

A WOMAN'S ESTIMATE OF WALT WHITMAN.  
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## A WOMAN'S ESTIMATE OF WALT WHITMAN.

[FROM LATE LETTERS BY AN ENGLISH LADY TO W. M. ROSSETTI.]

*London, Nov. 20, 1869.*

THE great satisfaction which I felt in arranging, about two years ago, the first edition (or rather selection) of Walt Whitman's poems published in England has been, in due course of time, followed by another satisfaction — and one which, rightly laid to heart, is both less mixed and more intense. A lady, whose friendship honors me, read the selection last summer, and immediately afterwards accepted from me the loan of the complete edition, and read that also. Both volumes raised in her a boundless and splendid enthusiasm, ennobling to witness. This found expression in some letters which she addressed to me at the time, and which contain (I affirm it without misgiving, and I hope not without some title to form an opinion) about the fullest, farthest-reaching, and most eloquent appreciation of Whitman yet put into writing, and certainly the most valuable, whether or not I or other readers find cause for critical dissent at an item here and there. The most valuable, I say, because this is the expression of what *a woman* sees in Whitman's poems, — a woman who has read

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and thought much, and whom to know is to respect and esteem in every relation, whether of character, intellect, or culture.

I longed that what this lady had written should be published for the benefit of English, and more especially of American readers. She has generously acceded to my request. The ensuing reflections upon Whitman's poems contain several passages reproduced verbatim from the letters in question, supplemented by others which the same lady has added so as more fully to define and convey the impression which those unparalleled and deathless writings have made upon her.

W. M. ROSSETTI.

*June 22, 1869.* — I was calling on ——— a fortnight ago, and he put into my hands your edition of Walt Whitman's poems. I shall not cease to thank him for that. Since I have had it, I can read no other book: it holds me entirely spell-bound, and I go through it again and again with deepening delight and wonder.

*June 23.* — I am very sure you are right in your estimate of Walt Whitman. There is nothing in him that I shall ever let go my hold of. For me the reading of his poems is truly a new birth of the soul.

I shall quite fearlessly accept your kind offer of the loan of a complete edition, certain that great and divinely beautiful nature has not, could not infuse any poison into the wine he has poured out for us. And as for what you specially allude to, who so well able to bear it — I will say, to judge wisely of it — as one who, having been a happy wife and mother, has learned to accept all things with tenderness, to feel a sacredness in all? Perhaps Walt Whitman has forgotten — or, through some theory in his head, has overridden — the truth that our instincts are beautiful facts of nature, as well as our bodies; and that we have a strong instinct of silence about some things.

*July 11.* — I think it was very manly and kind of you to put the whole of Walt Whitman's poems into my hands; and that I have no other friend who would have judged them and me so wisely and generously.

I had not dreamed that words could cease to be words, and become electric streams like these. I do assure you that, strong as I am, I feel sometimes as if I had not bodily strength to read

many of these poems. In the series headed "Calamus," for instance, in some of the "Songs of Parting," the "Voice out of the Sea," the poem beginning "Tears, Tears," &c., there is such a weight of emotion, such a tension of the heart, that mine refuses to beat under it,—stands quite still,—and I am obliged to lay the book down for a while. Or again, in the piece called "Walt Whitman," and one or two others of that type, I am as one hurried through stormy seas, over high mountains, dazed with sunlight, stunned with a crowd and tumult of faces and voices, till I am breathless, bewildered, half dead. Then come parts and whole poems in which there is such calm wisdom and strength of thought, such a cheerful breadth of sunshine, that the soul bathes in them renewed and strengthened. Living impulses flow out of these that make me exult in life, yet look longingly towards "the superb vistas of Death." Those who admire this poem, and don't care for that, and talk of formlessness, absence of metre, &c., are quite as far from any genuine recognition of Walt Whitman as his bitter detractors. Not, of course, that all the pieces are equal in power and beauty, but that all are vital; they grew—they were not made. We criticise a palace or a cathedral; but what is the good of criticizing a forest? Are not the hitherto-accepted masterpieces of literature akin rather to noble architecture; built up of material rendered precious by elaboration; planned with subtile art that makes beauty go hand in hand with rule and measure, and knows where the last stone will come, before the first is laid; the result stately, fixed, yet such as might, in every particular, have been different from what it is (therefore inviting criticism), contrasting proudly with the careless freedom of nature, opposing its own rigid adherence to symmetry to her willful dallying with it? But not such is this book. Seeds brought by the winds from north, south, east, and west, lying long in the earth, not resting on it like the stately building, but hid in and assimilating it, shooting upwards to be nourished by the air and the sunshine and the rain which beat idly against that,—each bough and twig and leaf growing in strength and beauty its own way, a law to itself, yet, with all this freedom of spontaneous growth, the result inevitable, unalterable (therefore setting criti-

cism at naught), above all things, vital,— that is, a source of ever-generating vitality : such are these poems.

