ГЕНРИ ДЖЕЙМС

NOTES OF A SON AND BROTHER

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Содержание

Henry James
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I

It may again perhaps betray something of that incorrigible vagueness of current in our educational drift which I have elsewhere[1] so unreservedly suffered to reflect itself that, though we had come abroad in 1855 with an eye to the then supposedly supreme benefits of Swiss schooling, our most resolute attempt to tap that supply, after twenty distractions, waited over to the autumn of the fourth year later on, when we in renewed good faith retraced our steps to Geneva. Our parents began at that season a long sojourn at the old Hôtel de l'Écu, which now erects a somewhat diminished head on the edge of the rushing Rhone—its only rival then was the Hôtel des Bergues opposite, considerably larger and commanding more or less the view of that profiled crest of Mont-Blanc which used to be so oddly likened to the head and face of a singularly supine Napoleon. But on that side the shooting blue flood was less directly and familiarly under the windows; in our position we lived with it and hung over it, and its beauty, just where we mainly congregated, was, I fear, my own sole happy impression during several of

[1] *A Small Boy and Others.* New York, 1913.

those months. It was of a Sunday that we congregated most; my two younger brothers had, in general, on that day their *sortie* from the Pensionnat Maquelin, a couple of miles out of town, where they were then established, and W. J., following courses at the Academy, in its present enriched and amplified form the University, mingled, failing livelier recreation, in the family circle at the hotel. Livelier recreation, during the hours of completest ease, consisted mostly, as the period drew itself out, of those *courses*, along the lake and along the hills, which offer to student-life in whatever phase, throughout that blest country, the most romantic of all forms of "a little change"; enjoyed too in some degree, but much more restrictedly, by myself—this an effect, as I remember feeling it, of my considerably greater servitude. I had been placed, separately, at still another Institution, that of M. Rochette, who carried on an École Préparatoire aux Écoles Spéciales, by which was meant in particular the Polytechnic School at Zurich, with whatever other like curricula, always "scientific," might elsewhere be aimed at; and I had been so disposed of under a flattering misconception of my aptitudes that leaves me to-day even more wonderstruck than at that immediate season of my distress.

I so feared and abhorred mathematics that the simplest arithmetical operation had always found and kept me helpless and blank—the dire discipline of the years bringing no relief whatever to my state; and mathematics unmitigated were at the Institution Rochette the air we breathed, building us up

as they most officiously did for those other grim ordeals and pursuits, those of the mining and the civil engineer, those of the architectural aspirant and the technician in still other fields, to which we were supposed to be addressed. Nothing of the sort was indeed supposed of me—which is in particular my present mystification; so that my assault of the preliminaries disclosed, feeble as it strikingly remained, was mere darkness, waste and anguish. I found myself able to bite, as the phrase was, into no subject there deemed savoury; it was hard and bitter fruit all and turned to ashes in my mouth. More extraordinary however than my good parents' belief—eccentric on their part too, in the light of their usual practice and disposition, their habit, for the most part, of liking for us after a gasp or two whatever we seemed to like—was my own failure to protest with a frankness proportioned to my horror. The stiffer intellectual discipline, the discipline of physics and of algebra, invoked for the benefit of an understanding undisputedly weak and shy, had been accepted on my side as a blessing perhaps in disguise. It had come to me by I know not what perversity that if I couldn't tackle the smallest problem in mechanics or face without dismay at the blackboard the simplest geometric challenge I ought somehow in decency to make myself over, oughtn't really to be so inferior to almost everyone else. That was the pang, as it was also the marvel—that the meanest minds and the vulgarest types approached these matters without a sign of trepidation even when they approached them, at the worst, without positive appetite. My attempt not

therefore to remain abnormal wholly broke down, however, and when I at last withdrew from the scene it was not even as a conspicuous, it was only as an obscure, a deeply hushed failure. I joined William, after what had seemed to me an eternity of woe, at the Academy, where I followed, for too short a time but with a comparative recovery of confidence, such literary *cours* as I might.

I puzzle it out to-day that my parents had simply said to themselves, in serious concern, that I read too many novels, or at least read them too attentively—*that* was the vice; as also that they had by the contagion of their good faith got me in a manner to agree with them; since I could almost always enter, to the gain of "horizon" but too often to the perversion of experience, into any view of my real interests, so-called, that was presented to me with a dazzling assurance. I didn't consider certainly that I was so forming my mind, and was doubtless curious to see whether it mightn't, by a process flourishing in other applications, get to some extent formed. It wasn't, I think, till I felt the rapture of that method's arrest that I knew how grotesquely little it had done for me. And yet I bore it afterwards no malice—resorting again to that early fatalistic philosophy of which the general sense was that almost anything, however disagreeable, had been worth while; so unable was I to claim that it hadn't involved impressions. I positively felt the impressional harvest rather rich, little as any item of it might have passed at the time for the sort of thing one exhibits as a trophy of learning.

My small exhibition was all for myself and consisted on the whole but of a dusty, spotty, ugly picture—I took it for ugly well-nigh to the pitch of the sinister. Its being a picture at all —and I clung to that—came from the personal and material facts of the place, where I was the only scholar of English speech, since my companions, with a Genevese predominance, were variously polyglot. They wondered, I couldn't doubt, what I was doing among them, and what lost lamb, almost audibly bleating, I had been charged to figure. Yet I remember no crude chaff, no very free relation of any one with any one, no high pitch, still less any low descent, of young pleasantry or irony; our manners must have been remarkably formed, and our general tone was that of a man-of-the-world discretion, or at the worst of a certain small bourgeois circumspection. The dread in the Genevese of having definitely to "know" strangers and thereby be at costs for any sort of hospitality to them comes back to me as written clear; not less than their being of two sorts or societies, sons of the townspeople pure and simple and sons of the local aristocracy perched in certain of the fine old houses of the Cité and enjoying a background of sturdily-seated lakeside villas and deeply umbrageous campagnes. I remember thinking the difference of type, complexion and general *allure* between these groups more marked, to all the senses, than any "social distinction" I had yet encountered. But the great thing was that I could so simplify our enclosing scene itself, round it in and make it compose—the dark, the dreary Institution, squeezed into a tall,

dim, stony-faced and stony-hearted house at the very top of the Cité and directly in the rear of the Cathedral, portions of the apse of which seem to me to have straggled above or protruded toward it, with other odd extraneous masses than itself pressing still nearer. This simplification, quite luxuriously for my young mind, was to mere mean blackness of an old-world sordid order. I recognised *rich* blackness in other connections, but this was somehow of a harsh tradition and a tragic economy; sordid and strong was what I had from the first felt the place, though urging myself always to rub off history from its stones, and suffering thus, after a fashion, by the fact that with history it ought to be interesting and that I ought to know just how and why it was. For that, I think, was ever both the burden and the joy—the complication, I mean, of interest, and the sense, in the midst of the ugly and the melancholy, that queer crooked silent corners behind cathedrals wrought in their way for one, did something, while one haunted them, to the imagination and the taste; and that so, once more, since the generalisation had become a habit with me, I couldn't, seeing and feeling these things, really believe I had picked up nothing.

When I sat in a dusky upper chamber and read "French literature" with blighted M. Toeppfer, son of a happier sire, as I was sure the charming writer and caricaturist, in spite of cumbrous cares, must have been; or when, a couple of times a week and in the same eternal twilight (we groped almost lampless through the winter days, and our glimmering tapers,

when they sparsely appeared, smelt of a past age), I worried out Virgil and Tite-Live with M. Verchère, or Schiller and Lessing with the ruddy noisy little professor of German, who sat always, the lesson long, in a light brown talma, the sides of which he caused violently to flap for emphasis like agitated wings, I was almost conscious of the breath of culture as I modestly aspired to culture, and was at any rate safe for the time from a summons to the blackboard at the hands of awful little M. Galopin, that dispenser of the paralysing chalk who most affected me. Extremely diminutive and wearing for the most part a thin inscrutable smile, the ghost of a tribute to awkwardness happily carried off, he found in our barren interviews, I believed, a charm to curiosity, bending afresh each time as over the handful of specimen dust, unprecedented product at its finest, extracted from the scratched soil of my intelligence. With M. Toeppfer I was almost happy; with each of these instructors my hour was unshared, my exploits unwitnessed, by others; but M. Toeppfer became a friend, shewed himself a *causeur*, brightened our lesson with memories of his time in Paris, where, if I am not mistaken, he had made, with great animation, his baccalauréat, and whence it was my possibly presumptuous impression he had brought back a state of health, apparently much impaired, which represented contrition for youthful spirits. He had haunted the parterre of the Théâtre Français, and when we read Racine his vision of Rachel, whom he had seen there as often as possible, revived; he was able to say at moments how she had spoken and moved, and I

recall in particular his telling me that on her entrance as Phèdre, borne down, in her languorous passion, by the weight of her royal robes—"Que ces vains ornemens, que ces voiles me pèsent!"—the long lapse of time before she spoke and while she sank upon a seat filled itself extraordinarily with her visible woe. But where he most gave me comfort was in bringing home to me that the house commemorated, immortalised, as we call it, in the first of his father's Nouvelles Genevoises, La Bibliothèque de mon Oncle, was none other than the structure facing us where we sat and which so impinged and leaned on the cathedral walls that he had but to indicate to me certain points from the window of our room to reconstitute thrillingly the scenery, the drollery, the whimsical action of the tale. *There* was a demonstration I could feel important, votary and victim of the "scene," the scene and the "atmosphere" only, that I had been formed to be. That I called interesting lore—called it so at least to myself, though feeling it at the same time of course so little *directly* producible that I could perhaps even then have fronted this actually remote circumstance of my never having produced it till this moment. There abode in me, I may add, a sense that on any subject that did appeal and that so found me ready—such subjects being indeed as yet vague, but immensely suggestive of number—I should have grasped the confident chalk, welcomed the very biggest piece, not in the least have feared the blackboard. They were inscribed, alas for me, in no recognised course. I put my hand straight on another of them, none the less, if not on a whole group of others, in my ascent,

each morning of the spring or the early summer sémestre, of the admirable old Rue de la Tour de Boël, pronounced Boisl, which, dusky, steep and tortuous, formed a short cut to that part of the Grand' Rue in which the Academy was then seated.

It was a foul and malodorous way—I sniff again, during the tepid weeks, its warm close air and that near presence of rank cheese which was in those days almost everywhere, for the nostril, the note of urban Switzerland; these things blessed me as I passed, for I passed straight to freedom and away from M. Galopin; they mixed with the benediction of the exquisite spring and the rapture, constantly renewed, though for too short a period, of my now substituting literary, or in other words romantic, studies for the pursuits of the Institution Rochette. I viewed them as literary, these new branches of research, though in truth they were loose enough and followed on loose terms. My dear parents, as if to make up to me, characteristically, for my recent absurd strain to no purpose, allowed me now the happiest freedom, left me to attend such lectures as I preferred, only desiring that I should attend several a week, and content —cherished memory that it makes of their forms with me —that these should involve neither examinations nor reports. The Academic authorities, good-natured in the extreme and accustomed to the alien amateur, appear to have been equally content, and I was but too delighted, on such lines, to attend anything or everything. My whole impression now, with my self-respect re-established, was of something exquisite: I was put

to the proof about nothing; I deeply enjoyed the confidence shown in my taste, not to say in my honour, and I sat out lecture after lecture as I might have sat out drama, alternate tragedy and comedy, beautifully performed—the professor in each case figuring the hero, and the undergraduates, much more numerous, though not in general maturer than those of the Institution, where I had been, to my perception, every one's junior, partaking in an odd fashion of the nature at once of troupe and spectators. The scientific subjects, in a large suggestive way, figured tragedy, I seemed to feel, and I pushed this form to the point of my following, for conscience' sake, though not with the last regularity, lurid demonstrations, as they affected me, on anatomy and physiology; these in turn leading to my earnest view, at the Medical School, of the dissection of a *magnifique gendarme*—which ordeal brought me to a stand. It was by the literary and even by the philosophic *leçons* that the office of bright comedy was discharged, on the same liberal lines; at the same time that I blush to remember with how base a blankness I must have several times listened to H. F. Amiel, admirable writer, analyst, moralist. His name and the fact of his having been then a mild grave oracle of the shrine are all that remain with me (I was fit to be coupled with my cousin Anne King, named in another place, who, on the same Genevese scene, had had early lessons from the young Victor Cherbuliez, then with all his music in him, and was to live to mention to me that he had been for her "like any one else"); the shrine, not to say the temple itself,

shining for me truly, all that season, with a mere confounding blur of light. Was it an effect of my intensity of reaction from what I had hated? was it to a great extent the beguiling beauty of a wonderful Swiss spring, into which all things else soothingly melted, becoming together a harmony without parts?—whatever the cause, I owed it to some accident only to be described, I think, as happy, that I moved, those three months, in an acutely enjoying and yet, as would at present appear, a but scantly comparing or distinguishing maze of the senses and the fancy. So at least, to cover this so thin report of my intelligence and my sum of acquisition and retention, I am reduced to supposing.

What essentially most operated, I make out, however, was that force of a renewed sense of William's major activity which always made the presumption of any degree of importance or success fall, with a sort of ecstasy of resignation, from my own so minor. Whatever he might happen to be doing made him so interesting about it, and indeed, with the quickest concomitance, about everything else, that what I probably most did, all the while, was but to pick up, and to the effect not a bit of starving but quite of filling myself, the crumbs of his feast and the echoes of his life. His life, all this Geneva period, had been more of a feast than mine, and I recall the sense of this that I had got on the occasion of my accompanying him, by his invitation, toward the end of our stay, to a students' celebration or carouse, which was held at such a distance from the town, at a village or small bourg, up in the Vaud back-country, that we had, after a considerable journey

by boat and in heterogeneous and primitive conveyances, tightly packed, to spend two nights there. The Genevese section of the Société de Zoffingue, the great Swiss students' organisation for brotherhood and beer, as it might summarily be defined, of which my brother had become a member, was to meet there certain other sections, now vague to me, but predominantly from the German-speaking Cantons, and, holding a Commerce, to toast their reunion in brimming bowls. It had been thought the impression might amuse, might even interest me—for it was not denied that there were directions, after all, in which I *could* perhaps take notice; and this was doubtless what after a fashion happened, though I felt out in the cold (and all the more that the cold at the moment happened to be cruel), as the only participant in view not crowned with the charming white cap of the society, becoming to most young heads, and still less girt with the parti-coloured ribbon or complementary scarf, which set off even the shabby—for shabbiness considerably figured. I participated vaguely but not too excludedly; I suffered from cold, from hunger and from scant sleeping-space; I found the Bernese and the Bâlois strange representatives of the joy of life, some of them the finest gothic grotesques—but the time none the less very long; all of which, however, was in the day's work if I might live, by the imagination, in William's so adaptive skin. To see that he was adaptive, was initiated, and to what a happy and fruitful effect, that, I recollect, was my measure of content; which was filled again to overflowing, as I have hinted, on my finding him so

launched at the Academy after our stretch of virtual separation, and just fancying, with a freedom of fancy, even if with a great reserve of expression, how much he might be living and learning, enjoying and feeling, amid work that was the right work for him and comrades, consecrated comrades, that at the worst weren't the wrong. What was not indeed, I always asked myself, the right work for him, or the right thing of any kind, that he took up or looked at or played with?—failing, as I did more than ever at the time I speak of, of the least glimpse of his being below an occasion. Whatever he played with or worked at entered at once into his intelligence, his talk, his humour, as with the action of colouring-matter dropped into water or that of the turning-on of a light within a window. Occasions waited on him, had always done so, to my view; and there he was, that springtime, on a level with them all: the effect of which recognition had much, had more than aught else, to say to the charming silver haze just then wrapped about everything of which I was conscious. He had formed two or three young friendships that were to continue and to which even the correspondence of his later years testifies; with which it may have had something to do that the Swiss *jeunesse* of the day was, thanks to the political temperature then prevailing, in a highly inflamed and exalted state, and particularly sensitive to foreign sympathy, however platonic, with the national fever. It was the hour at which the French Emperor was to be paid by Victor Emmanuel the price of the liberation of Lombardy; the cession of Nice and Savoie were

in the air—with the consequence, in the Genevese breast, of the new immediate neighbourhood thus constituted for its territory. Small Savoie was to be replaced, close against it, by enormous and triumphant France, whose power to absorb great mouthfuls was being so strikingly exhibited. Hence came much hurrying to and fro, much springing to arms, in the way of exercise, and much flocking to the standard—"demonstrations," in other words, of the liveliest; one of which I recall as a huge tented banquet, largely of the white caps, where I was present under my brother's wing, and, out of a sea of agitated and vociferous young heads, sprang passionate protests and toasts and vows and declaimed verses, a storm of local patriotism, though a flurry happily short-lived.

