschew such servitude. What the poet writes,
"He writes: mankind accepts it if it suits,
"And that's success: if not, the poem's passed
"From hand to hand, and yet from hand to hand
"Until the unborn snatch it, crying out
"In pity on their fathers being so dull,
"And that's success too."

She too re-echoes Ruskin's canon when she says:-

"What matter for the number of the leaves,
"Supposing the tree lives and grows?"

and gives a scathing rebuke to the finicking of the critics:-

"Keep up the fire,
"And leave the generous flames to shape themselves."

It may perhaps be thought that the foregoing description of
the elements of literature leads to a hopeless scepticism which
refutes itself, in which there is as little place for democracy
as for aristocracy because no room for criticism at all. This
however is but the delusive appearance resulting from the phys-
ical necessity of dealing with one consideration at a time. We stated at the outset that power and knowledge were really not kinds of literature but elements, both of which are present in all literature though in very different proportions; and that if we treat the division as into mutually exclusive kinds it must be a division according to main motive. If in the preceding we have had largely to sink the other element in order to concentrate attention on the aspect of power, we must none the less remind ourselves now that we can only claim to have vindicated one element of irreducible subjectivity. In addition to this we recognise a certain scope where expert criticism is legitimate enough. There are subjective and objective elements in all literature, and the final verdict is a balancing of many and various considerations of both sorts. Thus the aim and end of all poetry may be subjective and yet the rules of the different metres fall to be applied and enforced by those who are conversant with such technique. All art is pose; the mind must be set to work under certain conditions varying according to the nature of the art. Lessing's "Laocoon" is a study in the differences required by the different materials with which art works. In literature of
course there are many materials, many grades of freedom, from the oratio soluta of conversational interchange to the oratio vincita of an elaborate metre. Whatever pose is taken it must be adopted consistently. Whatever the material it has its own laws. Hence the main motive of the power literature may be subjective, and the constituents of its success may contain an element irreducibly subjective; while all the time this must be tempered by the consideration that the demand is not only for a morally valuable effect, not only for this with the additional merit of beauty in the whole result, but for an effective and beautiful product of a certain kind. True there is no limit to the number of possible kinds: nothing can be ruled out a priori as impossible material. But for all that, any particular product must fall under one class or other, and its material must have a specific nature. Now the element of consistency to pose must always necessitate a certain amount of expert opinion. The precise error of that view which seeks an objective test in "beauty" - a view which we dismissed by pointing to the typical and invincible subjectivity of the test after all, - may be exposed and corrected from the standpoint of this truth. The bare idea of beauty is the idea
of a certain intellectual pleasure and the capacity to call this forth. The pleasure of contemplation objectified into a quality of the thing contemplated is beauty. Nothing therefore is less fitted than the abstract conception of beauty to bring all men together to a binding test. But this is not true of the concrete and specified idea. Just as it was one of the elaborate discoveries of Plato that μὴ καλὸν, μὴ ἔγχαλον etc. are all species of the μὴ ἀν, this last being nothing but the abstract idea articulated in all the rest; so we must remember when we talk of art as producing morally valuable effects under the conditions of beauty, that there is a specific excellence for each kind of art and for each subdivision of a kind. There are definite laws of poetry and each metre has its own still more specific laws. Some kinds of verse must not only be poetry of a given metre, but dramatic poetry, in which case the thought effects require to be embodied in material of a very definite and not at all amorphous nature. Thus any degree of concreteness may be given to the notion of beauty, just as of excellence; for everything has its own proper excellence. Much confusion is wrought by conceiving of an "aesthetic sense" as though there were such an abstract
faculty. The aesthetic is an element which appears differently in a thousand different experiences, a thing of a million faces, a function of a thousand variables. It is an aspect of very different states of consciousness and it is a different thing in each of them.