“Roots and leaves themselves alone are these,  
Scents brought to men and women from the wild woods and from the pond-side,  
Breast sorrel and pinks of love, fingers that wind around tighter than vines,  
Gushes from the throats of birds hid in the foliage of trees as the sun is risen,  
Breezes of land and love, breezes set from living shores out to you on the living sea,— to you, O sailors !  
Frost-mellowed berries and Third-month twigs, offered fresh to young persons wandering out in the fields when the winter breaks up,  
Love-buds put before you and within you, whoever you are,  
Buds to be unfolded on the old terms.  
If you bring the warmth of the sun to them, they will open, and bring form, color, perfume, to you :  
If you become the aliment and the wet, they will become flowers, fruits, tall branches and trees.”

And the music takes good care of itself too. As if it *could* be otherwise ! As if those “large, melodious thoughts,” those emotions, now so stormy and wild, now of unfathomed tenderness and gentleness, could fail to vibrate through the words in strong, sweeping, long-sustained chords, with lovely melodies winding in and out fitfully amongst them ! Listen, for instance, to the penetrating sweetness, set in the midst of rugged grandeur, of the passage beginning, —

“I am he that walks with the tender and growing night ;  
I call to the earth and sea half held by the night.”

I see that no counting of syllables will reveal the mechanism of the music ; and that this rushing spontaneity could not stay to bind itself with the fetters of metre. But I know that the music is there, and that I would not for something change ears with those who cannot hear it. And I know that poetry must do one of two things, — either own this man as equal with her highest, completest manifestors, or stand aside, and admit that there is something come into the world nobler, diviner than herself, one that is free of the universe, and can tell its secrets as none before.

I do not think or believe this; but see it with the same unmistakable definiteness of perception and full consciousness that I see the sun at this moment in the noonday sky, and feel his rays glowing down upon me as I write in the open air. What more can you ask of the works of a man's mouth than that they should "absorb into you as food and air, to appear again in your strength, gait, face,"—that they should be "fibre and filter to your blood," joy and gladness to your whole nature?

I am persuaded that one great source of this kindling, vitalizing power—I suppose *the* great source—is the grasp laid upon the present, the fearless and comprehensive dealing with reality. Hitherto the leaders of thought have (except in science) been men with their faces resolutely turned backwards; men who have made of the past a tyrant that beggars and scorns the present, hardly seeing any greatness but what is shrouded away in the twilight, underground past; naming the present only for disparaging comparisons, humiliating distrust that tends to create the very barrenness it complains of; bidding me warm myself at fires that went out to mortal eyes centuries ago; insisting, in religion above all, that I must either "look through dead men's eyes," or shut my own in helpless darkness. Poets fancying themselves so happy over the chill and faded beauty of the past, but not making me happy at all,—rebellious always at being dragged down out of the free air and sunshine of to-day.

But this poet, this "athlete, full of rich words, full of joy," takes you by the hand, and turns you with your face straight forwards. The present is great enough for him, because he is great enough for it. It flows through him as a "vast oceanic tide," lifting up a mighty voice. Earth, "the eloquent, dumb, great mother," is not old, has lost none of her fresh charms, none of her divine meanings; still bears great sons and daughters, if only they would possess themselves and accept their birthright,—a richer, not a poorer, heritage than was ever provided before,—richer by all the toil and suffering of the generations that have preceded, and by the further unfolding of the eternal purposes. Here is one come at last who can show them

how ; whose songs are the breath of a glad, strong, beautiful life, nourished sufficingly, kindled to unsurpassed intensity and greatness by the gifts of the present.

“Each moment and whatever happens thrills me with joy.”

“O the joy of my soul leaning poised on itself,—receiving identity through materials, and loving them,—observing characters, and absorbing them!