All this was thrilling, but the term of it, by our consecrated custom, already in view; we were transferred at a bound, for the rest of that summer of 1860, to the care, respectively, of a pair of kindly pedagogues at Bonn-am-Rhein; as to which rapid phase I find remembrance again lively, with a letter or two of William's to reinforce it. Yet I first pick up as I pass several young lines from Geneva, and would fain pick up too the drawing that accompanied them—this by reason of the interest of everything of the sort, without exception, that remains to us from his hand. He at a given moment, which came quite early, as completely ceased to ply his pencil as he had in his younger time earnestly and curiously exercised it; and this constitutes exactly the interest of his case. No stroke of it that I have recovered but illustrates his

aptitude for drawing, his possible real mastery of the art that was yet, in the light of other interests, so utterly to drop from him; and the example is rare of being so finely capable only to become so indifferent. It was thanks to his later indifference that he made no point of preserving what he had done—a neglect that, still more lucklessly, communicated itself to his circle; so that we also let things go, let them again and again stray into the desert, and that what might be reproducible is but the handful of scraps that have happened not to perish. "Mother," he writes to his father in absence, "does nothing but sit and cry for you. She refuses to associate with us and has one side of the room to herself. She and the Aunt are now in the Aunt's room. Wilky and Bobby, at home for the day, are at church. It is a hard grey day. H. is telling a story to Louis Osborne, and I will try to make a sketch of them. There has been a terrible bise; the two Cornhill Magazines have come; Mrs. Thomas has been too sick to be at dinner, and we have seen something of some most extraordinary English people." Mrs. Thomas, of New York, was a handsome American widow with handsome children, all from the Avenue Gabriel in Paris, and with the boys enjoying life, among many little compatriots, at the admired establishment of M. Haccius, even as our small brothers were doing at that of M. Maquelin; yet with their destiny of ultimate Europeanisation, of finally complete absorption into the French system, already rather written for them—as a like history, for like foredoomed young subjects, was in those years beginning to be prefigured, through marriages of daughters and other such

beguilements, almost wherever one looked. The extraordinary English people were perhaps an amiable family of whom I retain an image as conversing with our parents at the season when the latter were in their prompt flush of admiration for George Eliot's first novel, Adam Bede, then just given to the world and their copy of which they had rejoicingly lent to their fellow Anglo-Saxons. I catch again the echo of their consternation on receiving it back with the remark that all attempt at an interest in such people, village carpenters and Methodists, had proved vain—for that style of Anglo-Saxon; together with that of my own excited wonder about such other people, those of the style in question, those somehow prodigiously presented by so rare a delicacy, so proud a taste, and made thus to irradiate a strange historic light. It *referred* them, and to a social order, making life more interesting and more various; even while our clear democratic air, that of our little family circle, quivered as with the monstrosity. It might, this note that made us, in the parlance of to-day, sit up, fairly have opened to me that great and up to then unsuspected door of the world from which the general collection of monstrosities, its existence suddenly brought home to us, would doubtless stretch grandly away. The story I told Louis Osborne has quite passed from me, but not little Louis himself, an American child of the most charming and appealing intelligence, marked by some malady that was more or less permanently to cripple, or was even cruelly to destroy him, and whom it was a constant joy to aspire to amuse. His mother was schooling her elder son in the company

of our own brothers, his father having established them all at Geneva that he might go for a tour in the East. Vivid to me still is the glimpse I happened to get one Sunday betimes of the good Maquelin couple, husband and wife, in deep mourning—a touch of the highest decency—who had come, with faces a yard long, to announce to Mrs. Osborne the death of her husband in the Holy Land, communicated to them, by slow letter, in the first instance. With little Louis on one's knee one didn't at all envy M. and Madame Maquelin; and than this small faint phantom of sociable helpless little listening Louis none more exquisite hovers before me.

With which mild memories thus stands out for me too the lively importance, that winter, of the arrival, from the first number, of the orange-covered earlier Cornhill—the thrill of each composing item of that first number especially recoverable in its intensity. Is anything like that thrill possible to-day—for a submerged and blinded and deafened generation, a generation so smothered in quantity and number that discrimination, under the gasp, has neither air to breathe nor room to turn round? Has any like circumstance now conceivably the value, to the charmed attention, so far as anything worth naming attention, or any charm for it, is anywhere left, of the fact that Trollope's Framley Parsonage there began?—let alone the still other fact that the Roundabout Papers did and that Thackeray thus appeared to us to guarantee personally, intimately, with a present audibility that was as the accent of good company, the new relation with

him and with others of company not much worse, as they then seemed, that such a medium could establish. To speak of these things, in truth, however, is to feel the advantage of being able to live back into the time of the more sovereign periodical appearances much of a compensation for any reduced prospect of living forward. For these appearances, these strong time-marks in such stretches of production as that of Dickens, that of Thackeray, that of George Eliot, had in the first place simply a genial weight and force, a direct importance, and in the second a command of the permeable air and the collective sensibility, with which nothing since has begun to deserve comparison. They were enrichments of life, they were *large* arrivals, these particular renewals of supply—to which, frankly, I am moved to add, the early Cornhill giving me a pretext, even the frequent examples of Anthony Trollope's fine middle period, looked at in the light of old affection and that of his great heavy shovelfuls of testimony to constituted English matters; a testimony of course looser and thinner than Balzac's to *his* range of facts, but charged with something of the big Balzac authority. These various, let alone numerous, deeper-toned strokes of the great Victorian clock were so many steps in the march of our age, besides being so many notes, full and far-reverberating, of our having high company to keep—high, I mean, to cover all the ground, in the sense of the genial pitch of it. So it was, I remember too, that our parents spoke of their memory of the successive surpassing attestations of the contemporary presence of Scott; to

which we might have replied, and doubtless after no great space began to reply, that our state, and even their later one, allowing for a certain gap, had nothing to envy any other. I witnessed, for that matter, with all my senses, young as I was, the never-to-be-equalled degree of difference made, for what may really be called the world-consciousness happily exposed to it, by the prolonged "coming-out" of The Newcomes, yellow number by number, and could take the general civilised participation in the process for a sort of basking in the light of distinction. The process repeated itself for some years under other forms and stimuli, but the merciless change was to come—so that through whatever bristling mazes we may now pick our way it is not to find them open into any such vales of Arcady. My claim for our old privilege is that we did then, with our pace of dignity, proceed from vale to vale.

II

My point at any rate, such as it is, would be that even at the age I had reached in 1860 something of the happier time still lingered—the time in which a given product of the press might have a situation and an aspect, a considerability, so to speak, a circumscription and an *aura*; room to breathe and to show in, margin for the casting of its nets. The occasion at large was doubtless shrinking, one could note—shrinking like the unlet "house" on a night of grandest opera, but "standing room only" was not yet everywhere the sign, and the fine deliberate thing could here and there find its seat. I really indeed might have held it the golden age of letters still, and of their fond sister leisure, with that quiet swim into our ken on its appointed day, during our Bonn summer, of the charming Once a Week of the prime, the prime of George Meredith and Charles Reade and J. E. Millais and George du Maurier; which our father, to bridge our separation from him, sent us, from Paris and elsewhere, in prompt and characteristic relief of our plotted, our determined strict servitude to German, and to the embrace of the sweet slim essence of which the strain of one's muscles round a circular ton of advertisement was not a condition attached. I should like to say that I rioted, all that season, on the supreme German classics *and* on Evan Harrington, with Charles Reade's A Good Fight, the assured little prelude to The Cloister and the Hearth, thrown

in; and I should indeed be ready to say it, were not the expression gross for the really hushed piety of my attitude during those weeks. It was perhaps not quite till then that I fully emerged from the black shadow of the École Préparatoire aux Écoles Spéciales, not quite till we had got off beyond the blest Rhine at Basle that I ceased to hear and feel all but just behind me, portentous perhaps of another spring, the cold breath of the monster. The guttery Bonn-Gasse was during those weeks of the year close and stale, and the house of our good Herr Doctor Humpert, professor at the Bonn Gymnasium, in which I shared a room with my brother Wilky, contracted and dim, as well as fragrant through a range of assaults that differed only in kind and not at all in number from those of the street itself; and yet I held the period and the whole situation idyllic—the slightly odd sense of which was one's being to that extent attuned to the life of letters and of (oh the great thing!) impressions "gone in for." To feel a unity, a character and a tone in one's impressions, to feel them related and all harmoniously coloured, that *was* positively to face the æsthetic, the creative, even, quite wondrously, the critical life and almost on the spot to commence author. They had begun, the impressions—that was what was the matter with them—to scratch quite audibly at the door of liberation, of extension, of projection; what they were *of* one more or less knew, but what they were *for* was the question that began to stir, though one was still to be a long time at a loss directly to answer it.

There, for the present, was the rub, the dark difficulty at which

one could but secretly stare—secretly because one was somehow ashamed of its being there and would have quickly removed one's eyes, or tried to clear them, if caught in the act of watching. Impressions were not merely all right but were the dearest things in the world; only one would have gone to the stake rather than in the first place confessed to some of them, or in the second announced that one really lived by them and built on them. This failure then to take one's stand in the connection could but come from the troubled view that they were naught without a backing, a stout stiff hard-grained underside that would hold them together and of which the terrible name was simply science, otherwise learning, and learning exclusively by books, which were at once the most beautiful and the most dreadful things in the world, some of them right, strikingly, showily right, some of them disgracefully and almost unmentionably wrong, that is grossly irrelevant, as for instance a bound volume of Once a Week would be, but remarkable above all for overwhelming number and in general for defiance of comprehension. It was true that one had from time to time the rare adventure of one's surprise at understanding parts of them none the less—understanding more than a very little, more than much too little; but there was no practical support to speak of in that, even the most one could ever hope to understand being a mere drop in the bucket. Never did I quite strike it off, I think, that impressions might themselves *be* science—and this probably because I didn't then know them, when it came to the point, as anything but life. I knew them but by

that collective and unpractical—many persons would have said that frivolous—name; which saw me little further. I was under the impression—this in fact the very liveliest of what might have been called the lot—that life and knowledge were simply mutual opposites, one inconsistent with the other; though hovered about, together, at the same time, by the anomaly that when knowledge impinged upon life, pushed against her, as it were, and drove her to the wall, it was all right, and such was knowledge's way and title; whereas when life played the like tricks with knowledge nothing but shame for the ruder, even if lighter, party could accrue. There was to come to me of course in time the due perception that neither was of the least use—use to myself—without the other; but meanwhile, and even for much after, the extreme embarrassment continued: to whichever of the opposites one gave one's self it was with a sense of all but basely sacrificing the other. However, the conflict and the drama involved in the question at large was doubtless what was to make consciousness—under whichever of the two names one preferred to entertain it—supremely intense and interesting.

This then is by way of saying that the idyll, as I have called it, of the happy juncture I glanced at a moment back came from the fact that I didn't at all know how much I was living, and meanwhile quite supposed I was considerably learning. When, rising at some extraordinary hour of the morning, I went forth through the unawakened town (and the Germans, at that time, heaven knows, were early afoot too), and made for the

open country and the hill, in particular, of the neighbouring Venusberg, long, low and bosky, where the dews were still fresh and ancient mummies of an old cloister, as I remember it, somewhere perched and exposed, I was doing, to my sense, an attuned thing; attuned, that is, to my coming home to bend double over Schiller's Thirty Years' War in the strenuous spirit that would keep me at it, or that would vary it with Goethe's Wahlverwandtschaften, till late in the warm afternoon. I found German prose much tougher than the verse, and thereby more opposed to "life," as to which I of course couldn't really shake off the sense that it might be worked as infinitely comprehensive, comprehensive even of the finest discriminations against it. The felicity, present but naturally unanalysed, was that the whole thing, our current episode, *was* exactly comprehensive of life, presenting it in particular as characteristically German, and therein freshly vivid—with the great vividness that, by our parents' vague wish, we were all three after or out for; in spite of our comparatively restricted use, in those days, of these verbal graces. Such therefore was the bright unity of our experience, or at least of my own share in it—this luck that, through the intensity of my wanting it to, all consciousness, all my own immediate, *tasted* German, to the great and delightful quickening of my imagination. The quickening was of course no such matter as I was to know nearly ten years later on plunging for the first time over the Alps into Italy; but, letting alone that I was then so much older, I had wondered about Italy, to put it embracingly,

far more than I was constitutionally capable of wondering about Germany. It was enough for me at Bonn that I felt no lack of appetite—had for the time all the illusion of being on the way to something; to something, I mean, with which the taste of German might somehow *directly* mix itself. Every aspect and object round about was a part, at all events, of the actual mixture; and when on drowsy afternoons, not a little interspaced indeed, I attempted the articulate perusal of Hermann und Dorothea with our good Professor, it was like dreaming, to the hum of bees, if not to the aftertaste of "good old Rhenish," in some homely fruity eighteenth-century garden.

The good old Rhenish is no such false note in this reconstitution; I seem to see the Frau Doctorin and her ancient mildly-scowling sister Fräulein Stamm, who reminded me of Hepzibah Pyncheon in The House of the Seven Gables, perpetually wiping green hock-glasses and holding them up to our meagre light, as well as setting out long-necked bottles, with rather chalky cakes, in that forward section of our general eating-and-living-room which formed our precinct of reception and conversation. The unbroken space was lighted at either end, from street and court, and its various effects of tempered shade or, frankly speaking, of rather greasy gloom, amid which the light touch of elegance gleamed but from the polish of the glasses and the sloping shoulders of their bottle, comes back to me as the view of an intensely internal interior. I recall how oppressively in that apartment, how congestedly, as in some cage of which

the wires had been papered over, I felt housed and disconnected; I scarce then, I think, knew what the matter was, but it could only have been that in all those summer weeks, to the best of my belief, no window was ever once opened. Still, there was the scene, the thick, the much-mixed chiaroscuro through which the two ladies of the family emerged from an exiguous retreat just off the back end of the place with ample platters of food; the almost impenetrable dusk of the middle zone, where the four or five of us, seated with our nutcracker-faced pastor, conveyed the food to our mouths with a confidence mainly borrowed from the play of his own deep-plunging knife; and then the forward, the festal extension, the privilege of occasionally lingering in which, or of returning to it for renewed refreshment, was a recognition both of our general minding of our business upstairs—left as we were to thumb our Flügel's Dictionary by the hour so long as we invoked no other oracle. Our drowsy Doctor invited no such approach; he smiled upon us as if unseen forefingers of great force had been inserted for the widening of his mouth at the corners, and I had the sense of his not quite knowing what to make of our being so very gently barbaric, or rather so informally civilised; he safely housed and quite rankly fed us, guided us to country walks and to the swimming-baths by the Rhine-side, introduced us to fruit-gardens where, on payment of the scantest tribute, we were suffered to consume off-hand bushels of cherries, plums and pears; suffered us to ascend the Drachenfels and to partake of coffee at Rolandseck and in other

friendly open-air situations; but flung his gothic shadow as little as possible over my so passive page at least, and took our rate of acquisition savingly for granted.

This, in the optimism of the hour, I have no memory of resenting; the page, though slow, managed at the same time to be stirring, and I asked no more of any one or anything but that they should be with all due gothicism whatever they most easily might. The long vistas of the beeches and poplars on the other side of the Rhine, after we had crossed by the funicular ferry, gothically rustled and murmured: I fancied their saying perpetually "We are German woods, we are German woods—which makes us very wonderful, do you know? and unlike any others: don't you feel the spell of the very sound of us and of the beautiful words, 'Old German woods, old German woods,' even if you can't tell why?" I couldn't altogether tell why, but took everything on trust as mystically and valuably gothic—valuably because ministering with peculiar directness, as I gathered, to culture. I was in, or again I was "out," in my small way, for culture; which seemed quite to come, come from everywhere at once, with the most absurd conciliatory rush, pitifully small as would have been any list of the sources I tapped. The beauty was in truth that everything was a source, giving me, by the charmingest breach of logic, more than it at all appeared to hold; which was exactly what had not been the case at the Institution Rochette, where things had appeared, or at least had pretended, to hold so much more than they gave. The oddity was that about

us now everything—everything but the murmur of the German woods and the great flow and magic name of the Rhine—was more ugly than beautiful, tended in fact to say at every turn: "You shall suffer, yes, indeed you *are* doing so (stick up for your right to!) in your sense of form; which however is quite compatible with culture, is really one of the finest parts of it, and may decidedly prove to you that you're getting it." I hadn't, in rubbing, with whatever weakness, against French and, so far as might be, against France, and in sinking, very sensibly, more and more into them, particularly felt that I was getting it *as* such; what I was getting as such was decidedly rather my famous "life," and without so much as thinking of the degree, with it all, of the valuable and the helpful.