An art critic is in our view valuable or worthless entirely according as his aesthetic perceptions are concrete or abstract. "This has pleased me, that is all I know" is the pronouncement of the most abstract criticism. It does not say what pleasure has been received; it does not analyse its constituents or appreciate its rationale. It is less abstract criticism to appreciate the correctness of a simple metre since what pleases is here known and the reason of the pleasure is analysed. But metre is not all that there is in poetry, and so to be able to give a definite exposition if the nature of a sonnet or a play, to be able to state its requirements, and the conditions it imposes upon the artist in his production of effects, to know how far these have been complied with, and how often they have been infringed, - this is to be a true critic, a critic for whom the world has a modest use.

Now the point to be observed here is the blending of the
objective and the subjective, of definite standard and of purely individual taste. Nothing can excuse want of power; whether it be a play or a picture, a novel or a statue, it must move and interest the reader or spectator. Correct metre is of no avail save when conditioned by the presence of the element of power; mere tame correctness is the worst of faults. Interest! Interest! Interest! All art is based on this and this is purely subjective. No man can say "This ought to move you," when it does not, unless the want of interest is seen to spring from moral defects in which case "ought" is not used in an aesthetic but in a moral sense. Otherwise I am quite entitled to differ from all my kind. And yet there are times when one may say of a drama "This Act is a mistake," as definitely as we correct an infant's attempts at addition or subtraction. A professed comedy in which nobody is married and everybody dies is a self-stultified production. On the other hand "nobody dies, everyone is married" may suit a play when it would be a sheer mistake in a novel. To such criticisms if they come from a trained and competent source little less authority will attach, than to the strictures on a poet's metre made by an expert on the subject. The reason is that
all these are questions of consistency of pose. So far as the nature of any particular literary type is understood so far is there standing-room for expert and objective criticism, distributing praise and blame with authority according to the degree of its knowledge.

But if there is thus a purely objective criterion in all species of literature, even the most esoteric, there is also in all possible or conceivable literature an element set over against it as diametrically opposed, and irreducibly subjective. We can never completely unify our aesthetic judgments into a coherent and self-explanatory whole. We always begin from two different ends of the subject and effect a working compromise after pursuing the criticism in each direction for a little way. The fact is that there is an inevitable dualism in all art criticism and in all criticism of works of power. Doubtless if we could thoroughly investigate the reasons for the different canons of literary art in its various branches, we would find that they are all obligatory in the last resort, simply because they are all necessary to the feeling of beauty. We might be able, - say by some Hegelian form of dialectic, - to articulate the abstraction of beauty into the thousand
different arts and species of art so that not a rule would remain rigid and unexplained in any single case. We should then judge, not by conformity to rules but by the realisation of the end directly, this being that one rule which all the others derive from. We should then be comparing the thing at once with its "idea." As matters are we cannot. We have to piece together pronouncements made from different points of view, points of view which we cannot usify. We begin by a direct introspection as to whether our interest has been pleasurably excited or not, and approve so far or else blame a little according to the facts of our mental life as revealed by this introspection. Next, something strikes us as conflicting with, or embodying particularly well, a rule which we always apply, a mental yard measure which we carry with us. From this point of view our criticism proceeds for a time. Then with the two threads in our hands and with a general knowledge where each of these takes us if we follow it a little way, we either fling out the mere material for a criticism, hard, lumpy, undigested, unresolved; or we strike a balance which we can defend by no reasoning, but which is warranted only by that vague sense of justice which our minds present
us with, upon a lazy contemplation of the compromise. This is the inherent dualism of finite thought in the sphere of art. *Sub specie aeternitatis* it is obviously folly: *sub specie temporis* we regard it as passable though its own insufficiency "bewrayeth it" even to our eyes.