O my soul vibrated back to me from them!

“O the gleesome saunter over fields and hillsides!  
The leaves and flowers of the commonest weeds, the moist, fresh stillness of the woods,  
The exquisite smell of the earth at daybreak, and all through the forenoon.

“O to realize space!  
The plenteousness of all—that there are no bounds;  
To emerge, and be of the sky—of the sun and moon and the flying clouds,  
as one with them.

“O the joy of suffering,—  
To struggle against great odds, to meet enemies undaunted,  
To be entirely alone with them—to find how much one can stand!”

I used to think it was great to disregard happiness, to press on to a high goal, careless, disdainful of it. But now I see that there is nothing so great as to be capable of happiness; to pluck it out of “each moment and whatever happens;” to find that one can ride as gay and buoyant on the angry, menacing, tumultuous waves of life as on those that glide and glitter under a clear sky; that it is not defeat and wretchedness which come out of the storm of adversity, but strength and calmness.

See, again, in the pieces gathered together under the title “Calamus,” and elsewhere, what it means for a man to love his fellow-man. Did you dream it before? These “evangel-poems of comrades and of love” speak, with the abiding, penetrating power of prophecy, of a “new and superb friendship;” speak not as beautiful dreams, unrealizable aspirations to be laid aside in sober moods, because they breathe out what now glows within the poet’s own breast, and flows out in action toward the men around him. Had ever any land before her poet, not only to

concentrate within himself her life, and, when she kindled with anger against her children who were treacherous to the cause her life is bound up with, to announce and justify her terrible purpose in words of unsurpassable grandeur (as in the poem beginning, "Rise, O days, from your fathomless deeps"), but also to go and with his own hands dress the wounds, with his powerful presence soothe and sustain and nourish her suffering soldiers,— hundreds of them, thousands, tens of thousands,— by day and by night, for weeks, months, years ?

"I sit by the restless all the dark night ; some are so young,  
Some suffer so much : I recall the experience sweet and sad.  
Many a soldier's loving arms about this neck have crossed and rested,  
Many a soldier's kiss dwells on these bearded lips : —

Kisses, that touched with the fire of a strange, new, undying eloquence the lips that received them ! The most transcendent genius could not, untaught by that "experience sweet and sad," have breathed out hymns for her dead soldiers of such ineffably tender, sorrowful, yet triumphant beauty.

But the present spreads before us other things besides those of which it is easy to see the greatness and beauty ; and the poet would leave us to learn the hardest part of our lesson unhelped if he took no heed of these ; and would be unfaithful to his calling, as interpreter of man to himself and of the scheme of things in relation to him, if he did not accept all— if he did not teach "the great lesson of reception, neither preference nor denial." If he feared to stretch out the hand, not of condescending pity, but of fellowship, to the degraded, criminal, foolish, despised, knowing that they are only laggards in "the great procession winding along the roads of the universe," "the far-behind to come on in their turn," knowing the "amplitude of Time," how could he roll the stone of contempt off the heart as he does, and cut the strangling knot of the problem of inherited viciousness and degradation ? And, if he were not bold and true to the utmost, and did not own in himself the threads of darkness mixed in with the threads of light, and own it with the same strength and directness that he tells of the light, and not in those vague generalities that everybody

uses, and nobody means, in speaking on this head,—in the worst, germs of all that is in the best; in the best, germs of all that is in the worst,— the *brotherhood* of the human race would be a mere flourish of rhetoric. And brotherhood is naught if it does not bring brother's love along with it. If the poet's heart were not "a measureless ocean of love" that seeks the lips and would quench the thirst of all, he were not the one we have waited for so long. Who but he could put at last the right meaning into that word "democracy," which has been made to bear such a burthen of incongruous notions?

"By God! I will have nothing that all cannot have their counterpart of on the same terms!"

flashing it forth like a banner, making it draw the instant allegiance of every man and woman who loves justice. All occupations, however homely, all developments of the activities of man, need the poet's recognition, because every man needs the assurance that for him also the materials out of which to build up a great and satisfying life lie to hand, the sole magic in the use of them, all of the right stuff in the right hands. Hence those patient enumerations of every conceivable kind of industry:—

"In them far more than you estimated — in them far less also."