Life meanwhile I had a good deal of at my side in the person of my brother Wilky, who, as I have had occasion elsewhere to say, contrived in those years to live, or to have every appearance of so doing, with an immediacy that left me far in the lurch. I was always still wondering how, while he had solved the question simply *ambulando*, which was for him but by the merest sociable stroll. This represented to me success—success of a kind, but such an assured kind—in a degree that was my despair; and I have never forgotten how, that summer, when the Herr Doctor did look in, did settle down a little to have the bristling page out with us, Wilky's share of the hour took on the spot the form of his turning at once upon our visitor the tables of earnest inquiry. He delighted, after this tribute of eagerness, to meet the Doctor's

interrogative advance; but the communication so made was of anything and everything except the fruit of his reading (the act of reading was inhuman and repugnant to him), and I amazedly noted while I nursed my small hoard that anything he offered did in the event quite as well: he could talk with such charm, such drollery of candour, such unexpectedness of figure, about what he had done and what he hadn't—or talk at least before it, behind it and beside it. We had three or four house-companions, youths from other places attending the Gymnasium and committed to our Professor's care, as to whom I could somehow but infer that they were, each in his personal way, inordinately gothic—which they had to be to supply to my mind a relation, or a substitute for a relation, with them; whereas my younger brother, without a scrap of a view of them, a grain of theory or formula, tumbled straight into their confidence all round. Our air for *him* was by just so much life as it couldn't have dreamed of being culture, and he was so far right that when the son of the house and its only child, the slim and ardent Theodor, who figured to me but as a case of such classic sensibility, of the Lieder or the Werther sort, as might have made, with the toss of a yellow lock or the gleam of a green blouse, the image for an Uhland or a Heine stanza, had imparted to him an intention of instant suicide under some resentment of parental misconception, he had been able to use dissuasion, or otherwise the instinct of then most freely fraternising, with a success to which my relish for so romantic a stroke as charmingly in Theodor's character and setting mightn't

at all have attained. There is a small something of each of us in a passage of an ingenuous letter addressed by him from the midst of these conditions to his parents. I fondly catch, I confess, at any of these recoverable lights; finding them at the best too scant for my commemorative purpose.

> Willy got his photograph this morning after three hours' hard work. From the post-office he was sent to the custom-house, and there was obliged to sign his name and to go to some neighbouring bookstore to buy a seal. On returning to the custom-house he was sent back to the post-office to get some document or other. After obtaining this article he turned his steps once more to the custom-house, where an insolent officer told him he must wait an hour. W. informed him that he would return at the end of the hour, and accordingly for the third time went to the C.H., and was conducted by the clerk to a cellar where the packages were kept, and there told to take off his hat. He obeyed, raging, and then was a fourth time sent to the P.O.—this time to pay money. Happily he is now in possession of his property. H. and he took a walk this afternoon to a fruit-garden, where plums, cherries, gooseberries and currants were abundant. After half an hour's good work H. left W. finishing merely the plums—the cherry and gooseberry course to come later. He was so enchanted that he thought H. a great fool to leave so soon. How does Paris now strike you? It can't be as nice as Bonn. You had better write to Bob.

Bob, our youngest brother, had been left at Geneva with excellent M. Maquelin and was at that time *en course*, over the

Alps, with this gentleman and their young companions; a most desirable, delicious excursion, which I remember following in envious fancy, as it included a descent to the Italian Lakes and a push on as far as Genoa. In reference to which excursion I cull a line or two from a faded scrap of a letter addressed a little later by this youngest of us to his "Beloved Brother" William. "This is about our Grande Course. We started at 5 o'clock in the morning with our faces and hands all nicely washed and our nails clean. The morning was superb, and as we waited in the court the soft balmy air of the mountains came in bringing with it the melodious sound of the rappel for breakfast. This finished we bade adieu, and I could see the emotions of the kind and ever-watchful Madame Maquelin as a few silent drops trickled down her fair cheeks. We at last arrived at the boat, where we met Mr. Peters, a portly gentleman from the city of Philadelphia, with his two sweet sons, one twelve, the other seven years old, the eldest coming from Mr. E.'s school with no very good opinion of the principal—saying he had seen him in a state of tightness several times during his stay there." Mr. Peters appears to have been something of a pessimist, for, when at a later stage "it began to rain hard, and half the road was a foot deep in water, and the cocher had stopped somewhere to get lanterns and had at the same time indulged in certain potations which didn't make him drive any the straighter," this gentleman "insinuated that we had all better have been with our mothers." The letter records at some length the early phases of the affair, but under the weight of

the vision of Italy it rather breaks down and artlessly simplifies. "Genoa is a most lively town, and there is a continual swarm of sailors in the street. We visited several palaces, among others that of Victor Emanuel, which is very fine, and the fruit is very cheap. We stayed there several days, but at last started for Turin, where we spent a Sunday—a place I didn't much like, I suppose because of that reason. We left Turin the next day on foot, but lost our road and had to come back." I recover even in presence of these light accents my shade of wonder at this odd chance that made the least developed of us the subject of what seemed to me even then a privilege of the highest intensity; and there again keeps it company my sense, through all the after years, that this early glimpse of the blest old Italy, almost too early though it appears to have but just missed being, might have done something towards preparing or enriching for Bob the one little plot of consciousness in which his deeply troubled life was to find rest. He was in the event also fondly to aim at painting, like two of his brothers; but whereas they were to fumble with the lock, in their very differing degree, only in those young years, he was to keep at it most as he grew older, though always with a perfect intelligence of the inevitable limits of the relation, the same intelligence that was so sharp and sad, so extraordinarily free and fine and detached in fact, as play of mind, play of independent talk and of pen, for the limits of his relation to many other matters. Singularly intelligent all round, yet with faculties that had early declined any consummation of acquaintance with

such training as under a different sort of pressure he might have enjoyed, he had an admirable hand and eye, and I have known no other such capacity for absorbing or storing up the minutest truths and shades of landscape fact and giving them out afterward, in separation from the scene, with full assurance and felicity. He could do this still better even than he cared to do; I for my part cared much more that he should than he ever did himself, and then it was, I dare say, that I made the reflection: "He took in the picture of Italy, with his firm hard gift, having the chance while William and I were still, comparatively, small untouched and gaping barbarians; and it should always be in him to do at some odd fine moment a certain honour to that." I held to it that that sensibility had played in him more than by any outward measure at the time; which was perhaps indeed one of the signs within me of the wasteful habit or trick of a greater feeling for people's potential propriety or felicity or full expression than they seemed able to have themselves. At all events I was absolutely never to cease to remember for Bob, through everything—and there was much and of the most agitated and agitating—that he had been dipped as a boy into the sacred stream; to some effect which, thanks to two or three of his most saving and often so amusing sensibilities, the turbid sea of his life might never quite wash away.

William had meanwhile come to Bonn with us, but was domiciled with another tutor, younger and fairer and more of the world, above all more ventilated and ventilating, Herr Stromberg,

whose defect might in fact have seemed that, with his constant exhibition of the stamp received by him from the writings of Lord Macaulay, passages of which he could recite by heart, and the circumstance that his other pupil, William's comrade for a time, was of unmitigatedly English, that is of quasi-Byronic association, he didn't quite rise to the full gothic standard. Otherwise indeed our brother moved on the higher plane of light and air and ease, and above all of enjoyed society, that we felt he naturally must. Present to me yet is the thrill of learning from him that his English fellow-pupil was the grandson, if I remember rightly the degree of descent, of Mary Chaworth, Byron's "first love," and my sense afterwards, in gaping at young Mr. Musters himself, that this independently romantic contact would have been more to my own private purpose at least than the most emphasised gothicism. None the less do I regain it as a part of my current vision that Frau Stromberg, who was young and fair, wrote tragedies as well as made pancakes—which were served to each consumer double, a thick confiture within being the reason of this luxuriance, and being also a note beyond our experience in the Bonn-Gasse; and that with the printed five acts of a certain "Cleopatra" before me, read aloud in the first instance to her young inmates and by my brother passed on to me, I lost myself in the view of I scarce knew what old-world Germanic grace, positively, or little court-city practice of the theatre: these things so lived in the small thick pamphlet, "grey paper with blunt type" and bristling, to my discomfiture, with descriptive

stage directions, vast dense bracketed tracts, gothic enough in all conscience, as to which I could already begin to wonder whether such reinforcements of presentation proved more for or against the true expressional essence of the matter; for or against, that is, there being nothing at all so dramatic, so chargeable with meaning and picture, as speech, of whatever sort, made perfect. Such speculations, I may parenthesise, might well have been fostered, and doubtless were, by an impression that I find commemorated in a few lines of a letter of my father's to a friend in America—he having brought us on to Bonn, introduced us to our respective caretakers and remained long enough to have had an evening at the theatre, to which we accompanied him. "We had Ristori to play Mary Stuart for us last night—which was the vulture counterfeiting Jenny Wren. Every little while the hoarse exulting voice, the sanguinary beak, the lurid leer of menace, and the relentless talons looked forth from the feathery mass and sickened you with disgust. She would do Elizabeth better." I recall the performance in every feature, as well as my absence of such reserves, though quite also the point to which I was impressed by the utterance of them; not that it didn't leave me at the same time free to feel that the heroine of history represented could scarce have been at all a dove-like, much less a wren-like person. She had indeed on Madame Ristori's showing prodigious resources of militant mobility—of what in fact would be called to-day mobilisation. Several years later on I was to see the actress play the same part in America; and then, if I am not mistaken,

was to note scarce more than one point; the awful effect on *any* histrionic case, even on one so guardedly artful as hers, of having been dragged round the globe and forced home, so far as might be, to imperfect comprehensions. The big brush had come fairly to daub the canvas. Let the above, however, serve in particular to lead in as many examples of my father's singularly striking and personal habit of expression and weight of thought as these pages may find room for.

The one difficulty is that to open that general door into the limbo of old letters, charged with their exquisite ghostly appeal, is almost to sink into depths of concession. I yield here for instance to the claim of a page or two from William, just contemporary and addressed to our parents in Paris—and yield perhaps but for no better reason than that of the small historic value or recoverable charm that I am moved to find in its illustrative items. The reference of its later lines is to a contemporary cousin, young and blooming, by whom I have already ever so lightly brushed[2] and who figured quite with the grand air on our young horizon; the only daughter of the brightest of the Albany uncles (by that time lost and mourned) now on the tour of Europe with a pair of protective elders for her entrance upon life and at that hour surrounding our parents, her uncle and aunt, with a notably voluminous rustle of fresh Paris clothes, the far-spreading drapery of the more and more draped and flounced and "sloped" second Empire. This friendly frou-frou almost

[2] *A Small Boy and Others*, 1913.

reached our ears, so sociable for us was every sound of her, in our far-off Rhineland. She was with her stature and shape the finest possible person to carry clothes, and I thought of her, with a revival of the old yearning envy, as now quite transcendently orphaned and bereft, dowered, directed and equipped.

> Your hearts, I know, would have been melted if you had had a view of us this Sunday morning. I went directly after breakfast for the boys, and though H. had an "iron stomach-ache," as he called it, we went off together to that low wooded hill which the Aunt could see from her window when you were here, and walked about till dinner-time, H. being all the while in great pain. In one part we found a platform with a stone bench commanding a view of the whole valley, and, as we were rather tired, sat down on it, H. and Wilky each with a Once a Week, while I tried to draw the view in my pocket-book. We wondered what our beloved parents were doing at that moment, 11.30, and thought you must all have been in your salon, Alice at the window with her eyes fixed on her novel, but eating some rich fruit that Father has just brought in for her from the Palais Royal, and the lovely Mother and Aunt in armchairs, their hands crossed in front of them, listening to Father, who walks up and down talking of the superiority of America to these countries after all, and how much better it is we should have done with them. We wished, oh we wished we could have been with you to join in the conversation and partake of the fruit. We got up from the seat and went on with a heavy sigh, but in a way so fraternal, presenting such

a sweet picture of brotherly unitedness and affection, that it would have done you good to see us.

And so it is every day that we meet for our shorter walks and talks. The German gets on slowly, but I notice a very marked improvement in talking. I have not kept at it so hard this last week as before, and I prevent H. from working his eyes out, which he seems on the whole rather less inclined to do. I am going to read as much as I can the rest of the time we are here. It seems a mere process of soaking, requiring no mental effort, but only time and steady patience. My room is very comfortable now I've got used to it, and I have a pair of slippers of green plush heavy and strong enough to last all my life and then be worn by my children. The photograph of our Zoffingen group has come, which gives me a moustache big enough for three lifeguardsmen. Tell us something more about Mary Helen. How long does she expect to stay in Europe, and who is this Dr. Adams—the man she is engaged to? She directs me to write to her in his care—so that I wish you would ask her, as she says she hopes to meet me, whether I shall still address her as Miss James? Of course it would be painful, but I think I could do it if Adams weren't there. Let the delicious little grey-eyed Alice be locked up alone on the day after the receipt of this with paper and envelopes to write a letter unassisted, uncorrected and unpunctuated to her loving brothers, who would send her novels and peaches if they could. What a blessing it is to have such parents, such a perfect Mother and magnificent Father and dear good Aunt and splendid little Sister!

I may mention that Mary Helen was not "engaged" to the gentleman above-mentioned, and was eventually to marry the late Alfred Grymes, originally of Louisiana. Also that a letter subsequent to this, apparently of the first days in September, sounds to his father the first note of my brother's definite personal preference, as he seemed lately and increasingly, though not in conditions markedly propitious, to have become aware of it, for an adoption of the "artistic career." It was an odd enough circumstance, in respect to the attested blood in our veins, that no less than three of our father's children, with two of his grandsons to add to these, and with a collateral addendum representing seven, in all, of our grandfather's, William James's, descendants in three generations, should have found the artistic career in general and the painter's trade in particular irresistibly solicit them.

> I wish you would as you promised set down as clearly as you can on paper what your idea of the nature of Art *is*, because I do not, probably, understand it fully, and should like to have it presented in a form that I might think over at my leisure. I wish you would do so as fully as you conveniently can, so that I may ruminate it—and I won't say more about it till I have heard from you again. As for what your last letter did contain, what can I do but thank you for every word of it and assure you that they went to the right spot. Having such a Father with us, how can we be other than in some measure worthy of him?—if not perhaps as eminently so as the distance leads his fond heart to imagine.

I never value him so much as when I am away from him. At home I see only his striking defects, but here he seems all perfection, and I wonder as I write why I didn't cherish him more when he was beside me. I beg darling old Mother's forgiveness too for the rude and dastardly way in which I snub her, and the Aunt for the impatience and violence I have always shown her. I shall be a perfect sherry-cobbler to both of them, and to the small Alice too, young as she may be for such treats.

I have just got home from dining with the boys and their Humperts; where I found the Doctor as genial as ever and the two old ladies perfect characters for Dickens. They have been so shut out from the world and melting together so long by the kitchen fire that the minds of both have become fused into one, and then seem to constitute a sort of two-bodied individual. I never saw anything more curious than the way they sit mumbling together at the end of the table, each using simultaneously the same comment if anything said at our end strikes their ear. H. pegs away pretty stoutly, but I don't think you need worry about him. He and Wilky appear to get on in great harmony and enliven themselves occasionally by brotherly trials of strength, quite good-natured, in their room, when excess of labour has made them sleepy or heavy. In these sometimes one, sometimes the other is victorious. They often pay me a visit here while I am dressing, which of course is highly convenient—and I have more than once been with *them* early enough to be present at Wilky's tumble out of bed and consequent awakening, with the call on the already-at-work H.: "Why

the mischief didn't you stop me?" Wilky and I walked to Rolandseck yesterday afternoon, and after a furious race back to the station found ourselves too late for the train by a second. So we took a boat and rowed down here, which was delightful. We are going to put H. through a splashing good walk daily. A thousand thanks to the cherry-lipped, apricot-nosed, double-chinned little Sister for her strongly dashed-off letter, which inflamed the hearts of her lonely brothers with an intense longing to smack her celestial cheeks.

III

I have before me another communication of about the same moment, a letter addressed to his father in Paris within that month; from which, in spite of its lively interest as I hold, I cull nothing—and precisely because of that interest, which prescribes for it a later appearance in conditions in which it may be given entire. William is from this season on, to my sense, so livingly and admirably reflected in his letters, which were happily through much of his career both numerous and highly characteristic, that I feel them particularly plead, in those cases in which they most testify to his personal history, for the separate gathered presentation that happily awaits them. *There* best may figure the serious and reasoned reply drawn from him by some assuredly characteristic enough communication of our parent's own in respect to his declared preference for a painter's life over any other. Lost is this original and, in the light of later matters, sufficiently quaint declaration, and lost the paternal protest answered by my brother from Bonn and anything *but* infelicitous, on its side, so far as the truer apprehension went, under the showing of the time to come. The only thing was that our father had a wonderful way of being essentially right without being practically or, as it were, vulgarly, determinant, and that this relegation of his grounds of contention to the sphere of the non-immediate, the but indirectly urgent, from the point of view

of the thing really to *do*, couldn't but often cause impatience in young breasts conscious of gifts or desires or ideals of which the very sign and warrant, the truth they were known by, was that they were susceptible of application. It was in no world of close application that our wondrous parent moved, and his indifference at the first blush to the manifestation of special and marketable talents and faculties, restlessly outward purposes of whatever would-be "successful" sort, was apt to be surpassable only by his delight subsequently taken in our attested and visible results, the very fruits of application; as to which the possibility, perhaps even the virtual guarantee, hadn't so much left him cold in advance as made him adversely and "spiritually" hot. The sense of that word was the most living thing in the world for him—to the point that the spiritual simply meant to him the practical and the successful, so far as he could get into touch with such denominations, or so far, that is, as he could face them or care for them *a priori*. Fortunately, as he had observational powers of the happiest, perceptions—perceptions of character and value, perceptions of relation and effect, perceptions in short of the whole—turned to the ground sensibly beneath our feet, as well as a splendid, an extraordinarily animated and, so far as he himself at least was concerned, guiding and governing soul, justice and generosity always eventually played up, the case worked itself happily out, and before we knew it he had found it quite the rightest of all cases, while we on our side had had the liveliest, and certainly the most amusing and civilising, moral or, as he

would have insisted, spiritual recreation by the way.