In the light of this dualism insistence on the irreducible subjectivity of the test of the power element becomes imperative. The mistake of many art dogmatists is that while they perceive the element of scepticism which democracy in literature presupposes as its philosophical ground, they are too rash in their rejection of a scepticism which is little more than modesty. They forget that "eyes as piercing as those of God," - however rational they might find all things, - are no part of our human nature. No doubt subjective feeling and objective truth become identified in God. No doubt it is a presupposition of all human activity and of art among others, that the human mind is competent to truth, that the world is not a bad joke, not an absolutely irreducible surd. Doubtless there is no such thing as an element of irreducible subjectivity in anything, if by this be meant something in which reason as such, - an ideal or abstract reason, - could
not find itself. But all this is in ordine ad universum.

For us it is palpably true that there is an element of subjectivity in art which is de facto irreducible by the reasonings and introspections of beings at our stage of consciousness, of our mental potential. Nowhere is there need of more urgently proclaiming the admirable warning of Leibnitz, which tells of the danger that too much authority be given to the speculations of poor philosophers, under cover of what God can do. Of all the grotesque proceedings attributed to Him by theorists, we can say of none that it was beyond God's power. So here let us keep the two matters distinct. "All things are rational" is one thing: "nothing is merely subjective for us" is quite another. The difference is between the omniscience of God and the omniscience of man. The scepticism which denies the latter has been confounded with the scepticism which doubts the former, and the democracy which follows from the one with the chaos that follows from the other. But surely we may well fall back on the dumb instincts of the heart where no reasoned theory of worth is as yet in our possession. Democracy is justified by the dualism of our thinking; it is the inevitable practical result in the actual
economy of the republic of letters of that "empiricism," to use the word of a recent writer (James) which is not so much a philosophical theory as an unphilosophical fact.

A cable has two ends either of which may be seen by any spectator on the shore. Between those ends there is a world of sea. The line lies infinitely deep and its sinuations are indefinitely tortuous. Starting from one end you cannot follow it up till you see the one end become the other. If only one is known the other can never really be found from that given one. But suppose both are known and the assumption that they are connected is tolerable as a working hypothesis. Suppose it even appears that they must be connected though how they are so cannot be shown by following it up. Such a supposition may feebly illustrate the human position in the matter of art. Simple rules of form we can understand quite well, but these forms get more and more concrete till they outrun our powers of analysis, and become tinged with subjectivity in the sense that we can tell a thing to be wrong by direct experience without being able to show it by reasoning. Finally an unconscious and unreflective sense of pleasure or disappointment completes the tendency towards
the abstract and subjective: here reasoning has got entirely beyond its depth. Now our present thesis is that we must fall back upon the subjective facts of popular effect in the absence of a completely unified theory of artistic truth, just as we fall back on the hypothesis that the two ends of the cable are united though we cannot see them unite. We have the two ends of the artistic thread. They are connected but how we cannot know. Either by itself will lead us to no criticism worth having; given both we may accomplish a little. We may see a little of the nature of each and guess at the direction in which it points, - a knowledge very incomplete, and fearfully harassed by partisans of the respective principles pushing one-sided claims. But the truth is not with the abstract logic of either point of view taken by itself. The full truth is not for us at all, and partial insight into the truth is on condition that we faithfully use both aspects and endeavour to relate them so far as is possible for us.