Far more as a means, next to nothing as an end; whereas we are wont to take it the other way, and think the result something, but the means a weariness. Out of all come strength, and the cheerfulness of strength. I murmured not a little, to say the truth, under these enumerations, at first. But now I think that not only is their purpose a justification, but that the musical ear and vividness of perception of the poet have enabled him to perform this task also with strength and grace, and that they are harmonious as well as necessary parts of the great whole.

Nor do I sympathize with those who grumble at the unexpected words that turn up now and then. A quarrel with words is always, more or less, a quarrel with meanings; and here we are to be as genial and as wide as nature, and quarrel with



nothing. If the thing a word stands for exists by divine appointment (and what does not so exist?), the word need never be ashamed of itself; the shorter and more direct, the better. It is a gain to make friends with it, and see it in good company. Here, at all events, "poetic diction" would not serve, — not pretty, soft, colorless words, laid by in lavender for the special uses of poetry, that have had none of the wear and tear of daily life; but such as have stood most, as tell of human heart-beats, as fit closest to the sense, and have taken deep hues of association from the varied experiences of life — those are the words wanted here. We only ask to seize and be seized swiftly, overmasteringly, by the great meanings. We see with the eyes of the soul, listen with the ears of the soul; the poor old words that have served so many generations for purposes, good, bad, and indifferent, and become warped and blurred in the process, grow young again, regenerate, translucent. It is not mere delight they give us, — *that* the "sweet singers," with their subtly wrought gifts, their mellifluous speech, can give too in their degree; it is such life and health as enable us to pluck delights for ourselves out of every hour of the day, and taste the sunshine that ripened the corn in the crust we eat (I often seem to myself to do that).

Out of the scorn of the present came skepticism; and out of the large, loving acceptance of it comes faith. If *now* is so great and beautiful, I need no arguments to make me believe that the *nows* of the past and of the future were and will be great and beautiful too.

"I know I am deathless.  
I know this orbit of mine cannot be swept by the carpenter's compass.  
I know I shall not pass, like a child's carlacue cut with a burnt stick at night.  
I know I am august.  
I do not trouble my spirit to vindicate itself or be understood.

"My foothold is tenoned and mortised in granite:  
I laugh at what you call dissolution,  
And I know the amplitude of Time."

"No array of terms can say how much I am at peace about God and Death."

**You argued rightly that my confidence would not be betrayed**

by any of the poems in this book. None of them troubled me even for a moment; because I saw at a glance that it was not, as men had supposed, the heights brought down to the depths, but the depths lifted up level with the sunlit heights, that they might become clear and sunlit too. Always, for a woman, a veil woven out of her own soul—never touched upon even, with a rough hand, by this poet. But, for a man, a daring, fearless pride in himself, not a mock-modesty woven out of delusions—a very poor imitation of a woman's. Do they not see that this fearless pride, this complete acceptance of themselves, is needful for her pride, her justification? What! is it all so ignoble, so base, that it will not bear the honest light of speech from lips so gifted with "the divine power to use words?" Then what hateful, bitter humiliation for her, to have to give herself up to the reality! Do you think there is ever a bride who does not taste more or less this bitterness in her cup? But who put it there? It must surely be man's fault, not God's, that she has to say to herself, "Soul, look another way—you have no part in this. Motherhood is beautiful, fatherhood is beautiful; but the dawn of fatherhood and motherhood is not beautiful." Do they really think that God is ashamed of what he has made and appointed? And, if not, surely it is somewhat superfluous that they should undertake to be so for him.

"The full-spread pride of man is calming and excellent to the soul,"

Of a woman above all. It is true that instinct of silence I spoke of is a beautiful, imperishable part of nature too. But it is not beautiful when it means an ignominious shame brooding darkly. Shame is like a very flexible veil, that follows faithfully the shape of what it covers,—beautiful when it hides a beautiful thing, ugly when it hides an ugly one. It has not covered what was beautiful here; it has covered a mean distrust of a man's self and of his Creator. It was needed that this silence, this evil spell, should for once be broken, and the daylight let in, that the dark cloud lying under might be scattered to the winds. It was needed that one who could here indicate for us "the path between reality and the soul" should speak. That is what these beautiful, despised poems, the "Children of Adam,"

do, read by the light that glows out of the rest of the volume: light of a clear, strong faith in God, of an unfathomably deep and tender love for humanity, — light shed out of a soul that is “possessed of itself.”