My brother challenges him, with a beautiful deference, on the imputed damage to what might be best in a man by the professional pursuit of "art"—which he appears to have set forth with characteristic emphasis; and I take the example for probably one of the rarest in all the so copious annals of parental opposition to the æsthetic as distinguished from some other more respectable course. What was marked in our father's prime uneasiness in presence of any particular form of success we might, according to our lights as then glimmering, propose to invoke was that it bravely, or with such inward assurance, dispensed with any suggestion of an alternative. What we were to do instead was just to *be* something, something unconnected with specific doing, something free and uncommitted, something finer in short than being *that*, whatever it was, might consist of. The "career of art" has again and again been deprecated and denounced, on the lips of anxiety or authority, as a departure from the career of business, of industry and respectability, the so-called regular life, but it was perhaps never elsewhere to know dissuasion on the very ground of its failing to uplift the spirit in the ways it most pretends to. I must in fairness add, however, that if the uneasiness I here refer to continued, and quite by exception as compared with the development of other like episodes, during the whole of my brother's fortunately but little prolonged studio season, it was really because more alternatives swarmed before our parent's eyes, in the cause, than he could

bring himself to simplify it by naming. He apprehended ever so deeply and tenderly his eldest son's other genius—as to which he was to be so justified; though this indeed was not to alter the fact that when afterwards that subject went in, by a wondrous reaction, for the pursuit of science, first of chemistry and then of anatomy and physiology and medicine, with psychology and philosophy at last piling up the record, the rich *malaise* at every turn characteristically betrayed itself, each of these surrenders being, by the measure of them in the parental imagination, so comparatively narrowing. That was the nearest approach to any plea for some other application of the spirit—that they *were* narrowing. When I myself, later on, began to "write" it was breathed upon me with the finest bewildering eloquence, with a power of suggestion in truth which I fairly now count it a gain to have felt play over me, that this too was narrowing. On the subsequent history of which high paradox no better comment could occur to me than my find of a passage in a letter long subsequently addressed to Mr. James T. Fields, then proprietor and editor of the Atlantic Monthly magazine—a letter under date of May 1868 and referring clearly to some published remarks on a certain young writer which did violence to the blessedly quick paternal prejudice.

> I had no sooner left your sanctum yesterday than I was afflicted to remember how I had profaned it by my unmeasured talk about poor H. Please forget it utterly. I don't know how it is with better men, but the parental

> sentiment is so fiendish a thing with me that if anyone attempt to slay my young, especially in a clandestine way, or out of a pious regard (*e.g.*) to the welfare of the souls comprised in the diocese of the Atlantic, I can't help devoting him bag and baggage to the infernal gods. I am not aware of my animus until I catch, as yesterday, a courteous ear; then the unholy fire flames forth at such a rate as to leave me no doubt on reflection where it was originally lighted.

Almost all my dear father is there, making the faded page to-day inexpressibly touching to me; his passionate tenderness, his infinite capacity for reaction on reaction, a force in him fruitful in so many more directions than any high smoothness of *parti-pris* could be, and his beautiful fresh individual utterance, always so stamped with the very whole of him. The few lines make for me, after all the years, a sort of silver key, so exquisitely fitting, to the treasure of living intercourse, of a domestic air quickened and infinitely coloured, comprised in all our younger time. The renewed sense of which, however, has carried me for the moment too far from the straighter line of my narrative.

The author of the young letter of which I have deferred presentation met in Paris, shortly after that date, the other party to the discussion; and the impression of the endless day of our journey, my elder and my younger brothers' and mine, from Bonn to that city, has scarcely faded from me. The railway service was so little then what it has become that I even marvel at our having made our connections between our early rise in the

Bonn-Gasse and our midnight tumble into bed at the Hôtel des Trois Empereurs in the Place du Palais Royal; a still-felt rapture, a revelation of the Parisian idea of bed after the rude German conception, our sore discipline for so many weeks. I remember Cologne and its cathedral almost in the bland dawn, and our fresh start thence for Strasbourg, now clearly recognised, alas, as a start back to America, to which it had been of a sudden settled that we were, still with a fine inconsequence, to return. We had seen Cologne cathedral by excursion from Bonn, but we saw Strasbourg, to my sorrow until a far later occasion soothed it, only as a mild monster behind bars, that is above chimneys, housetops and fortifications; a loss not made up to me by other impressions or particulars, vivid and significant as I found myself none the less supposing several of these. Those were the September days in which French society, so far as it was of the Empire at least, moved more or less in its mass upon Homburg and Baden-Baden; and we met it in expressive samples, and in advance and retreat, during our incessant stops, those long-time old stops, unknown to the modern age, when everyone appeared to alight and walk about with the animation of prisoners suddenly pardoned, and ask for conveniences, and clamour for food, and get mixed with the always apparently still dustier people of opposite trains drawn up for the same purposes. We appeared to be concerned with none but first-class carriages, as an effect of which our own was partly occupied, the livelong day, by the *gens* of a noble French house as to which we thus had frequent revelations—a

pair of footmen and a lady's maid, types of servile impudence taking its ease, who chattered by the hour for our wonderstruck ears, treating them to their first echo of the strange underworld, the sustaining vulgarity, of existences classified as "great." They opened vistas, and I remember how when, much later, I came to consider the designed picture, first in Edmond About and then in Alphonse Daudet, of fifty features symptomatic of the social pace at which the glittering régime hurried to its end, there came back to me the breath of this sidewind of the frenzied dance that we had caught during those numerous and so far from edifying hours in our fine old deep-seated compartment. The impression, I now at any rate perfectly recover, was one that could feed full enough any optimism of the appointedly modest condition. It was true that Madame la Marquise, who was young and good-natured and pretty without beauty, and unmistakably "great," exhaling from afar, as I encouraged myself to imagine, the scented air of the Tuileries, came on occasion and looked in on us and smiled, and even pouted, through her elegant patience; so that she at least, I recollect, caused to swim before me somehow such a view of happy privilege at the highest pitch as made me sigh the more sharply, even if the less professedly, for our turning our backs on the complex order, the European, fresh to me still, in which contrasts flared and flourished and through which discrimination could unexhaustedly riot—pointing so many more morals, withal, if that was the benefit it was supposed to be, than we should find pretexts for "on the other side." We

were to fall as soon as we were at home again to reading the Revue des Deux Mondes—though doubtless again I should speak here, with any emphasis, but for myself; my chin, in Europe, had scarce risen to the level of that publication; but at Newport in Rhode Island, our next following place of sojourn, I speedily shot up so as quite to bend down to it: it took its place therewith as the very headspring of culture, a mainstay in exile, and as opening wide in especial the doors of that fictive portrayal of a society which put a price, for the brooding young reader, on cases, on *cadres*, in the Revue parlance, already constituted and propitiously lighted. Then it was that the special tension of the dragged-out day from Cologne to Paris proved, on the absurdest scale, a preparation, justified itself as a vivid point of reference: I was to know what the high periodical meant when I encountered in its *études de mœurs* the blue-chinned corruptible, not to say corrupt, *larbin* and the smart soubrette; it was above all a blessing to feel myself, in the perusal of M. Octave Feuillet, an education, as I supposed, of the taste, not at a marked disadvantage; since who but the Petite Comtesse herself had swung her crinoline in and out of my prospect, or, to put it better, of my preserved past, on one of my occasions of acutest receptivity?

The truth was that acute, that quite desperate receptivity set in for me, under a law of its own—may really be described as having quite raged for me—from the moment our general face, by the restless parental decree (born not a little of parental homesickness and reinforced by a theory of that complaint on

our own part, we having somehow in Europe "no companions," none but mere parents themselves), had been turned again to the quarter in which there would assuredly be welcomes and freedoms and unchecked appropriations, not to say also cousins, of both sexes and of a more and more engaging time of life, cousins kept and tended and adorned for us in our absence, together with the solicitation for our favour of possible, though oh so just barely possible, habitats before which the range of Europe paled; but which, nevertheless, to my aching fancy, meant premature abdication, sacrifice and, in one dreadful word, failure. I had had cousins, naturally, in the countries we were quitting, but to a limited degree; yet I think I already knew I had had companions in as full a measure as any I was still to know—inasmuch as my imagination made out one, in the complex order and the coloured air, almost wherever I turned; and, inasmuch as, further, to live by the imagination was to live almost only in that way, so to foresee the comparative, not to say the absolute, absence of tonic accent in the appearances complacently awaiting me, as well as to forecast in these appearances, at the best, a greater paucity, was really to enjoy a sharp prevision of dearth. Certain it is that those supreme moments of Paris, those after-days at the Trois Empereurs, were to flush for me, as they ebbed, with images and visions; judged by any achieved act of possession I hadn't assuredly much to give up, but intensity of sentiment, resting on a good disposition, makes for its own sake the most of opportunity, and I buried my

associations, which had been in a manner till lately my hopes as well, with all decent dignity and tenderness. These more or less secret obsequies lent to our further brief delay a quality of suppressed excitement; the "old-world" hours were numbered too dreadfully—had shrunk but to a handful: I had waked up to that, as with a passionate even if private need for gathering in and saving, on the morrow of our reaching our final sticking-place: I had slipped from my so cushioned sleep, my canopied couch, to hang, from the balcony of our quatrième, my brothers' and mine, over that Place du Palais Royal and up against that sculptured and storied façade of the new Louvre which seemed to me then to represent, in its strength, the capacity and chiselled rim of some such potent vivifying cup as it might have been given us, under a happier arrangement, to taste now in its fulness and with a braver sense for it. Over against us on the great palace wall, as I make out—if not for that occasion then for some other—were statues of heroes, Napoleon's young generals, Hoche, Marceau, Desaix or whoever, such a galaxy as never was or should ever be again for splendid monumental reference; and what it somehow came to was that here massed itself the shining second Empire, over which they stood straight aloft and on guard, like archangels of the sword, and that the whole thing was a high-pitched wonder and splendour, which we had already, in our small gaping way, got into a sort of relation with and which would have ever so much more ever so thrillingly to give us. What it would give us loomed but vaguely enough out of the great hum and the

great toned perspective, and withal the great noble expense, of which we had constant reminder; but that we were present at something it would be always after accounted a privilege to have been concerned with, and that we were perversely and inconsiderately dropping out of it, and for a reason, so far as there might be a reason, that was scarcely less than strange—all this loomed large to me as our interval shrank, and I even ask myself before the memory of it whether I was ever again in the later and more encompassing and accommodating years to have in those places so rich a weight of consciousness to carry or so grand a presumption of joy. The presumption so boldly entertained was, if you please, of what the whole thing meant. It meant, immensely, the glittering régime, and that meant in turn, prodigiously, something that would probably never be meant quite to any such tune again: so much one positively and however absurdly said to one's self as one stood up on the high balcony to the great insolence of the Louvre and to all the history, all the glory again and all the imposed applause, not to say worship, and not to speak of the implied inferiority, on the part of everything else, that it represented. And the sense was of course not less while one haunted at odd hours the arcades and glass galleries of the Palais Royal close at hand—as if to store up, for all the world, treasures of impression that might be gnawed, in seasons or places of want, like winter pears or a squirrel's hoard of nuts, and so perhaps keep one alive, as to one's most vital faculty above-mentioned, till one should somehow or other be able to

scramble back.

The particular ground for our defection, which I obscurely pronounced mistaken, was that since William was to embrace the artistic career—and freedom for this experiment had been after all, as I repeat that it was always in like cases to be, not in the least grudgingly granted him—our return to America would place him in prompt and happy relation to William Hunt, then the most distinguished of our painters as well as one of the most original and delightful of men, and who had cordially assured us that he would welcome such a pupil. This was judged among us at large, other considerations aiding, a sound basis for action; but never surely had so odd a motive operated for a break with the spell of Paris. We named the motive generally, I think, and to the credit of our earnest good faith, with confidence—and I am of course not sure how often our dear father may not explicatively have mentioned the shy fact that he himself in any case had gradually ceased to "like" Europe. This affects me at present as in the highest degree natural: it was to be his fortune for the rest of his life to find himself, as a worker in his own field and as to what he held most dear, scantly enough heeded, reported or assimilated even in his own air, no brisk conductor at any time of his remarkable voice; but in Europe his isolation had been utter—he had there had the sense of playing his mature and ardent thought over great dense constituted presences and opaque surfaces that could by their very nature scarce give back so much as a shudder. No more admirable case of apostolic energy

combined with philosophic patience, of constancy of conviction and solitary singleness of production unperturbed, can I well conceive; and I certainly came later on to rejoice in his having had after a certain date to walk, if there was a preference, rather in the thin wilderness than in the thick. I dare say that when we returned to America toward the end of 1860, some five years and a half after our departure, it may have been with illusions not a few for him about the nature of the desert, or in other words about the degree of sensibility of the public, there awaiting him; but the pretext given him by his so prized and admired eldest son was at the worst, and however eccentric our action, inspiring: I alone of the family perhaps made bold not to say quite directly or literally that we went home to learn to paint. People stared or laughed when we said it, and I disliked their thinking us so simple —though dreaming too a little perhaps that they might have been struck with our patriotism. This however conveyed but a chill the more—since we didn't in the least go to our friend, who had been Couture's and Frère's pupil, who had spent years in France and of whom it was the common belief that you couldn't for the life of you tell him from a French painter, because he was patriotic; but because he was distinguished and accomplished, charming and kind, and above all known to us and thereby in a manner guaranteed. He looked, as people get to look under such enjoyed or even suffered exposures, extremely like a Frenchman, and, what was noteworthy, still more like a sculptor of the race than a painter; which doubtless had to do with my personally, though

I hope, in present cultivated anxiety, not too officiously, sighing at all the explanation the whole thing took. I am bound to add none the less that later on, repatriated and, as to my few contacts, reassured, I found this amount, the apprehension of which had haunted me, no great charge; and seem even to make out that for the first six months of our Newport phase at least we might have passed for strikingly wise. For here was, beyond doubt, a genial, an admirable master; and here also—at such a rate did sparse individuals, scattered notches in the long plain stick, count—was John La Farge. Here moreover—here and everywhere about me, before we could quite turn round—was the War, with its infinite, its truly quite humiliating correction of my (as I now can but so far call it) fatuous little confidence that "appearances," on the native scene, would run short. They were in the event, taking one thing with another, never to hold out for me as they held during those four years. Wondrous this force in them as I at present look back—wondrous I mean in view of that indirectness of its play which my conditions confined me, with such private, though I must add, alas, such helplessly unapplied resentment, to knowing it by. If the force was great the attenuation of its reach was none the less preappointed and constant; so that the case must have come back again but to the degree—call it too, frankly, the force—of one's sensibility, or in other words the blest resource, the supremely breatheable and thereby nourishing and favouring air of one's imaginative life. There were of a truth during that time probably more appearances at one's command in the way of felt

aspects, images, apprehended living relations and impressions of the stress of life, than during any other season one was to know; only doubtless with more of the work of their figuring to their utmost, their giving all they could, to do by one's self and, in the last resort, deep within one's breast. The point to be made just here, in any case, is that if we had not recrossed the sea, by way, rather, of such an anticlimax, to William Hunt, we should certainly with brief delay have found ourselves doing it, on the first alarm of War, for the experience I thus too summarily glance at and which I don't pretend to speak of as all my own.