In our remarks on democracy in political life we affirmed that the merit of this sort of government is not in the superior intelligence which is brought to bear on things poli-
tical, but rather in the fact that opinions which are actual, whether they are correct or not, do in this type of polity get full recognition. "Government is a science," but it is a science of men, and democracy is justified by the humanity of the object and not by the scientific nature of the method. Because a democracy is always averagely intelligent and capable of instruction, the loss of intelligence - equivalent to the difference between the most intelligent opinion and the average opinion - is not so great in modern times and in civilised communities as to annul the enormous advantage of allowing men to act for themselves. The feature of this view it will be remarked is that it finds a justification for that very finite measure of success which attends democracy, without the silly pretence of attributing the acme of wisdom to the mob. In the theory of art, which, with the literature of power in constant view, we have above enunciated, the same feature is for us the great attraction. We think we see in the common talk and writing on both subjects a defence of democracy which lays stress on it where it is weak, and declines to admit its value in those respects where it is strong. It is usual to talk about the education of the masses as the
justification of democracy while it is equally usual to admit
the authority of men of taste in matters of pure feeling. This view we have tried in some measure to discredit, recog-
nising, however, that on the one hand a certain degree of
education among the people is a necessary condition of any
tolerable democracy, and that on the other hand a large part
of art criticism is objective, that part namely which concerns
consistency to pose, including technique. This being admit-
ted, there is room enough still to insist on the Platonic
view of the ignorance of the demos compared with the best and
wisest; and yet leave democracy with a defence, by taking
seriously a truth which is perfectly axiomatic, that in a
matter of feeling there is no umpire. The other position
seems to us to load men with silly flattery on the one hand,
and cheat them of their birth-right on the other. For this
reason we would emphasize the fact that our theory does not
make democracy the judge of anything which upon scientific
principle can be decided by experts. It is because of the
utter hopelessness of a completely reasoned criticism in any
branch of art, because of the abrupt ending to the sphere of
scientific principle which meets us when we pursue the objective
side into more and more concreteness, because of the irreducible and impregnable element of empiricism which our best mental analysis is forced to acknowledge, that we admit a place in literary and other art for democracy. We have therefore a complete answer to what would have been otherwise a very forcible kind of criticism referred to by Mr. Gosse in the Comtemporary Review. A theory of democracy in literary art appears to put an undue premium upon the notions of "the craziest sot in the village." Just as a view which would allow no objectivity whatever would be a blank Pyrrhonism, so a theory which finds room for any subjective element, if not so hopeless, seems nevertheless inoculated with the same disease. Men dare not let go the idea of artistic truth, and where truth is concerned it is plain that men are not all on a level. Our answer is however a reminder of the large sphere left upon our theory to the expert in technique, to the critic who is conversant with the rules of the different species of artistic effort; and a reminder, further, that it is only because this scientific criticism very soon breaks utterly short, and only after it has collapsed, that we vindicate democracy at all. We are second to none in faithfulness to
Plato's view of the paramount importance of knowledge, and the dense ignorance actually characteristic of the demos. Within the sphere of principle the critic who is competent may be as didactic as he cares. It is when that sphere has for us stopped short, and when, governed by the imperfect knowledge it imparts to us, we have to proceed further to fill in the outline, that we must dare to have faith in the deeply-rooted if uncritical instincts; not as though all men were really irrational surds and human nature a chaos, but because we are all potentially rational through and through, and have in us that which makes us, at any stage, greater than when at that stage we know. Not because we are faithless to the postulate of all reasoning that everything has a rational ground, but because, believing in this, we recognise also that we shall never see the ground of reason in all our blind aesthetic instincts, would we venture to place a certain limited trust in that which is only known as subjective prejudice, but which cannot, all the same, be proved to be nothing more. As against the dogmatic or rationalist view the issue is a plain question of fact. Is it the case or is it not, that the judgments of the most cultured men do not in art
proceed from purely objective reasonings and tests? Is the "empiricism" of the kind mentioned above not an indubitable and important fact? If so, it follows at once that there is a limit to the authority of those who are lights in the artistic world - a limit of which it is not unimportant that they should be from time to time reminded. The democratic element in the literature of power can never be superseded till psychological analysis has reached an almost impious perfection. But its place is that of a necessary evil, if you like. All matters of government or criticism are practical concerns which come to little good in the aether of pure logic and of abstract ideals. We must keep in our minds' eye, not the conception of a consciousness in general, - a bewusstsein überhaupt; but the actual consciousnesses that compose the literary world and the general public.