“Natural life of me faithfully praising things,  
Corroborating for ever the triumph of things.”

Now silence may brood again; but lovingly, happily, as protecting what is beautiful, not as hiding what is unbeautiful; consciously enfolding a sweet and sacred mystery — august even as the mystery of Death, the dawn as the setting; kindred granddeurs, which to eyes that are opened shed a hallowing beauty on all that surrounds and preludes them.

“O vast and well-veiled Death!

“O the beautiful touch of Death, soothing and benumbing a few moments, for reasons!”

He who can thus look with fearlessness at the beauty of Death may well dare to teach us to look with fearless, untroubled eyes at the perfect beauty of Love in all its appointed realizations. Now none need turn away their thoughts with pain or shame; though only lovers and poets may say what they will, — the lover to his own, the poet to all, because all are in a sense his own. None need fear that this will be harmful to the woman. How should there be such a flaw in the scheme of creation that, for the two with whom there is no complete life, save in closest sympathy, perfect union, what is natural and happy for the one should be baneful to the other? The utmost faithful freedom of speech, such as there is in these poems, creates in her no thought or feeling that shuns the light of heaven, none that are not as innocent and serenely fair as the flowers that grow; would lead, not to harm, but to such deep and tender affection as makes harm or the thought of harm simply impossible. Far more beautiful care than man is aware of has been taken in the making of her, to fit her to be his mate. God has taken such care that *he* need take none; none, that is, which consists in disguise-ment, insincerity, painful hushing-up of his true, grand, initiating nature. And, as regards the poet's utterances, which, it might

be thought, however harmless in themselves, would prove harmful by falling into the hands of those for whom they are manifestly unsuitable, I believe that even here fear is needless. For her innocence is folded round with such thick folds of ignorance, till the right way and time for it to accept knowledge, that what is unsuitable is also unintelligible to her; and, if no dark shadow from without be cast on the white page by misconstruction or by foolish mystery and hiding away of it, no hurt will ensue from its passing freely through her hands.

This is so, though it is little understood or realized by men. Wives and mothers will learn through the poet that there is rejoicing grandeur and beauty there wherein their hearts have so longed to find it; where foolish men, traitors to themselves, poorly comprehending the grandeur of their own or the beauty of a woman's nature, have taken such pains to make her believe there was none, — nothing but miserable discrepancy.

One of the hardest things to make a child understand is, that down underneath your feet, if you go far enough, you come to blue sky and stars again; that there really is no "down" for the world, but only in every direction an "up." And that this is an all-embracing truth, including within its scope every created thing, and, with deepest significance, every part, faculty, attribute, healthful impulse, mind, and body of a man (each and all facing towards and related to the Infinite on every side), is what we grown children find it hardest to realize too. Novalis said, "We touch heaven when we lay our hand on the human body;" which, if it mean anything, must mean an ample justification of the poet who has dared to be the poet of the body as well as of the soul, — to treat it with the freedom and grandeur of an ancient sculptor.

"Not physiognomy alone nor brain alone is worthy of the muse: — I say the form complete is worthier far."

"These are not parts and poems of the body only, but of the soul."

"O, I say now these are soul."

But while Novalis — who gazed at the truth a long way off, up in the air, in a safe, comfortable, German fashion — has been

admirably quoted by high authorities, the great American who has dared to rise up and wrestle with it, and bring it alive and full of power in the midst of us, has been greeted with a very different kind of reception, as has happened a few times before in the world in similar cases. Yet I feel deeply persuaded that a perfectly fearless, candid, ennobling treatment of the life of the body (so inextricably intertwined with, so potent in its influence on the life of the soul) will prove of inestimable value to all earnest and aspiring natures, impatient of the folly of the long prevalent belief that it is because of the greatness of the spirit that it has learned to despise the body, and to ignore its influences; knowing well that it is, on the contrary, just because the spirit is not great enough, not healthy and vigorous enough, to transfuse itself into the life of the body, elevating that and making it holy by its own triumphant intensity; knowing, too, how the body avenges this by dragging the soul down to the level assigned itself. Whereas the spirit must lovingly embrace the body, as the roots of a tree embrace the ground, drawing thence rich nourishment, warmth, impulse. Or, rather, the body is itself the root of the soul,—that whereby it grows and feeds. The great tide of healthful life that carries all before it must surge through the whole man, not beat to and fro in one corner of his brain.