IV

Newport, with repatriation accepted, would have been on many grounds inevitable, I think—as it was to remain inevitable for several years, and this quite apart from William's having to paint; since if I spoke just now of the sweep of our view, from over the water, of a continent, or well-nigh, waiting to receive us, the eligibility of its innumerable sites was a matter much more of our simplified, our almost distressfully uninvolved and unconnected state than of the inherent virtue of this, that or the other particular group of local conditions. Our parents had for us no definite project but to be liberally "good"—in other words so good that the presumption of our being so would literally operate anywhere and anyhow, would really amount in itself to a sort of situated state, a sufficient prime position, and leave other circumstances comparatively irrelevant. What would infallibly have occurred at the best, however, was what did punctually happen—its having to be definitely gathered that, though we might apparently be good, as I say, almost on any ground, there was but one place in which we should even at a restricted pitch be well: Newport imposed itself at that period to so remarkable a degree as the one right residence, in all our great country, for those tainted, under whatever attenuations, with the quality and the effect of detachment. The effect of detachment was the fact of the experience of Europe. Detachment might of course have

come from many causes, but it truly came in most cases but from one, though that a fairly merciless: it came from the experience of Europe, and I think was on the whole regarded as—what it could only have been in the sphere of intimacy and secrecy felt to be—without an absolute remedy. As comparatively remedial Newport none the less figured, and this for sundry reasons into the detail of which I needn't go. Its rare distinction and precious attribute was that, being a watering-place, a refuge from summer heats, it had also, were the measure considerably stretched, possibilities of hibernation. We could, under stress, brave there the period from November to June; and it was to be under stress not to know what else to do. That was the pinch to which Europe reduced you; insidiously, fatally disconnected, you could but make the best, as a penalty, of the one marked point of reattachment. The philosophy of all of which was that to confess to disconnection was to confess by the same stroke to leisure—which involved also an admission, however rueful at once and deprecatory, of what might still at that time pass in our unregenerate country for something in the nature of "means." You had had the means, that is, to *become*, so awkwardly, detached—for you might then do that cheaply; but the whole basis of the winter life there, of that spare semblance of the Brighton life, the Folkestone life, the Bath or the Cheltenham or the Leamington life, was that your occupation or avocation should be vague enough; or that you shouldn't in other words be, like everyone you might know save a dozen or so at the most, in business. I remember well

how when we were all young together we had, under pressure of the American ideal in that matter, then so rigid, felt it tasteless and even humiliating that the head of our little family was *not* in business, and that even among our relatives on each side we couldn't so much as name proudly anyone who was—with the sole exception of our maternal uncle Robertson Walsh, who looked, ever so benevolently, after our father's "affairs," happily for us. Such had never been the case with the father of any boy of our acquaintance; the business in which the boy's father gloriously *was* stood forth inveterately as the very first note of our comrade's impressiveness. *We* had no note of that sort to produce, and I perfectly recover the effect of my own repeated appeal to our parent for some presentable account of him that would prove us respectable. Business alone was respectable—if one meant by it, that is, the calling of a lawyer, a doctor or a minister (we never spoke of clergymen) as well; I think that if we had had the Pope among us we should have supposed the Pope in business, just as I remember my friend Simpson's telling me crushingly, at one of our New York schools, on my hanging back with the fatal truth about our credentials, that the author of *his* being (we spoke no more of "governors" than we did of "parsons") was in the business of a stevedore. That struck me as a great card to play—the word was fine and mysterious; so that "What shall we tell them you *are*, don't you see?" could but become on our lips at home a more constant appeal. It seemed wantonly to be prompted for our father, and indeed greatly to

amuse him, that he should put us off with strange unheard-of attributions, such as would have made us ridiculous in our special circles; his "Say I'm a philosopher, say I'm a seeker for truth, say I'm a lover of my kind, say I'm an author of books if you like; or, best of all, just say I'm a Student," saw us so very little further. Abject it certainly appeared to be reduced to the "student" plea; and I must have lacked even the confidence of my brother Bob, who, challenged, in my hearing and the usual way, was ready not only with the fact that our parent "wrote," but with the further fact that he had written *Lectures and Miscellanies James*. I think that when we settled awhile at Newport there was no one there who had written but Mr. Henry T. Tuckerman, a genial and graceful poet of the Artless Age, as it might still be called in spite of Poe and Hawthorne and Longfellow and Lowell, the most characteristic works of the first and the two last of whom had already appeared; especially as those most characteristic of Mr. Tuckerman referred themselves to a past sufficiently ample to have left that gentleman with a certain deafness and a glossy wig and a portly presence and the reputation, positively, of the most practised and desired of diners-out. He was to be recognised at once as a social value on a scene not under that rubric densely peopled; he constituted indeed such a note as would help to keep others of the vague definability in countenance. Clearly indeed it might happen that an association of vaguenesses would arrive in time, by fondly cleaving together, at the semblance of a common identity; the nature of the case then demanding, however, that

they should be methodically vague, take their stand on it and work it for all it was worth. That in truth was made easy by the fact that what I have called our common disconnectedness positively projected and proclaimed a void; disconnected from business we could only be connected with the negation of it, which had as yet no affirmative, no figurative side. This probably would come; figures, in the void, would one by one spring up; but what would be thus required for them was that the void should be ample and, as it were, established. Not to be afraid of it they would have to feel it clear of everything and everyone they knew in the air actually peopled.

William Hunt, for that matter, was already a figure unmmistakable, superficially speaking unsurpassable, just as John La Farge, already mentioned, was so soon to prove to be. They were only two indeed, but they argued the possibility; and so the great thing, as I say, was that, to stand out, they should have margin and light. We couldn't all be figures—on a mere margin, the margin of business, and in the light of the general wonder of our being anything, anything *there*; but we could at least understand the situation and cultivate the possibilities, watch and protect the germs. This consciousness, this aim or ideal, had after all its own intensity—it burned with a pure flame: there is a special joy, clearly, in the hopeful conversion of the desert into the garden, of thinness into thickness, a joy to which the conversion of the thick into the mere dense, of the free into the rank or the close, perhaps gives no clue. The great need that

Newport met was that of a basis of reconciliation to "America" when the habit, the taking for granted, of America had been broken or intermitted: it would be hard to say of what subtle secret or magic the place was possessed toward this end, and by a common instinct, I think, we didn't attempt to formulate it —we let it alone, only looking at each other hard, only moving gently, on the brave hypothesis, only in fine deprecating too rude and impatient, too precipitate a doubt of the spell that perhaps might work if we waited and prayed. We did wait and pray, accordingly, scantly-served though the board we might often have felt we had sat down to, and there was a fair company of us to do so, friendliest among whom to our particular effort was my father's excellent friend of many years Edmund Tweedy, already named in pages preparatory to these and who, with his admirable wife, presented himself as our main introducer and initiator. He had married, while we were all young in New York together, a manner of Albany cousin, Mary Temple the elder, aunt of the younger,[3] and had by this time "been through" more than anything, more than everything, of which there could be question for ourselves. The pair had on their marriage gone at once to Europe to live, had put in several years of Italy and yet had at last, particular reasons operating, returned to their native, that is to sterner, realities; those as to which it was our general theory, of so touching a candour as I look back to it, that they offered themselves at Newport in a muffling mitigating air.

[3] A Small Boy and Others, 1913.

The air, material, moral, social, was in fact clear and clean to a degree that might well have left us but dazed at the circumjacent blankness; yet as to that I hasten to add too that the blowing out of our bubble, the planting of our garden, the correction of our thinness, the discovery, under stress, of such scraps of colour and conversation, such saving echoes and redeeming references as might lurk for us in each other, all formed in themselves an active, and might at last even grow to suggest an absolutely bustling, process.

I come back with a real tenderness of memory for instance to that felicity of the personal, the social, the "literary and artistic," almost really the romantic, identity responding, after a fashion quite to bring tears to the eyes, in proportion as it might have seemed to feel by some divine insufflation what it practically could stand for. What should one call this but the brave triumph of values conscious of having to be almost missionary? There were many such that in "Europe" hadn't had to be missionary at all; in Europe, as it were, one hadn't—comparatively—seen, if not the forest for the trees, then the trees for the forest; whereas on this other great vacuous level every single stem seemed to enjoy for its distinction quite the totality of the daylight and to rise into the air with a gladness that was itself a grace. Of some of the personal importances that acted in that way I should with easier occasion have more to say—I shall as it is have something; but there could perhaps be no better sample of the effect of sharpness with which the forces of culture might

emerge than, say, the fairly golden glow of romance investing the mere act of perusal of the Revue des Deux Mondes. There was the charm—though I grant of course that I speak here all for myself, constitutionally and, face to face *with* myself, quite shamelessly an inquirer, a hunter, for charm—that whereas the spell cast had more or less inevitable limits in the world to which such a quality as the best things of the Revue, such a performance of the intellectual and expressional engagement as these suggested, was native and was thereby relative to other generally like phenomena, so it represented among *us*, where it had to take upon itself what I have already alluded to as all the work, far more than its face value. Few of the forces about us reached as yet the level of representation (even if here and there some might have been felt as trying for it); and this made all the difference. Anything suggestive or significant, anything promising or interesting, anything in the least finely charming above all, immensely counted, claimed tendance and protection, almost claimed, or at any rate enjoyed, worship; as for that matter anything finely charming does, quite rightly, anywhere. But our care, our privilege, on occasion our felt felicity, was to foster every symptom and breathe encouragement to every success; to hang over the tenderest shoots that betrayed the principle of growth—or in other words to read devoutly into everything, and as straight as possible, the very fullest meaning we might hope it would learn to have. So at least quite at first—and so again very considerably after the large interval and grim intermission

represented by the War; during which interest and quality, to say nothing of quantity, at the highest pitch, ceased in any degree to fail us, and what might be "read into" almost any aspect without exception paled in the light of what was inevitably read out from it. It must be added at the same time that with its long duration the War fell into its place as part of life at large, and that when it was over various other things still than the love of peace were found to have grown.

Immediately, at any rate, the Albany cousins, or a particular group of them, began again to be intensely in question for us; coloured in due course with reflections of the War as their lives, not less than our own, were to become—and coloured as well too, for all sorts of notation and appreciation, from irrepressible private founts. Mrs. Edmund Tweedy, bereft of her own young children, had at the time I speak of opened her existence, with the amplest hospitality, to her four orphaned nieces, who were also our father's and among whom the second in age, Mary Temple the younger, about in her seventeenth year when she thus renewed her appearance to our view, shone with vividest lustre, an essence that preserves her still, more than half a century from the date of her death, in a memory or two where many a relic once sacred has comparatively yielded to time. Most of those who knew and loved, I was going to say adored, her have also yielded—which is a reason the more why thus much of her, faint echo from too far off though it prove, should be tenderly saved. If I have spoken of the elements and presences round

about us that "counted," Mary Temple was to count, and in more lives than can now be named, to an extraordinary degree; count as a young and shining apparition, a creature who owed to the charm of her every aspect (her aspects were so many!) and the originality, vivacity, audacity, generosity, of her spirit, an indescribable grace and weight—if one might impute weight to a being so imponderable in common scales. Whatever other values on our scene might, as I have hinted, appear to fail, she was one of the first order, in the sense of the immediacy of the impression she produced, and produced altogether as by the play of her own light spontaneity and curiosity—not, that is, as through a sense of such a pressure and such a motive, or through a care for them, in others. "Natural" to an effect of perfect felicity that we were never to see surpassed is what I have already praised all the Albany *cousinage* of those years for being; but in none of the company was the note so clear as in this rarest, though at the same tune symptomatically or ominously palest, flower of the stem; who was natural at more points and about more things, with a greater range of freedom and ease and reach of horizon than any of the others dreamed of. They had that way, delightfully, with the small, after all, and the common matters—while she had it with those too, but with the great and rare ones over and above; so that she was to remain for us the very figure and image of a felt interest in life, an interest as magnanimously far-spread, or as familiarly and exquisitely fixed, as her splendid shifting sensibility, moral, personal, nervous, and having at once

such noble flights and such touchingly discouraged drops, such graces of indifference and inconsequence, might at any moment determine. She was really to remain, for our appreciation, the supreme case of a taste for life as life, as personal living; of an endlessly active and yet somehow a careless, an illusionless, a sublimely forewarned curiosity about it: something that made her, slim and fair and quick, all straightness and charming tossed head, with long light and yet almost sliding steps and a large light postponing, renouncing laugh, the very muse or amateur priestess of rash speculation. To express her in the mere terms of her restless young mind, one felt from the first, was to place her, by a perversion of the truth, under the shadow of female "earnestness"—for which she was much too unliteral and too ironic; so that, superlatively personal and yet as independent, as "off" into higher spaces, at a touch, as all the breadth of her sympathy and her courage could send her, she made it impossible to say whether she was just the most moving of maidens or a disengaged and dancing flame of thought. No one to come after her could easily seem to show either a quick inward life or a brave, or even a bright, outward, either a consistent contempt for social squalors or a very marked genius for moral reactions. She had in her brief passage the enthusiasm of humanity—more, assuredly, than any charming girl who ever circled, and would fain have continued to circle, round a ballroom. This kept her indeed for a time more interested in the individual, the immediate human, than in the race or the social order at large;

but that, on the other hand, made her ever so restlessly, or quite inappeasably, "psychologic." The psychology of others, in her shadow—I mean their general resort to it—could only for a long time seem weak and flat and dim, above all not at all amusing. She burned herself out; she died at twenty-four.

At the risk perhaps of appearing to make my own scant adventure the pivot of that early Newport phase I find my reference to William Hunt and his truly fertilising action on our common life much conditioned by the fact that, since W. J., for the first six months or so after our return, daily and devotedly haunted his studio, I myself did no less, for a shorter stretch, under the irresistible contagion. The clearness of the whole passage for me, the clearest impression, above all, of the vivid and whimsical master, an inspirer, during a period that began a little later on, of numberless devotions and loyalties, is what this fond memory of my permitted contact and endeavour still has to give me. Pupils at that time didn't flock to his gates —though they were to do so in Boston, during years, later on; an earnest lady or two, Boston precursors, hovered and flitted, but I remember for the rest (and I speak of a short period) no thorough-going élèves save John La Farge and my brother. I remember, for that matter, sitting quite in solitude in one of the grey cool rooms of the studio, which thus comes back to me as having several, and thinking that I really might get to copy casts rather well, and might in particular see myself congratulated on my sympathetic rendering of the sublime uplifted face of

Michael Angelo's "Captive" in the Louvre. I sat over this effort and a few others for long quiet hours, and seem to feel myself again aware, just to that tune, of how happy I ought to be. No one disturbed me; the earnest workers were elsewhere; I had a chamber of the temple all to myself, with immortal forms and curves, with shadows beautiful and right, waiting there on blank-eyed faces for me to prove myself not helpless; and with two or three of Hunt's own fine things, examples of his work in France, transporting me at once and defying. I believed them great productions—thought in especial endless good of the large canvas of the girl with her back presented while she fills her bucket at the spout in the wall, against which she leans with a tension of young muscle, a general expression of back, beneath her dress, and with the pressure of her raised and extended bare arm and flattened hand: this, to my imagination, could only become the prize of some famous collection, the light of some museum, for all the odd circumstance that it was company just then for muddled me and for the queer figures projected by my crayon. Frankly, intensely—that was the great thing—these were hours of Art, art definitely named, looking me full in the face and accepting my stare in return—no longer a tacit implication or a shy subterfuge, but a flagrant unattenuated aim. I had somehow come into the temple by the back door, the *porte d'honneur* opened on another side, and I could never have believed much at best in the length of my stay; but I was there, day by day, as much as any one had ever been, and with a sense of what it "meant"

to be there that the most accredited of pupils couldn't have surpassed; so that the situation to this extent really hummed with promise. I fail, I confess, to reconstitute the relation borne by my privilege to that of tuition "in the higher branches," to which it was quite time I should have mounted, enjoyed at the hands of the Reverend William C. Leverett, curate to the then "rector," Doctor Mercer, of that fine old high-spired Trinity Church in which had throbbed, from long before the Revolution as they used to say, the proud episcopal heart of Newport; and feel indeed that I must pretty well have shaken off, as a proved absurd predicament, all submission to my dilemma: all submission of the mind, that is, for if my share of Mr. Leverett's attention was less stinted than my share of William Hunt's (and neither had much duration) it failed to give me the impression that anything worth naming had opened out to me, whereas in the studio I was at the threshold of a world.