For this reason valuable support may be derived from certain remarks by Professor Saintsbury on the practical duties of criticism. There are in his view two extremes which require to be avoided. The one has been pilloried by Mr. Goldwin Smith as the idea that the business of the litterateur is the saying of fine things. The other is the conception
of a scientific criticism of literary work. It will not be disputed that the former is the bare idea of anarchy erected into an ideal. It is that reign of unreason which the enemies of all literary democracy fear as its result. It is the "craziest sot in the village" speaking ex cathedra. But the purely scientific or objective standpoint will serve our ends as little. Science "can only deal with classes, only with general laws; and so long as these classes are constantly reduced to 'species of one' and these laws are set at nought by incalculable and singular influences she must be constantly baffled and find all her elaborate plant of formulas and generalisations useless." Professor Saintsbury well insists on "the mocking demon of the individual" which never can be exorcised from art, and which is quite incompatible with a purely objective criterion. We do not say that Ruskin or Matthew Arnold pretend to a complete scientific knowledge and analysis of the things they approve or condemn. On the contrary though they apply definite canons so far, it is their taste they desire to have recognised as authoritative. But if language means anything at all this mere subjectivity can never be authoritative. De gustibus non disputandum. Now,
that even from the practical point of view it should appear that what hinders purely scientific treatment is insufficient power of analysis, is a remarkable corroboration of the view adopted in this paper. There is nothing irrational in literary art though much that is unrationolised by us. This introduces the possibility of a chastened democracy, saving literature at once from the undiluted anarchy which follows if we cannot rationalise art at all, and from the machine-like and lifeless caricature which would eliminate all but the interaction of ascertained laws according to rigid and appointed rules.

One word more on the general theory of literary criticism. There is a possible view which excludes all democracy from literature and which is at the same time entitled to considerable respect, for the straightforwardness and brusquerie which characterises it is a source of real and abiding strength. According to it, the great mass of men who compose the third class in our division of the public are in a position of necessary slavery. Indeed this view is the analogue of Aristotle's theory of slavery. If ever letters or science or art was to make a start, it had to be as the produce of the leisure
of an upper class. All the drudges had to slave that the 
\( \text{o} \text{η} \varphi \text{γ} \text{υ} \text{τ} \text{i} \text{k} \text{ό} \text{s} \ \text{φ} \text{i} \text{o} \text{s} \) might be realised by a few. The many had to pine that the few might pioneer. If the progress of science or art is even now to spread over the whole populace equally, if no one is to go forward till all are ready to take the same step, progress is indefinitely postponed, if not sacrificed beyond all hope. Hence the mass of men must be frankly treated as mere means, and we must categorically deny the equality of men in an ultimate regard. Those only who live the speculative life constitute the end of the state, and give worth to the whole society which gives them and their pursuits possibility. All the rest derive worth from their contribution to the ideal life of this select few. As slavery was rendered unnecessary by that very progress which it made possible, so the critics of our time may be working out such a view of art that in the long run more happiness will be attained by humanity on the whole, than if the untutored populace were to be treated as freemen and full citizens at the present stage. In art, perhaps, and in the literature of power as much as anywhere, ours is but the fate of the generations which die by the way, not having received the
promises. In some respects this is true of every age; in our age it is true of artistic production and criticism as it affects the masses.

A strong theory this; compact, consistent, logical, - if repulsive. Difficult to disprove, it is more difficult to believe. It makes so little of all that we had thought the modern spirit to have achieved. We are very chary, in these days, of caste systems, of divine rights, of peculiar peoples, - in a word of privilege. The most evolutionary age which ever was, or ever will be in all human probability, has yet little patience with theories which condemn large areas of humanity to be "cast as atoms in the void." It has talked much of the "struggle for existence" but it has never taken the cruelty of the process seriously to heart, never realised the suffering which has watered all the shoots of progress. The universe is built on pain as a foundation - if evolution does not mean this, and mean it first of all things, and mean it more than anything, the word has no tangible significance whatever. Yet there is no optimism so confident as the evolutionary optimism. People look upon themselves as the culmination of a long process of melioration; never as the starting-point of a fresh
process which will make them but instruments in a purpose they know not of. They are very self-contented on the whole. The lessons of experience seem entirely against the Aristotelian theory and in favour of the Stoic and Christian theory of equality. Even when the first century wrappings of these latter theories - the talk e.g. about the law of nature - are stripped off, we find ourselves heirs to that abiding contribution to ethics which is best expressed perhaps in its latest formula, "Be a person and respect others as persons." (Hegel)