“O the life of my senses and flesh, transcending my senses and flesh!”

For the sake of all that is highest, a truthful recognition of this life, and especially of that of it which underlies the fundamental ties of humanity,—the love of husband and wife, fatherhood, motherhood,—is needed. Religion needs it, now at last alive to the fact that the basis of all true worship is comprised in “the great lesson of reception, neither preference nor denial,” interpreting, loving, rejoicing in all that is created, fearing and despising nothing.

“I accept reality, and dare not question it.”

The dignity of a man, the pride and affection of a woman, need it too. And so does the intellect. For science has opened up such elevating views of the mystery of material existence that, if poetry

had not bestirred herself to handle this theme in her own way, she would have been left behind by her plodding sister. Science knows that matter is not, as we fancied, certain stolid atoms which the forces of nature vibrate through and push and pull about; but that the forces and the atoms are one mysterious, imperishable identity, neither conceivable without the other. She knows, as well as the poet, that destructibility is not one of nature's words; that it is only the relationship of things—tangibility, visibility—that are transitory. She knows that body and soul are one, and proclaims it undauntedly, regardless, and rightly regardless, of inferences. Timid onlookers, aghast, think it means that soul is body,—means death for the soul. But the poet knows it means body is soul,—the great whole imperishable; in life and in death continually changing substance, always retaining identity. For, if the man of science is happy about the atoms, if he is not baulked or baffled by apparent decay or destruction, but can see far enough into the dimness to know that not only is each atom imperishable, but that its endowments, characteristics, affinities, electric and other attractions and repulsions—however suspended, hid, dormant, masked, when it enters into new combinations—remain unchanged, be it for thousands of years, and, when it is again set free, manifest themselves in the old way, shall not the poet be happy about the vital whole? shall the highest force, the vital, that controls and compels into complete subservience for its own purposes the rest, be the only one that is destructible? and the love and thought that endow the whole be less enduring than the gravitating, chemical, electric powers that endow its atoms? But identity is the essence of love and thought,—I still I, you still you. Certainly no man need ever again be scared by the “dark hush” and the little handful of refuse.

“You are not scattered to the winds—you gather certainly and safely around yourself.”

“Sure as Life holds all parts together, Death holds all parts together.”

“All goes onward and outward: nothing collapses.”

“What I am, I am of my body; and what I shall be, I shall be of my body.”

“The body parts away at last for the journeys of the soul.”

Science knows that whenever a thing passes from a solid to a subtle air, power is set free to a wider scope of action. The poet knows it too, and is dazzled as he turns his eyes toward "the superb vistas of death." He knows that "the perpetual transfers and promotions" and "the amplitude of time" are for a man as well as for the earth. The man of science, with unwearied, self-denying toil, finds the letters and joins them into words. But the poet alone can make complete sentences. The man of science furnishes the premises; but it is the poet who draws the final conclusion. Both together are "swiftly and surely preparing a future greater than all the past." But, while the man of science bequeaths to it the fruits of his toil, the poet, this mighty poet, bequeaths himself—"Death making him really undying." He will "stand as nigh as the nighest" to these men and women. For he taught them, in words which breathe out his very heart and soul into theirs, that "love of comrades" which, like the "soft-born measureless light," makes wholesome and fertile every spot it penetrates to, lighting up dark social and political problems, and kindling into a genial glow that great heart of justice which is the life-source of Democracy. He, the beloved friend of all, initiated for them a "new and superb friendship;" whispered that secret of a god-like pride in a man's self, and a perfect trust in woman, whereby their love for each other, no longer poisoned and stifled, but basking in the light of God's smile, and sending up to him a perfume of gratitude, attains at last a divine and tender completeness. He gave a faith-compelling utterance to that "wisdom which is the certainty of the reality and immortality of things, and of the excellence of things." Happy America, that he should be her son! One sees, indeed, that only a young giant of a nation could produce this kind of greatness, so full of the ardor, the elasticity, the inexhaustible vigor and freshness, the joyousness, the audacity of youth. But I, for one, cannot grudge anything to America. For, after all, the young giant is the old English giant,—the great English race renewing its youth in that magnificent land, "Mexican-breathed, Arctic-braced," and girding up its loins to start on a new career that shall match with the greatness of the new home.