It became itself indeed on the spot a rounded satisfying world, the place did; enclosed within the grounds, as we then regarded them, of the master's house, circled about with numerous trees, as we then counted them, and representing a more direct exclusion of vulgar sounds, false notes and harsh reminders than I had ever known. I fail in the least to make out where the real work of the studio went forward; it took somewhere else its earnest course, and our separation—mine from the real workers, my indulged yet ignored state—kept me somehow the safer, as if I had taken some mild and quite harmless drug through which

external rubs would reach me from a distance, but which left my own rubbing power, not to say my own smearing or smutching, quite free. Into the world so beautifully valid the master would occasionally walk, inquiring as to what I had done or would do, but bearing on the question with an easy lightness, a friendliness of tact, a neglect of conclusion, which it touches me still to remember. It was impossible to me at that time not so to admire him that his just being to such an extent, as from top to toe and in every accent and motion, the living and communicating Artist, made the issue, with his presence, quite cease to be of how one got on or fell short, and become instead a mere self-sacrificing vision of the picturesque itself, the constituted picturesque or treated "subject," in efficient figure, personal form, vivid human style. I then felt the man the great mystery could mark with its stamp, when wishing the mark unmistakable, teach me just in himself the most and best about any art that I should come to find benignantly concerned with me, for moments however smilingly scant. William Hunt, all muscular spareness and brownness and absence of waste, all flagrant physiognomy, brave bony arch of handsome nose, upwardness of strong eyebrow and glare, almost, of eyes that both recognised and wondered, strained eyes that played over questions as if they were objects and objects as if they were questions, might have stood, to the life, for Don Quixote, if we could associate with that hero a far-spreading beard already a little grizzled, a manner and range of gesture and broken form of discourse that was like a restless reference to a palette and

that seemed to take for granted, all about, canvases and models and charming, amusing things, the "tremendously interesting" in the seen bit or caught moment, and the general unsayability, in comparison, of anything else. He never would have perched, it must be added, on Rosinante—he was fonder of horses even than of the method of Couture, and though with a shade of resemblance, as all simple and imaginative men have, to the knight of La Mancha, he least suggested that analogy as he passed in a spinning buggy, his beard flying, behind a favourite trotter. But what he perhaps most puts before me to-day is the grim truth of the merciless manner in which a living and hurrying public educates itself, making and devouring in a day reputations and values which represent something of the belief in it that it has had in *them*, but at the memory of which we wince, almost to horror, as at the legend of victims who have been buried alive. Oh the cold grey luminaries hung about in odd corners and back passages, and that we have known shining and warm! They serve at the most now as beacons warning any step not to come *that* way, whatever it does; the various attested ways it may not with felicity come growing thus all the while in number.

John La Farge became at once, in breaking on our view, quite the most interesting person we knew, and for a time remained so; he became a great many other things beside—a character, above all, if there ever was one; but he opened up to us, though perhaps to me in particular, who could absorb all that was given me on those suggestive lines, prospects

and possibilities that made the future flush and swarm. His foreignness, which seemed great at that time, had gained a sharper accent from a long stay made in France, where both on his father's and his mother's side he had relations, and had found, to our hovering envy, all sorts of charming occasions. He had spent much time in Brittany, among kindred the most romantically interesting, people and places whose very names, the De Nanteuils of Saint-Pol-de-Léon, I seem to remember for instance, cast a spell across comparatively blank Newport sands; he had brought home with him innumerable water-colour sketches, Breton peasants, costumes, interiors, bits of villages and landscape; and I supposed him to have had on such ground the most delightful adventure in the world. How was one not to suppose it at a time when the best of one's education, such as that was, had begun to proceed almost altogether by the aid of the Revue des Deux Mondes, a periodical that supplied to us then and for several years after (or again I can but speak for myself) all that was finest in the furniture and the fittings of romance? Those beginnings of Newport were our first contact with New England—a New England already comparatively subdued and sophisticated, a Samson shorn of his strength by the shears of the Southern, and more particularly of the New York, Delilah; the result of which, still speaking for myself, was a prompt yearning and reaching out, on the part of the spirit, for some corrective or antidote to whatever it was that might be going, in the season to come, least charmingly or informingly or inspiringly to press

upon us. I well recall my small anxious foresight as to a required, an indispensable provision against either assault or dearth, as if the question might be of standing an indefinite siege; and how a certain particular capacious closet in a house we were presently to occupy took on to my fond fancy the likeness at once of a store of edibles, both substantial and succulent, and of a hoard of ammunition for the defence of any breach—the Revue accumulating on its shelves at last in serried rows and really building up beneath us with its slender firm salmon-coloured blocks an alternative sphere of habitation. There will be more to say of this, bristling or rather flowering with precious particulars, if I stray so far; but the point for the moment was that one would have pushed into that world of the closet, one would have wandered or stumbled about in it quite alone if it hadn't been that La Farge was somehow always in it with us. That was in those years his admirable function and touch—that he affected me as knowing his way there as absolutely no one else did, and even as having risen of a sudden before us to bear us this quickening company. Nobody else, not another creature, was free of it to that tune; the whole mid-century New England—as a rough expression of what the general consciousness most signified—was utterly out of it; which made, you see, a most unequal division of our little working, or our totally cogitative, universe into the wondrous esoteric quarter peopled just by us and our friend and our common references, and the vast remainder of the public at large, the public of the innumerably uninitiated even

when apparently of the most associated.

All of which is but a manner of expressing the intensity, as I felt it, of our Franco-American, our most completely accomplished friend's presence among us. Out of the safe rich home of the Revue, which opened away into the vastness of visions, he practically stepped, and into it, with all his ease, he mysteriously returned again: he came nearer to being what might have been meant concretely throughout it all—though meant most of course in its full-charged stream of fiction—than any other visiting figure. The stream of fiction was so constant an appeal to the charmed, by which I mean of course the predisposed, mind that it fairly seemed at moments to overflow its banks and take to its bosom any recognised, any congruous creature or thing that might happen to be within reach. La Farge was of the type—the "European," and this gave him an authority for me that it verily took the length of years to undermine; so that as the sense of those first of them in especial comes back to me I find it difficult, even under the appeal to me of the attempt, to tell how he was to count in my earliest culture. If culture, as I hold, is a matter of attitude quite as much as of opportunity, and of the form and substance of the vessel carried to the fountain no less than of the water-supply itself, there couldn't have been better conditions for its operating drop by drop. It operates ever much more, I think, by one's getting whatever there may happen to be out for one's use than by its conforming to any abstract standard of quantity or lustre. It may work, as between

dispenser and subject, in so incalculably personal a manner that no chemical analysis shall recover it, no common estimate of forces or amounts find itself in the least apply. The case was that La Farge swam into our ingenuous ken as the figure of figures, and that such an agent, on a stage so unpeopled and before a scene so unpainted, became salient and vivid almost in spite of itself. The figure was at a premium, and fit for any glass case that its vivacity should allow to enclose it—wherein it might be surrounded by wondering, admiring and often quite inevitably misconceiving observers. It was not that these too weren't agents in their way, agents in some especial good cause without the furtherance of which we never should have done at all; but they were by that very fact specialised and stiffened, committed to their one attitude, the immediately profitable, and incapable of that play of gesture in which we recognise representation. A representative, a rounded figure, however, is as to none of its relations definable or announceable beforehand; we only know it, for good or for ill, but with something of the throb of elation always, when we see it, and then it in general sufficiently accounts for itself. We often for that matter insist on its being a figure, we positively make it one, in proportion as we seem to need it —or as in other words we too acutely miss the active virtue of representation. It takes some extraordinary set of circumstances or time of life, I think, either to beguile or to hustle us into indifference to some larger felt extension roundabout us of "the world"—a sphere the confines of which move on even as we

ourselves move and which is always there, just beyond us, to twit us with the more it should have to show if we were a little more "of" it. Sufficiency shuts us in but till the man of the world—never prefigured, as I say, only welcomed on the spot—appears; when we see at once how much we have wanted him. When we fail of that acknowledgment, that sense as of a tension, an anxiety or an indigence relieved, it is of course but that the extraordinary set of circumstances, or above all the extraordinary time of life I speak of, has indeed intervened.

It was as a man of the world that, for all his youth, La Farge rose or, still better, bowed, before us, his inclinations of obeisance, his considerations of address being such as we had never seen and now almost publicly celebrated. This was what most immediately and most iridescently showed, the truth being all the while that the character took on in him particular values without which it often enough, though then much more grossly, flourishes. It was by these enrichments of curiosity, of taste and genius, that he became the personality, as we nowadays say, that I have noted—the full freshness of all of which was to play but through his younger time, or at least through our younger apprehension. He was so "intellectual"—that was the flower; it crowned his being personally so finished and launched. The wealth of his cultivation, the variety of his initiations, the inveteracy of his forms, the degree of his *empressement* (this in itself, I repeat, a revelation) made him, with those elements of the dandy and the cavalier to which he struck us as so

picturesquely sacrificing, a cluster of bright promises, a rare original and, though not at all a direct model for simpler folk, as we then could but feel ourselves, an embodiment of the gospel of esthetics. Those more resounding forms that our age was to see this gospel take on were then still to come, but I was to owe them in the later time not half the thrill that the La Farge of the prime could set in motion. He was really an artistic, an esthetic nature of wondrous homogeneity; one was to have known in the future many an unfolding that went with a larger ease and a shrewder economy, but never to have seen a subtler mind or a more generously wasteful passion, in other words a sincerer one, addressed to the problems of the designer and painter. Of his long later history, full of flights and drops, advances and retreats, experiment and performance, of the endless complications of curiosity and perversity, I say nothing here save that if it was to contradict none of our first impressions it was to qualify them all by others still more lively; these things belonging quite to some other record. Yet I may just note that they were to represent in some degree an eclipse of the so essentially harmonious person round whom a positive grace of legend had originally formed itself. I see him at this hour again as that bright apparition; see him, jacketed in black velvet or clad from top to toe in old-time elegances of cool white and leaning much forward with his protuberant and over-glazed, his doubting yet all-seizing vision, dandle along the shining Newport sands in far-away summer sunsets on a charming chestnut mare whose light legs and fine

head and great sweep of tail showed the Arab strain—quite as if (what would have been characteristic of him) he had borrowed his mount from the adorable Fromentin, whom we already knew as a painter, but whose acquaintance as a writer we were of course so promptly to owe him that when "Dominique" broke upon us out of the Revue as one of the most exquisite literary events of our time it found us doubly responsive.

So, at any rate, he was there, and there to stay—intensely among us but somehow not withal of us; his being a Catholic, and apparently a "real" one in spite of so many other omnisciences, making perhaps by itself the greatest difference. He had been through a Catholic college in Maryland, the name of which, though I am not assured of it now, exhaled a sort of educational elegance; but where and when he had so miraculously laid up his stores of reading and achieved his universal saturation was what we longest kept asking ourselves. Many of these depths I couldn't pretend to sound, but it was immediate and appreciable that he revealed to us Browning for instance; and this, oddly enough, long after Men and Women had begun (from our Paris time on, if I remember) to lie upon our parents' book-table. *They* had not divined in us as yet an aptitude for that author; whose appeal indeed John reinforced to our eyes by the reproduction of a beautiful series of illustrative drawings, two or three of which he was never to surpass—any more than he was to complete his highly distinguished plan for the full set, not the least faded of his hundred dreams. Most of all he revealed to us Balzac;

having so much to tell me of what was within that formidably-plated door, in which he all expertly and insidiously played the key, that to re-read even after long years the introductory pages of Eugénie Grandet, breathlessly seized and earnestly absorbed under his instruction, is to see my initiator's youthful face, so irregular but so refined, look out at me between the lines as through blurred prison bars. In Mérimée, after the same fashion, I meet his expository ghost—hovering to remind me of how he started me on La Vénus d'Ille; so that nothing would do but that I should translate it, try to render it as lovingly as if it were a classic and old (both of which things it now indeed is) and send it off to the New York weekly periodical of that age of crudest categories which was to do me the honour neither of acknowledging nor printing nor, clearly, since translations did savingly appear there, in the least understanding it. These again are mild memories—though not differing in that respect from most of their associates; yet I cherish them as ineffaceable dates, sudden milestones, the first distinctly noted, on the road of so much inward or apprehensive life. Our guest—I call him our guest because he was so lingeringly, so abidingly and supersedingly present—began meanwhile to paint, under our eyes, with devotion, with exquisite perception, and above all as with the implication, a hundred times beneficent and fertilising, that if one didn't in these connections consistently take one's stand on supersubtlety of taste one was a helpless outsider and at the best the basest of vulgarians or flattest of frauds—a doctrine more salutary

at that time in our world at large than any other that might be sounded. Of all of which ingenuous intensity and activity I should have been a much scanter witness than his then close condisciple, my brother, had not his personal kindness, that of the good-natured and amused elder youth to the enslaved, the yearningly gullible younger, charmed me often into a degree of participation. Occasions and accidents come back to me under their wash of that distilled old Newport light as to which we more and more agreed that it made altogether exceptionally, on our side of the world, for possibility of the *nuance*, or in other words for picture and story; such for example as my felt sense of how unutterably it was the real thing, the gage of a great future, when I one morning found my companions of the larger, the serious studio inspired to splendid performance by the beautiful young manly form of our cousin Gus Barker, then on a vivid little dash of a visit to us and who, perched on a pedestal and divested of every garment, was the gayest as well as the neatest of models. This was my first personal vision of the "life," on a pedestal and in a pose, that had half gleamed and half gloomed through the chiaroscuro of our old friend Haydon; and I well recall the crash, at the sight, of all my inward emulation—so forced was I to recognise on the spot that I might niggle for months over plaster casts and not come within miles of any such point of attack. The bravery of my brother's own in especial dazzled me out of every presumption; since nothing less than that meant drawing (they were not using colour) and since our genial kinsman's perfect

gymnastic figure meant living truth, I should certainly best testify to the whole mystery by pocketing my pencil.

I secured and preserved for long William's finished rendering of the happy figure—which was to speak for the original, after his gallant death, in sharper and finer accents perhaps than aught else that remained of him; and it wanted but another occasion somewhat later on, that of the sitting to the pair of pupils under Hunt's direction of a subject presented as a still larger challenge, to feel that I had irrecoverably renounced. Very handsome were the head and shoulders of Katherine Temple, the eldest of those Albany cousins then gathered at Newport under their, and derivatively our, Aunt Mary's wing, who afterwards was to become Mrs. Richard Emmet—the Temples and the Emmets being so much addicted to alliances that a still later generation was to bristle for us with a delightful Emmetry, each member of it a different blessing; she sat with endless patience, the serenest of models, and W. J.'s portrait of her in oils survives (as well as La Farge's, dealing with her in another view) as a really mature, an almost masterly, piece of painting, having, as has been happily suggested to me, much the air of a characteristic Manet. Such demonstrations would throw one back on regret, so far as my brother was concerned, if subsequent counter-demonstrations hadn't had it in them so much to check the train. For myself at the hour, in any case, the beautiful success with Kitty Temple did nothing but hurry on the future, just as the sight of the charming thing to-day, not less than that of La

Farge's *profil perdu*, or presented ear and neck and gathered braids of hair, quite as charming and quite as painted, touchingly reanimates the past. I say touchingly because of the remembered pang of my acceptance of an admonition so sharply conveyed. Therefore if somewhat later on I could still so fondly hang about in that air of production—so far at least as it enveloped our friend, and particularly after his marriage and his setting up of his house at Newport, vivid proofs alike, as seemed to us all, of his consummate, his *raffiné* taste, even if we hadn't yet, I think, that epithet for this—it was altogether in the form of mere helpless admirer and inhaler, led captive in part by the dawning perception that the arts were after all essentially one and that even with canvas and brush whisked out of my grasp I still needn't feel disinherited. That was the luxury of the friend and senior with a literary side—that if there were futilities that he didn't bring home to me he nevertheless opened more windows than he closed; since he couldn't have meant nothing by causing my eyes to plunge so straight into the square and dense little formal garden of Mérimée. I might occasionally serve for an abundantly idle young out-of-doors model—as in fact I frequently did, the best perhaps of his early exhibitions of a rare colour-sense even now attesting it; but mightn't it become possible that Mérimée would meanwhile serve for me? Didn't I already see, as I fumbled with a pen, of what the small dense formal garden might be inspiringly symbolic? It was above all wonderful in the La Farge of those years that even as he painted and painted, very slowly and intently

and belatedly—his habit of putting back the clock and ignoring every time-scheme but his own was matched only by his view of the constant timeliness of talk, talk as talk, for which no moment, no suspended step, was too odd or too fleeting—he remained as referentially and unexhaustedly bookish, he turned his back by the act as little on our theory of his omniscience as he ceased to disown his job, whatever it might be, while endlessly burying his salient and reinforced eyes and his visibly active organ of scent in some minutest rarity of print, some precious ancientry of binding, mechanically plucked, by the hazard of a touch, from one of the shelves of a stored collection that easily passed with us for unapproached.