Democracy has worked far too well in many spheres, notably the political, to be much in danger from a theory which has the initial disadvantage of appearing pessimistic. These theories of aristocracy, under whatever guise they appear, - Judaism with its peculiar people of God, Phariseeism with its self-righteous cliquery, Romanism with its "extra ecclesiam nihil salus," Calvinism even with its dogma of Election - have fallen one and all upon evil days. The question is so very wide that we must be content to point to the verdict - now fairly clear - which history has worked out. For history has upset all of them that have been put to the test, and the modern moral sentiment opposes an emphatic veto to the reason-
ings, - at best not over specious, - which sacrifice what is nearest to us for a very doubtful pocket-system of the universe. The reasoning possible to philosophy is never stringent when constructive, and the most compact theory cannot compel assent if it be so repulsive to the feelings that they whisper to us at every stage of the argument, "The opposite is conceivable after all; how can it be safe with no better warrant to make a massa damnata of so many of your brethren?"

It is right that some reference should be made here to a long line of writers, whose works have played a very important part, both in the literary and political world. From the "Areopagitica" of Milton, Jeremy Taylor's "Liberty of Prophecying," Locke's "Letters on Toleration," down to John Stuart Mill "On Liberty," Mr. Justice Stephen's "Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity," and Mr. Morley "On Compromise," England has never wanted writers on the relation of the State to literature, to the expression of men's consciences and aspirations. An official censorship or licence is not now an evil to be feared with us, and while in Russia and the more backward states such an institution must for some time continue, there is no longer any problem for us save the academic and doctrin-
aire discussion of abstract principle. True, there are many publications suppressed by English Law in opposition to Mill's principles and with the approval and defence of Stephen. Such controversy is doubtless still possible and the broad principles of governmental interference may always be overhauled anew; but the matter is sadly shrunk in importance since in all but unimportant points it is now res judicata. It may be thought that this is one of the triumphs of democracy, to allow no government to dictate to the populace what it shall read. This is a capital mistake. The freedom of the press is the bulwark against democratic indignation much oftener than the protection of democratic rights. Nowhere is this seen more strongly than in Mill:—"Speaking generally, it is not, in constitutional countries, to be apprehended, that the government, whether completely responsible to the people or not, will often attempt to control the expression of opinion, except when in doing so it makes itself the organ of the general intolerance of the public." What he insists on is not protection against those in high places, against the childishness and prejudice of monarchs, but "against the tyranny of the prevailing opinion and feeling." The political
right to freedom of speech is not the triumph of democracy in literature, it is the fruit of a long and bitter political experience which showed the inutility and ineffectiveness of attempts at restriction - an experience bound up with the great issues of Protestantism and state-craft, rather than dependant on any principle of literary art or theories of the literary republic. The religious aspect engaged attention first, both Milton (1644) and Taylor (1647) fighting their case, the one largely, the other wholly, in the theological arena; with many a quotation from the Fathers and many an appeal to the Protestant sentiments of the time. Locke, who wrote in 1689, had the eye of the practical statesman who abhorred the irritating and the ineffective, and the calm insight attendant on a philosophic breadth of view. Milton alone spoke as one to whom the republic of letters was the foremost consideration, with the indignation of a scholar, the pride of an author whose soul lay open in his books, the biting satire of a genius in a minority. Even his interest in the literary question is the one-sided interest of an author who teaches the reading public of whom he does not count himself a unit, for we notice as we read him that the insult of a licencer is a personal
insult, a bitter indignity put upon the writer. "What advantage is it to be a man over it is to be a boy at school, if we have only escaped the ferule to come under the fescue of an imprimatur? if serious and elaborate writings, as if they were no more than the theme of a grammar lad under his pedagogue, must not be uttered without the cursory eyes of a temporizing and extemporizing licenser?" This is the thought that stings, not any other; for though it is not the only thought, it is the one which ever and again recurs, to which he harks back in gusts of indignation. True, he sees - he is much too acute an advocate to miss it - that the common people also are insulted. "Nor is it to the common people less than a reproach; for if we be so jealous over them as that we dare not trust them with an English pamphlet, what do we but censure them for a giddy, vicious, and ungrounded people, in such a sick and weak estate of faith and discretion as to be able to take nothing down save through the pipe of a licenser?" But what is the real reason as it appeared conclusive to Milton himself against the licensing of books? The very self-same author's reason that so profoundly impressed Mill two centuries later. "Such authorised books are but the language of the
times. For though a licenser should happen to be judicious more than ordinary, which will be a great jeopardy of the next succession, yet his very office and his commission enjoins him to let pass nothing but what is vulgarly received already."
The political principle of freedom has been grounded it would thus appear, mostly upon the incompetence of the demos and their true representatives to do justice to struggling minorities in matters moral, religious, scientific, or philosophical. Democracy in politics has had much to do with the restriction of the tyranny of the prevailing opinion in literary concerns, but both are the results of more recondite forces than we can here discuss but forces which are equally the conditions of both. In effect, they are aspects of the same general enlightenment. Cromwell was marvellously tolerant: his followers outrageously the reverse. There is no more Providential fact in English history than the fact that Puritanism was not a creed but a common tendency found in a hundred creeds, Presbyterian and Episcopalian, Calvinist and Armenian, Baptist and Anabaptist, Socinian and Zwinglian. Even Calvin burnt Quakers at Geneva and so earned a place in John Greenleaf Whittier's extensive catalogue of detestables. Milton himself makes the
exception:— "I mean not tolerated Popery and open superstition." So that wherever it was feasible to persecute we may take it that it was done, and be thankful for the fact that there were as many sects as members. We think therefore that the matter is not one which throws much light on the true principles of literary criticism but rather on the true principles according to which political officialdom should leave literary criticism alone. At most it but emphasises what on general grounds is fairly evident otherwise that science, philosophy, and all the literature of knowledge are not properly put under the heel of a democracy but should be free to teach it from above. No man is so likely to be hated as he who would elevate his neighbour; it cannot be tried without making a claim to superiority. Even in our own day, Mill and Morley have their interest in literary freedom largely because they are the apostles of religious views which the populace are repelled by. The question of criticism affects the knowledge-literature almost solely, and the results of experience but prove that there is no appeal from the scientific expert to the man in the street.