He lost himself on these occasions both by a natural ease and by his early adoption and application of the principle of the imperturbable, which promised even from those days to govern his conduct well-nigh to the exclusion of every other. We were to know surely as time went on no comparable case of consistency of attitude—no other such prompt grasp by a nature essentially entire, a settled sovereign self, of the truth of what would work for it most favourably should it but succeed in never yielding the first inch of any ground. Immense every ground thus became by its covering itself from edge to edge with the defence of his serenity, which, whatever his fathomless private dealings with it, was never consentingly, I mean publicly, to suffer a grain of abatement. The artist's serenity, by this conception, was an intellectual and spiritual capital that must never brook defeat

—which it so easily might incur by a single act of abdication. That was at any rate the case for the particular artist and the particular nature he felt himself, armour-proof as they became against the appeal of sacrifice. Sacrifice was fallibility, and one could only of course be consistent if one inveterately had hold of the truth. There was no safety or, otherwise, no inward serenity or even outward—though the outward came secondly—unless there was no deflection; none into the question, that is, of what might make for the serenity of others, which was their own affair and which above all seemed not urgent in comparison with the supreme artistic. It wasn't that the artist hadn't to pay, to pay for the general stupidity, perversity and perfidy, from the moment he might have to deal with these things; that was the inevitable suffering, and it was always there; but it could be more or less borne if one was systematically, or rather if one was naturally, or even, better still, preternaturally, in the right; since this meant the larger, the largest serenity. That account of so fine a case of inward confidence would indeed during those very first years have sinned somewhat by anticipation; yet something of the beauty—that is of the unmatched virtuosity—of the attitude finally achieved did even at the early time colour the air of intercourse with him for those who had either few enough or many enough of their own reserves. The second of these conditions sprang from a due anxiety for one's own interests, more or less defined in advance and therefore, as might be, more or less menaced; the other proviso easily went with vagueness

—vagueness as to what things were one's interests, seeing that the exhibited working of an esthetic and a moral confidence conjoined on that scale and at play together unhampered would perhaps prove for the time an attraction beyond any other. This reflection must verily, in our relation, have brought about my own quietus—so far as that mild ecstasy could be divorced from agitation. I recall at all events less of the agitation than of the ecstasy; the primary months, certain aspects even of the few following years, look out at me as from fine accommodations, acceptances, submissions, emotions, all melted together, that one must have taken for joys of the mind and gains of the imagination so clear as to cost one practically nothing. They are what I see, and are all I want to see, as I look back; there hangs about them a charm of thrilled good faith, the flush and throb of crowding apprehensions, that has scarce faded and of which I can only wish to give the whole picture the benefit. I bottle this imponderable extract of the loitering summers of youth, when every occasion really seemed to stay to be gathered and tasted, just for the sake of its faint sweetness.

Some time since, in Boston, I spent an hour before a commemorative cluster of La Farge's earlier productions, gathered in on the occasion of his death, with the effect as of a plummet suddenly dropped into obscure depths long unstirred, that of a remembered participation, it didn't seem too much to say, in the far-away difficult business of their getting themselves born. These things, almost all finished studies of landscape, small

and fond celebrations of the modest little Newport harmonies, the spare felicities and delicacies of a range of aspects that have ceased to appeal or to "count," called back into life a hundred memories, laid bare the very footsteps of time, light and uncertain though so often the imprint. I seemed so to have been there by the projection of curiosity and sympathy, if not by having literally looked in, when the greater number of such effects worked themselves out, that they spoke to me of my own history—through the felt intensity of my commission, as it were, to speak for my old friend. The terms on which he was ever ready to draw out for us the interesting hours, terms of patience as they essentially were for the edified party, lived again in this record, but with the old supposition of profit, or in other words the old sense of pleasure, of precious acquisition and intenser experience, more vivid than anything else. There recurs to me for instance one of the smallest of adventures, as tiny a thing as could incur the name and which was of the early stage of our acquaintance, when he proposed to me that we should drive out to the Glen, some six miles off, to breakfast, and should afterwards paint—we paint!—in the bosky open air. It looks at this distance a mythic time, that of felt inducements to travel so far at such an hour and in a backless buggy on the supposition of rustic fare. But different ages have different measures, and I quite remember how ours, that morning, at the neat hostel in the umbrageous valley, overflowed with coffee and griddle-cakes that were not as other earthly refreshment, and how a spell of romance rested

for several hours on our invocation of the genius of the scene: of such material, with the help of the attuned spirit, may great events consent to be composed. My companion, his easel and canvas, his palette and stool and other accessories happily placed, settled to his subject, while I, at a respectful distance, settled to mine and to the preparation of this strange fruit of time, my having kept the impression as if it really mattered. It did indeed matter, it was to continue to have done so, and when I ask myself the reason I find this in something as rare and deep and beautiful as a passage of old poetry, a scrap of old legend, in the vagueness of rustling murmuring green and plashing water and woodland voices and images, flitting hovering possibilities; the most retained of these last of course being the chance that one's small daub (for I too had my easel and panel and palette) might incur appreciation by the eye of friendship. This indeed was the true source of the spell, that it was in the eye of friendship, friendship full of character and colour, and full of amusement of its own, that I lived on any such occasion, and that I had come forth in the morning cool and had found our breakfast at the inn a thing of ineffable savour, and that I now sat and flurriedly and fearfully aspired. Yes, the interesting ineffectual and exquisite array of the Boston "show" smote for me most the chord of the prime questions, the admirations and expectations at first so confident, even that of those refinements of loyalty out of which the last and highest tribute was to spring; the consideration, I mean, of whether our extraordinary associate, neither promptly

understood nor inveterately accepted, might not eventually be judged such a colourist and such a poet that owners of his first felicities, those very ones over which he was actually bending, and with a touch so inscrutable, such "tonalities" of his own, would find themselves envied and rich. I remember positively liking to see most people stupid about him, and to make them out, I dare say, more numerously stupid than they really were: this perhaps in some degree as a bright communication of his own spirit—which discerned from so far off that of the bitterest-sweet cup it was abundantly to taste; and partly because the case would after that fashion only have its highest interest. The highest interest, the very highest, it certainly couldn't fail to have; and the beauty of a final poetic justice, with exquisite delays, the whole romance of conscious delicacy and heroic patience intervening, was just what we seemed to see meanwhile stow itself expectantly away.

This view of the inevitable fate of distinguished work was thus, on my part, as it comes before me again, of early development, and I admit that I should appear to antedate it hadn't I in renewed presence of each of the particular predestined objects of sacrifice I have glanced at caught myself in the very act of that invidious apprehension, that fondest contemporaneity. There were the charming individual things round the production of which I had so at once elatedly and resignedly circled; and nothing remained at the end of time but to test the historic question. *Was* the quiet chamber of the Boston museum a

constitution of poetic justice long awaited and at last fully cognisant?—or did the event perhaps fail to give out, after all, the essence of our far-away forecast? I think that what showed clearest, or what I, at any rate, most sharply felt, was the very difficulty of saying; which fact meant of course, I recognise, that the story fell a little short, alas, of rounding itself off. Poetic justice, when it comes, I gather, comes ever with a great shining; so that if there is any doubt about it the source of the doubt is in the very depths of the case and has been from the first at work there. It literally seems to me, besides, that there was more history and thereby more interest recoverable as the matter stood than if every answer to every question about it hadn't had a fine ambiguity. I like ambiguities and detest great glares; preferring thus for my critical no less than for my pedestrian progress the cool and the shade to the sun and dust of the way. There was an exquisite effort of which I had been peculiarly sure; the large canvas of the view of the Paradise Rocks over against Newport, but within the island and beyond the "second beach"—such were our thin designations! On the high style and the grand manner of this thing, even though a little uneasy before the absence from it of a certain crânerie of touch, I would have staked every grain of my grounded sensibility—in spite of which, on second thoughts, I shall let that faded fact, and no other contention at all, be my last word about it. For the prevailing force, within the Boston walls, the supreme magic anything was to distil, just melted into another connection which flung a soft mantle as over

the whole show. It became, from the question of how even a man of perceptive genius had painted what we then locally regarded as our scenery, a question of how we ourselves had felt and cherished that scenery; which latter of these two memories swept for me everything before it. The scenery we cherished—by which I really mean, I fear, but four or five of us—has now been grossly and utterly sacrificed; in the sense that its range was all for the pedestrian measure, that to overwalk it was to love it and to love it to overwalk it, and that no such relation with it as either of these appears possible or thinkable to-day. We had, the four or five of us, the instinct—the very finest this must have been—of its scale and constitution, the adorable wise economy with which nature had handled it and in the light of which the whole seaward and insular extension of the comparatively futile town, untrodden, unsuspected, practically all inviolate, offered a course for the long afternoon ramble more in harmony with the invocations, or for that matter the evocations, of youth than we most of us, with appreciation so rooted, were perhaps ever to know. We knew already, we knew then, that no such range of airs would ever again be played for us on but two or three silver strings. They were but two or three—the sea so often as of the isles of Greece, the mildly but perpetually embayed promontories of mossy rock and wasted thankless pasture, bathed in a refinement of radiance and a sweetness of solitude which amounted in themselves to the highest "finish"; and little more than the feeling, with all this, or rather with no more than this, that

possession, discrimination, far frequentation, were ours alone, and that a grassy rocky tide-washed, just a bare, though ever so fine-grained, toned and tinted breast of nature and field of fancy stretched for us to the low horizon's furthest rim. The vast region —it struck us then as vast—was practically roadless, but this, far from making it a desert, made it a kind of boundless empty carpeted saloon. It comes back to me that nobody in those days walked, nobody but the three or four of us—or indeed I should say, if pushed, the single pair in particular of whom I was one and the other Thomas Sargeant Perry, superexcellent and all-reading, all-engulfing friend of those days and still, sole survivor, of these, I thus found deeply consecrated that love of the long, again and again of the very longest possible, walk which was to see me, year after year, through so many of the twists and past so many of the threatened blocks of life's road, and which, during the early and American period, was to make me lone and perverse even in my own sight: so little was it ever given me then, wherever I scanned the view, to descry a fellow-pedestrian. The pedestrians came to succumb altogether, at Newport, to this virtual challenge of their strange agitation—by the circumstance, that is, of their being offered at last, to importunity, the vulgar road, under the invasion of which the old rich alternative miserably dwindled.

V

Nothing meanwhile could have been less logical, yet at the same time more natural, than that William's interest in the practice of painting should have suddenly and abruptly ceased; a turn of our affair attended, however, with no shade of commotion, no repining at proved waste; with as little of any confessed ruefulness of mistake on one side as of any elation of wisdom, any resonance of the ready "I told you so" on the other. The one side would have been, with a different tone about the matter and a different domestic habit than ours, that of my brother's awkwardness, accompanying whatever intelligence, of disavowal, and the other been our father's not unemphatic return to the point that his doubts, those originally and confidently intimated, had been justified by the fact. Tempting doubtless in a heavier household air the opportunity on the latter's part to recall that if he had perfectly recognised his son's probable progress to a pitch of excellence he had exactly not granted that an attainment of this pitch was likely in the least, however uncontested, to satisfy the nature concerned; the foregone conclusion having all the while been that such a spirit was competent to something larger and less superficially calculable, something more expressive of its true inwardness. This was not the way in which things happened among us, for I really think the committed mistake was ever discriminated

against—certainly by the head of the family—only to the extent of its acquiring, even if but speedily again to fade, an interest greater than was obtainable by the too obvious success. I am not sure indeed that the kind of personal history most appealing to my father would not have been some kind that should fairly proceed by mistakes, mistakes more human, more associational, less angular, less hard for others, that is less exemplary for them (since righteousness, as mostly understood, was in our parent's view, I think, the cruellest thing in the world) than straight and smug and declared felicities. The qualification here, I allow, would be in his scant measure of the difference, after all, for the life of the soul, between the marked achievement and the marked shortcoming. He had a manner of his own of appreciating failure, or of not at least piously rejoicing in displayed moral, intellectual, or even material, economies, which, had it not been that his humanity, his generosity and, for the most part, his gaiety, were always, at the worst, consistent, might sometimes have left us with our small savings, our little exhibitions and complacencies, rather on our hands. As the case stood I find myself thinking of our life in those years as profiting greatly for animation and curiosity by the interest he shed for us on the whole side of the human scene usually held least interesting—the element, the appearance, of waste which plays there such a part and into which he could read under provocation so much character and colour and charm, so many implications of the fine and the worthy, that, since the art of missing or of failing, or of

otherwise going astray, did after all in his hands escape becoming either a matter of real example or of absolute precept, enlarged not a little our field and our categories of appreciation and perception. I recover as I look back on all this the sense as of an extraordinary young confidence, our common support, in our coming round together, through the immense lubrication of his expressed thought, often perhaps extravagantly working and playing, to plenty of unbewildered rightness, a state of comfort that would always serve—whether after strange openings into a sphere where nothing practical mattered, or after even still quainter closings in upon us of unexpected importances and values. Which means, to my memory, that we breathed somehow an air in which waste, for us at least, couldn't and didn't live, so certain were aberrations and discussions, adventures, excursions and alarms of whatever sort, to wind up in a "transformation scene" or, if the term be not profane, happy harlequinade; a figuration of each involved issue and item before the footlights of a familiar idealism, the most socialised and ironised, the most amusedly generalised, that possibly could be.

Such an atmosphere was, taking one of its elements with another, doubtless delightful; yet if it was friendly to the suggested or imagined thing it promoted among us much less directly, as I have already hinted, the act of choice—choice as to the "career" for example, with a view of the usual proceedings thereupon consequent. I marvel at the manner in which the door appears to have been held or at least left open to us for

experiment, though with a tendency to close, the oddest yet most inveterately perceptible movement in that sense, before any very earnest proposition in particular. I have no remembrance at all of marked prejudices on our father's part, but I recall repeated cases, in his attitude to our young affairs, of a disparagement suggested as by stirred memories of his own; the instance most present to me being his extreme tepidity in the matter of William's, or in fact of my, going, on our then American basis, to college. I make out in him, and at the time made out, a great revulsion of spirit from that incurred experience in his own history, a revulsion I think moreover quite independent of any particular or instrinsic attributes of the seat of learning involved in it. Union College, Schenectady, New York, the scene of his personal experiment and the natural resort, in his youth, of comparatively adjacent Albanians, might easily have offered at that time no very rare opportunities—few were the American country colleges that then had such to offer; but when, after years, the question arose for his sons he saw it in I scarce know what light of associational or "subjective" dislike. He had the disadvantage—unless indeed it was much more we who had it—of his having, after many changes and detachments, ceased to believe in the Schenectady resource, or to revert to it sentimentally, without his forming on the other hand, with his boys to place, any fonder presumption or preference. There comes out to me, much bedimmed but recognisable, the image of a day of extreme youth on which, during a stay with our

grandmother at Albany, we achieved, William and I, with some confused and heated railway effort, a pious pilgrimage to the small scholastic city—pious by reason, I clearly remember, of a lively persuasion on my brother's part that to Union College, at some indefinite future time, we should both most naturally and delightedly repair. We invoked, I gather, among its scattered shades, fairly vague to me now, the loyalty that our parent appeared to have dropped by the way—even though our attitude about it can scarce have been prematurely contentious; the whole vision is at any rate to-day bathed and blurred for me in the air of some charmed and beguiled dream, that of the flushed good faith of an hour of crude castle-building. We were helped to build, on the spot, by an older friend, much older, as I remember him, even than my brother, already a member of the college and, as it seemed, greatly enjoying his life and those "society" badges and trinkets with which he reappears to me as bristling and twinkling quite to the extinction of his particular identity. This is lost, like everything else, in the mere golden haze of the little old-time autumn adventure. Wondrous to our sensibility may well have been the October glamour—if October it was, and if it was not it ought to have been!—of that big brave region of the great State over which the shade of Fenimore Cooper's Mohawks and Mohicans (if this be not a pleonasm) might still have been felt to hang. The castle we had built, however, crumbled—there were plenty of others awaiting erection; these too successively had their hour, but I needn't at this time stoop to pick up their

pieces. I see moreover vividly enough how it might have been that, at this stage, our parents were left cold by the various appeal, in our interest, of Columbia, Harvard and Yale. Hard by, at Providence, in the Newport time, was also "Brown"; but I recover no connection in which that mystic syllable swept our sky as a name to conjure with. Our largest licence somehow didn't stray toward Brown. It was to the same tune not conceivable that we should have been restored for educational purposes to the swollen city, the New York of our childhood, where we had then so tumbled in and out of school as to exhaust the measure, or as at least greatly to deflower the image, of our teachability on that ground. Yale, off our beat from every point of view, was as little to be thought of, and there was moreover in our father's imagination no grain of susceptibility to what might have been, on the general ground, "socially expected." Even Harvard, clearly—and it was perhaps a trifle odd—moved him in our interest as little as Schenectady could do; so that, for authority, the voice of social expectation would have had to sound with an art or an accent of which it had by no means up to that time learned roundabout us the trick. This indeed (it comes to saying) is something that, so far as our parents were concerned, it would never have learned. They were, from other preoccupations, unaware of any such pressure; and to become aware would, I think, primarily have been for them to find it out of all proportion to the general pitch of prescription. We were not at that time, when it came to such claims, in presence of

persuasive, much less of impressive, social forms and precedents —at least those of us of the liberated mind and the really more curious culture were not; the more curious culture, only to be known by the positive taste of it, was nowhere in the air, nowhere seated or embodied.