It is to be remarked however that the first appearance
of the theory of State criticism of literature was not bound up with the *odium theologicum*. We refer, of course, to the Republic of Plato; where many characteristics of Homer and the ancient poets are animadverted upon as rendering the populace timid, vicious, or melancholy. He has the power-literature almost exclusively in his eye, and his purpose is not only to object to degrading falsehoods, but also to many things which are admittedly true as requiring to be kept secret by an extensive use of the *disciplina arcani*. Of the danger of this method he is not entirely ignorant, but he thinks that it may be advantageously employed if by responsible people. "But again a high value must be set upon truth. For if we were right in what we said just now, and falsehood is really useless to the gods, and only useful to men in the way of a medicine, it is plain that such an agent must be kept in the hands of physicians, and that unprofessional men must not meddle with it." Confident, however, in his own sufficiency for the task, he condemns those who picture gods and heroes as licentious or as giving way to extreme grief, who picture death as horrible and dwell on the darkness of the caverns of Hades. However true, these things must not be spoken.
Death will not be faced with valour if Homer's sentiment is allowed to be instilled into their minds:

"I would e'en be a villein, and drudge on the lands of a master,
"Under a portionless wight, whose garner was scantily furnished,
"Sooner than reign supreme in the realm of the dead that have perished."

They will not be temperate if the imagination of poets is allowed in all directions to run riot. "We must assume control over these fables...." "We must expunge the following passage...." "When a poet holds such language concerning the gods, we shall be angry with him, and refuse him a chorus."

Phrases like these occur in every other line of the third book of the Republic, showing the exaggerated ideal of civic life so natural to the Greeks, worked out to all its intolerabilities. Happily it is not necessary at this time of day to do more than point to the superior truth expressed by Milton for all the moderns:- "I cannot praise a fugitive and cloistered virtue, unexercised and unbreathed, that never sallies out and sees her adversary, but slinks out of the race, where that immortal garland is to be run for, not without dust and

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heat."

One qualification must now be introduced to avoid a certain misunderstanding in connection with our theory of criticism as it applies to the literature of knowledge. There are certain of the Moral Sciences which take to do with the ordinary facts of human life and endeavour to rationalise or understand them in a manner not attempted by the great part of mankind. Now a moral experience is as good a scientific subject-matter as is any other fact of the physical world, and there is no more an appeal to common-sense from philosophy than from science. At the same time these moral sciences are under a peculiar tendency to explain troublesome facts by explaining them away, to tamper with the data, to falsify the experiences of life in order to fit them to a theory. Hence it is often necessary to resist this process by calling in a man from the ordinary business of life, in order to prove that among the facts to be explained is such and such an one which the theory being tested ignores; and in this sense it is necessary to admit a certain democracy in ethical and theological speculation. When Socrates affirms that no one sins save through ignorance, when optimists affirm that the virtuous are always
happy, the conscience and experience of people are conclusively against them. No theory can in such matters afford to appear fantastic and revolting to the unscientific, without grave presumption of error, at least in statement. The common people may not know much, but they do know very well the salient facts of human life. It is of course true that this test needs very careful application, for many people held that Darwinianism was impious and absurd on the face of the matter. Still when the question is: What are the facts of the moral life which philosophy has to explain and must begin by assuming? the question is entirely one of the ordinary man's experience, and the most consistent theory which ignored the de facto character of the moral life would require to be abandoned. For though many things are for ever shut to the great mass of mankind, things which need labour, and time, and talent, and money to acquire, they can never be excluded from their position as the great end of all social activity in whatever form, be it literary or other, nor from that of being fairly competent judges whether the facts of their own life are being misrepresented. On this principle there appears to be a definite test of theologies and religions in particular - of those
theories which reach to such altitudes that no one can follow them to prove or disprove, and of those that have so many sides that no one can be sure of taking account of all. A religion which fails to work must be set aside e.g. salvation by dialectics is absurd. Because a theory which omits, or degrades, or belittles any part of human nature will certainly, if tested in many countries and for a long period, inevitably end in some practical and palpable vice or weakness or monstrosity; there is no test so safe and searching, and unmistakeable as the application of theories to the practice which they profess to explain. Time in religions as in other things makes small leakages large, and unnoticeable flaws flagrant vices, so bringing down to the common man the chance of a fairly safe judgment upon theories as embodied in institutions which are not new. Hence, even in certain spheres of the literature of knowledge, it is possible for the "expert" to become too pretentious and too scornful of the amateur. Here again the demos has a sort of jury function as the body on whom the actual experiment takes place, which decides whether a theory answers or distorts a need. Here again the popular mind is an element in the case to be tried; its
judgments, as such, do in certain respects prove something on the matter. It is for reasons such as these that Aristotle was of opinion that men must have lived before they could study Ethics to advantage, that it was not a science for the young but for those who had in the first place a direct knowledge of the problem of life. Now all studies for which this is a qualification essential to success, must have within their borders room for a considerable degree of democracy since knowledge of human life as it actually obtains is an attribute which pre-eminently belongs to the popular voice. Democracy could not have had the success it undoubtedly has had in politics, if it had not been that in the case of the demos "wisdom comes, though knowledge lingers."

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FORTITER et RECTE.