Which reflections, as I perhaps too loosely gather them in, refresh at any rate my sense of how we in particular of our father's house actually profited more than we lost, if the more curious culture was in question, by the degree to which we were afloat and disconnected; since there were at least luxuries of the spirit in this quite as much as drawbacks—given a social order (so far as it *was* an order) that found its main ideal in a "strict attention to business," that is to buying and selling over a counter or a desk, and in such an intensity of the traffic as made, on the part of all involved, for close localisation. To attend strictly to business was to be invariably *there*, on a certain spot in a certain place; just as to be nowhere in particular, to *have* to be nowhere, told the queer tale of a lack or of a forfeiture, or possibly even of a state of intrinsic unworthiness. I have already expressed how few of these elements of the background we ourselves had ever had either to add to or to subtract from, and how this of itself did after a fashion "place" us in the small Newport colony of the despoiled and disillusioned, the mildly, the reminiscentially desperate. As easy as might be, for the time, I have also noted, was our footing there; but I have not, for myself, forgotten, or even now outlived, the particular shade of satisfaction to be taken

in one's thus being in New England without being of it. To have originally been of it, or still to have had to be, affected me, I recall, as a case I should have regretted—unless it be more exact to say that I thought of the condition as a danger after all escaped. Long would it take to tell why it figured as a danger, and why that impression was during the several following years much more to gain than to lose intensity. The question was to fall into the rear indeed, with ever so many such secondary others, during the War, and for reasons effective enough; but it was afterwards to know a luxury of emergence—this, I mean, while one still "cared," in general, as one was sooner or later to stop caring. Infinitely interesting to recover, in the history of a mind, for those concerned, these movements of the spirit, these tides and currents of growth—though under the inconvenience for the historian of such ramifications of research that here at any rate I feel myself warned off. There appeared to us at Newport the most interesting, much, of the Albany male cousins, William James Temple—coming, oddly enough, first from Yale and then from Harvard; so that by contact and example the practicability of a like experience might have been, and doubtless was, put well before us. "Will" Temple, as we were in his short life too scantly to know him, had made so luckless, even if so lively a start under one alma mater that the appeal to a fresh parentship altogether appears to have been judged the best remedy for his case: he entered Harvard jumping, if I mistake not, a couple of years of the undergraduate curriculum, and my personal memory of these

reappearances is a mere recapture of admiration, of prostration, before him. The dazzled state, under his striking good looks and his manly charm, was the common state; so that I disengage from it no presumption of a particular plea playing in our own domestic air for his temporary Cambridge setting; he was so much too radiant and gallant and personal, too much a character and a figure, a splendid importance in himself, to owe the least glamour to settings; an advantage that might have seemed rather to be shed on whatever scene by himself in consenting to light it up. He made all life for the hour a foreground, and one that we none of us would have quitted for a moment while he was there.

In that form at least I see him, and no revival of those years so puts to me the interesting question, so often aimlessly returned upon in later life, of the amount of truth in this or that case of young confidence in a glory to come—for another than one's self; of the likelihood of the wonders so flatteringly forecast. Many of our estimates were monstrous magnifications—though doing us even at that more good than harm; so that one isn't even sure that the happiest histories were to have been those of the least liberal mistakes. I like at any rate to think of our easy overstrainings—the possible flaw in many of which was not indeed to be put to the proof. That was the case for the general, and for every particular, impression of Will Temple, thanks to his early death in battle—at Chancellorsville, 1863; he having, among the quickened forces of the time, and his father's record helping him, leaped to a captaincy in the regular Army; but I

cling to the idea that the siftings and sortings of life, had he remained subject to them, would still have left him the lustre that blinds and subdues. I even do more, at this hour; I ask myself, while his appearance and my personal feeling about it live for me again, what possible aftertime could have kept up the pitch of my sentiment—aftertime either of his or of mine. Blest beyond others, I think as we look back, the admirations, even the fondest (and which indeed were not of their nature fond?) that were not to know to their cost the inevitable test or strain; they are almost the only ones, of the true high pitch, that, without broken edges or other tatters to show, fold themselves away entire and secure, even as rare lengths of precious old stuff, in the scented chest of our savings. So great misadventure have too often known at all events certain of those that were to come to trial. The others are the *residual*, those we must keep when we can, so to be sure at least of a few, sacrificing as many possible mistakes and misproportions as need be to pay but for two or three of them. There could be no mistake about Gus Barker, who threw himself into the fray, that is into the cavalry saddle, as he might into a match at baseball (football being then undreamt of), and my last reminiscence of whom is the sight of him, on a brief leave for a farewell to his Harvard classmates after he had got his commission, crossing with two or three companions the expanse of Harvard Square that faced the old Law School, of which I found myself for that year (1862-63) a singularly alien member. I was afterwards sharply to regret the accident by which I on

that occasion missed speech of him; but my present vision of his charming latent agility, which any motion showed, of his bright-coloured wagging head and of the large gaiety of the young smile that made his handsome teeth shine out, is after all the years but the more happily uneffaced. The point of all which connections, however, is that they somehow managed to make in the parental view no straight links for us with the matter-of-course of college. There were accidents too by the aid of which they failed of this the more easily. It comes to me that, for my own part, I thought of William at the time as having, or rather as so much more than having, already graduated; the effect of contact with his mind and talk, with the free play of his spirit and the irrepressible brush of his humour, couldn't have been greater had he carried off fifty honours. I felt in him such authority, so perpetually quickened a state of intellect and character, that the detail or the literal side of the question never so much as came up for me: I must have made out that to plenty of graduates, or of the graduating, nothing in the nature of such appearances attached. I think of our father moreover as no less affected by a like impression; so extremely, so immensely disposed do I see him to generalise his eldest son's gifts as by the largest, fondest synthesis, and not so much proceed upon them in any one direction as proceed *from* them, as it were, in all.

Little as such a view might have lent itself to application, my brother's searching discovery during the summer of 1861 that his vocation was not "after all" in the least satisfyingly for Art,

took on as a prompt sequel the recognition that it was quite positively and before everything for Science, physical Science, strenuous Science in all its exactitude; with the opportunity again forthcoming to put his freshness of faith to the test. I had presumed to rejoice before at his adoption of the studio life, that offering as well possible contacts for myself; and yet I recall no pang for his tergiversation, there being nothing he mightn't have done at this or at any other moment that I shouldn't have felt as inevitable and found in my sense of his previous age some happy and striking symptom or pledge of. As certain as that he had been all the while "artistic" did it thus appear that he had been at the same time quite otherwise inquiring too—addicted to "experiments" and the consumption of chemicals, the transfusion of mysterious liquids from glass to glass under exposure to lambent flame, the cultivation of stained fingers, the establishment and the transport, in our wanderings, of galvanic batteries, the administration to all he could persuade of electric shocks, the maintenance of marine animals in splashy aquaria, the practice of photography in the room I for a while shared with him at Boulogne, with every stern reality of big cumbrous camera, prolonged exposure, exposure mostly of myself, darkened development, also interminable, and ubiquitous brown blot. Then there had been also the constant, as I fearfully felt it, the finely speculative and boldly disinterested absorption of curious drugs. No livelier remembrance have I of our early years together than this inveteracy, often appalling to

a nature so incurious as mine in *that* direction, of his interest in the "queer" or the incalculable effects of things. There was apparently for him no possible effect whatever that mightn't be more or less rejoiced in as such—all exclusive of its relation to other things than merely knowing. There recurs to me withal the shamelessness of my own indifference—at which I also, none the less, I think, wondered a little; as if by so much as it hadn't been given me to care for visibly provoked or engineered phenomena, by that same amount was I open to those of the mysteriously or insidiously aggressive, the ambushed or suffered sort. Vivid to me in any case is still the sense of how quite shiningly light, as an activity and an appeal, he had seemed to make everything he gave himself to; so that at first, until the freshness of it failed, he flung this iridescent mantle of interest over the then so grey and scant little scene of the Harvard (the Lawrence) Scientific School, where in the course of the months I had had a glimpse or two of him at work. Early in the autumn of 1861 he went up from Newport to Cambridge to enter that institution; in which thin current rather than in the ostensibly more ample began to flow his long connection with Harvard, gathering in time so many affluents. His letters from Cambridge during the next couple of years, many of them before me now, breathe, I think, all the experience the conditions could have begotten at the best; they mark the beginning of those vivacities and varieties of intellectual and moral reaction which were for the rest of his life to be the more immeasurably candid and vivid, the more

numerous above all, and the more interesting and amusing, the closer view one had of him. That of a certainty; yet these familiar pages of youth testify most of all for me perhaps to the forces of amenity and spontaneity, the happy working of all relations, in our family life. In such parts of them as I may cite this will shine sufficiently through—and I shall take for granted thus the interest of small matters that have perhaps but that reflected light to show. It is in a letter to myself, of that September, dated "Drear and Chill Abode," that he appears to have celebrated the first steps of his initiation.

Sweet was your letter and grateful to my eyes. I had gone in a mechanical way to the P.O. not hoping for anything (though "on espère alors qu'on désespère toujours,") and, finding nothing, was turning heavily away when a youth modestly tapped me and, holding out an envelope inscribed in your well-known character, said, "Mr. J., this was in our box!" 'Twas the young Pascoe, the joy of his mother—but the graphic account I read in the letter he gave me of the sorrow of my mother almost made me shed tears on the floor of the P.O. Not that on reflection I should dream–! for reflection shows me a future in which she shall regard my vacation visits as "on the whole" rather troublesome than otherwise; or at least when she shall feel herself as blest in the trouble I spare her when absent as in the glow of pride and happiness she feels at the sight of me when present. But she needn't fear I can ever think of *her* when absent with such equanimity. I oughtn't to "joke on such a serious subject," as

Bobby would say though; for I have had several pangs since being here at the thought of all I have left behind at Newport —especially gushes of feeling about the *place*. I haven't for one minute had the feeling of being at home here. Something in my quarters precludes the possibility of it, though what this is I don't suppose I can describe to you.

As I write now even, writing itself being a cosy cheerful-looking amusement, and an argand gas-burner with a neat green shade merrily singing beside me, I still feel unsettled. I write on a round table in the middle of the room, with a fearful red and black cloth. Before me I see another such-covered table of oblong shape against the wall, capped by a cheap looking-glass and flanked by two windows, curtainless and bleak, whose shades of linen flout the air as the sportive wind impels them. To the left are two other such windows, with a horse-hair sofa between them, and at my back a fifth window and a vast wooden mantel-piece with nothing to relieve its nakedness but a large cast, much plumbago'd, of a bust of Franklin. On my right the Bookcase, imposing and respectable with its empty drawers and with my little array of printed wisdom covering nearly *one* of the shelves. I hear the people breathe as they go past in the street, and the roll and jar of the horse-cars is terrific. I have accordingly engaged the other room from Mrs. Pascoe, with the little sleeping-room upstairs. It looks infinitely more cheerful than this, and if I don't find the grate sufficient I can easily have a Franklin stove put up. But she says the grate will make an oven of it.... John Ropes I met

the other day at Harry Quincy's room, and was very much pleased with him. Don't fail to send on Will Temple's letters to him and to Herbert Mason, which I left in one of the library's mantelpiece jars, to use the Portuguese idiom. Storrow Higginson has been very kind to me, making enquiries about tables etc. We went together this morning to the house of the Curator of the Gray collection of Engravings, which is solemnly to unfold its glories to me to-morrow. He is a most serious stately German gentleman, Mr. Thies by name, fully sensible of the deep vital importance of his treasures and evidently thinking a visit to them a great affair —to *me*. Had I known how great, how tremendous and formal, I hardly think I should have ventured to call. Tom Ward pays me a visit almost every evening. Poor Tom seems a-cold too. His deafness keeps him from making acquaintances. Professor Eliot, at the School, is a fine fellow, I suspect; a man who if he resolves to do a thing won't be prevented. I find analysis very interesting *so far*! The Library has a reading-room, where they take all the magazines; so I shan't want for the Rev. des 2 M. I remain with unalterable sentiments of devotion ever, my dear H., your Big Brother Bill.

This record of further impressions closely and copiously followed.

> Your letter this morning was such a godsend that I hasten to respond a line or two, though I have no business to—for I have a fearful lesson to-morrow and am going to Boston to-night to hear Agassiz lecture (12 lectures on "Methods

in Nat. Hist."), so that I will only tell you that I am very well and my spirits just getting good. Miss Upham's table is much pleasanter than the other. Professor F. J. Child is a great joker—he's a little flaxen-headed boy of about 40. There is a nice old lady boarder, another man of about 50, of aristocratic bearing, who interests me much, and 3 intelligent students. At the other table was no conversation at all; the fellows had that American solemnity, called each other Sir, etc. I cannot tell you, dearest Mother, how your account of your Sunday dinner and of your feelings thereat brought tears to my eyes. Give Father my ardent love and cover with kisses the round fair face of the most kiss-worthy Alice. Then kiss the Aunt till you get tired, and get all the rest of them to kiss *you* till you cry hold enough!

This morning as I was busy over the 10th page of a letter to Wilky in he popped and made my labour of no account. I had intended to go and see him yesterday, but found Edward Emerson and Tom Ward were going, and so thought he would have too much of a good thing. But he walked over this morning with, or rather without them, for he went astray and arrived very hot and dusty. I gave him a bath and took him to dinner, and he is now gone to see Andrew Robeson and E. E. His plump corpusculus looks as always. I write in my new parlour whither I moved yesterday. You have no idea what an improvement it is on the old affair—worth double the cost, and the little bedroom under the roof is perfectly delicious, with a charming outlook on little back yards with trees and pretty old brick walls. The sun is upon *this* room from earliest dawn

till late in the afternoon—a capital thing in winter. I like Miss Upham's very much. Dark "aristocratic" dining-room, with royal cheer. "Fish, roast beef, veal cutlets, pigeons!" says the splendid, tall, noble-looking, white-armed, black-eyed Juno of a handmaid as you sit down. And for dessert a choice of three, *three*, darling Mother, of the most succulent, unctuous (no, not unctuous, unless you imagine a celestial unction without the oil) pie-like confections, always 2 platesful—my eye! She has an admirable chemical, not mechanical, combination of cake and jam and cream which I recommend to Mother if she is ever at a loss; though there is no well-stored pantry like that of good old Kay Street, or if there is it exists not for miserable me.

This chemical analysis is so bewildering at first that I am "muddled and bet" and have to employ almost all my time reading up. Agassiz is evidently a great favourite with his Boston audience and feels it himself. But he's an admirable earnest lecturer, clear as day, and his accent is most fascinating. Jeffries Wyman's lectures on Comp. Anatomy of Verts. promise to be very good; prosy perhaps a little and monotonous, but plain and well-arranged and nourris. Eliot I have not seen much more of; I don't believe he is a *very* accomplished chemist, but can't tell yet. We are only about 12 in the Laboratory, so that we have a very cosy time. I expect to have a winter of "crowded life." I can be as independent as I please, and want to live regardless of the good or bad opinion of every one. I shall have a splendid chance to try, I know, and I know too that the native hue of resolution has never been of very great shade in me hitherto.

I am sure that that feeling is a right one, and I mean to live according to it if I can. If I do so I think I shall turn out all right.

I stopped this letter before tea, when Wilky the rosy-gilled and Frank Higginson came in. I now resume it by the light of a taper and that of the moon. Wilky read H.'s letter and amused me "metch" by his naive interpretation of Mother's most rational request that I should "keep a memorandum of all moneys I receive from Father." He thought it was that she might know exactly what sums her prodigal philosopher really gives out, and that mistrust of his generosity caused it. The phrase has a little sound that way, as H. subtly framed it, I confess!

The first few days, the first week here, I really didn't know what to do with myself or how to fill my time. I felt as if turned out of doors. I then received H.'s and Mother's letters. Never before did I know what mystic depths of rapture lay concealed within that familiar word. Never did the same being look so like two different ones as I going in and out of the P.O. if I bring a letter with me. Gloomily, with despair written on my leaden brow I stalk the street along towards the P.O., women, children and students involuntarily shrinking against the wall as I pass—thus,[4] as if the curse of Cain were stamped upon my front. But when I come out with a letter an immense concourse of people generally attends me to my lodging, attracted by my excited wild gestures and look.

[4] Expressive drawing alas irreproducible.

Christmas being sparely kept in the New England of those days, William passed that of 1861, as a Cambridge letter of the afternoon indicates, without opportunity for a seasonable dash to Newport, but with such compensations, nearer at hand as are here exhibited. Our brother Wilky, I should premise, had been placed with the youngest of us, Bob, for companion, at the "co-educational" school then but a short time previously established by Mr. F. B. Sanborn at Concord, Massachusetts —and of which there will be more to say. "Tom" Ward, already mentioned and who, having left the Concord school shortly before, had just entered Harvard, was quickly to become William's intimate, approved and trusted friend; the diversion of whose patient originality, whose intellectual independence, ability and curiosity from science and free inquiry to hereditary banking—consequent on the position of the paternal Samuel Gray Ward as the representative for many years in the United States of the house of Baring Brothers—he from the first much regretted: the more pertinently doubtless that this companion was of a family "connected" with ours through an intermarriage, Gus Barker, as Mrs. S. G. Ward's nephew, being Tom's first cousin as well as ours, and such links still counting, in that age of comparatively less developed ramifications, when sympathy and intercourse kept pace as it was kept between our pairs of parents.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.