

Self-Reliance

Ralph Waldo Emerson

"Ne te quaesiveris extra."

"Man is his own star; and the soul that can
 Render an honest and a perfect man,
 Commands all light, all influence, all fate;
 Nothing to him falls early or too late.
 Our acts our angels are, or good or ill,
 Our fatal shadows that walk by us still."

Epilogue to Beaumont and Fletcher's Honest Man's Fortune

Cast the bantling on the rocks,
 Suckle him with the she-wolf's teat;
 Wintered with the hawk and fox,
 Power and speed be hands and feet.

I read the other day some verses written by an eminent painter which were original and not conventional. The soul always hears an admonition in such lines, let the subject be what it may. The sentiment that is of more value than any thought they may contain. To believe your own thought, to believe that what is true for you in your private heart is true for all men, -- that is genius. Speak your latent conviction and it shall be the universal sense; for the inmost in due time becomes the outmost,---- and our first thoughts are rendered back to us by the trumpets of the Last Judgment. Familiar as the voice of the mind is to us, we ascribe to Moses, Plato, and Milton, that they set at naught books and traditions, and spake not what men but what they thought. A man should learn to detect and watch that gleam of truth which flashes across his mind from within, more than the lustre of the firmament of bards and sages; for it dismisses without notice his thought, because it is his. In every work of genius we recognize our own thoughts: they come back to us with a certain alienated majesty. Great works of art have a more affecting lesson for us than this. They teach us to abide by our spontaneous impression with good-temper, inflexibility then most when the whole cry of voices is on the other side. Else, to-morrow a strange thought may occur with masterly good sense precisely what we have thought and felt all the time, and we shall be compelled to take with shame our own opinion from another.

There is a time in every man's education when he arrives at the conviction that envy is ignorance; imitation is suicide; that he must take himself for better, for worse, as his portion; that though the universe is full of good, no kernel of nourishing corn can come to him but through his toil bestow him a plot of ground which is given to him to till. The power which resides in him is new in nature, and he knows what that is which he can do, nor does he know until he has tried. Not for nothing one fact, one character, one fact, makes much impression on him, and another none. This sculpture in the memory is without preestablished harmony. The eye was placed where one ray should fall, that it might testify to the particular ray. We but half express ourselves, and are ashamed of that divine idea which each of us represents. It may be safely trusted as proportionate and of good issues, so it be faithfully imparte it to the world. God will not have his work made manifest by cowards. A man is relieved and gay when he has put his soul into his work and done his best; but what he has said or done otherwise, shall give him no peace. [A man may be delivered from his enemies, but not from himself. He may be delivered from his enemies, but not from himself. He may be delivered from his enemies, but not from himself.] deliverance which does not deliver. In the attempt his genius deserts him; no muse befriends; no inspiration comes. He is left to himself.

Trust thyself: every heart vibrates to that iron string. Accept the place the divine providence has assigned to you, the society of your contemporaries, the connection of events. Great men have always done so,

confided themselves childlike to the genius of their age, betraying their perception that the absolute trustworthy was seated at their heart, working through their hands, predominating in all their being. They are now men, and must accept in the highest mind the same transcendent destiny; and not minors or invalids in a protected corner, not cowards fleeing before a revolution, but guides, redeemers, and benefactors, obeying the Almighty effort, and advancing on Chaos and the Dark.

What pretty oracles nature yields us on this text, in the face and behaviour of children, babes, and brutes! That divided and rebel mind, that distrust of a sentiment because our arithmetic has computed strength and means opposed to our purpose, these have not. Their mind being whole, their eye is unconquered, and when we look in their faces, we are disconcerted. Infancy conforms to nobody: it conforms to it, so that one babe commonly makes four or five out of the adults who prattle and play. God has armed youth and puberty and manhood no less with its own piquancy and charm, and makes them enviable and gracious and its claims not to be put by, if it will stand by itself. Do not think the young force, because he cannot speak to you and me. Hark! in the next room his voice is sufficiently clear and emphatic. It seems he knows how to speak to his contemporaries. Bashful or bold, then, he will know how to make us seniors very unnecessary.

The nonchalance of boys who are sure of a dinner, and would disdain as much as a lord to do or say to conciliate one, is the healthy attitude of human nature. A boy is in the parlour what the pit is in the playhouse; independent, irresponsible, looking out from his corner on such people and facts as parties and sentences them on their merits, in the swift, summary way of boys, as good, bad, interesting, eloquent, troublesome. He cumbers himself never about consequences, about interests: he gives an independent, genuine verdict. You must court him: he does not court you. But the man is, as it were, clapped into jail by his consciousness. As soon as he has once acted or spoken with eclat, he is a public person, watched by the sympathy or the hatred of hundreds, whose affections must now enter into account. There is no Lethe for this. Ah, that he could pass again into his neutrality! Who can thus break his pledges, and having observed, observe again from the same unaffected, unbiased, unbribable, uninterested innocence, must always be formidable. He would utter opinions on all passing affairs, which being not private, but necessary, would sink like darts into the ear of men, and put them in fear.

These are the voices which we hear in solitude, but they grow faint and inaudible as we enter into the world. Society everywhere is in conspiracy against the manhood of every one of its members. Society is a joint-stock company, in which the members agree, for the better securing of his bread to each share, to surrender the liberty and culture of the eater. The virtue in most request is conformity. Self-reliance is the virtue in most request is aversion. It loves not realities and creators, but names and customs.

Whoso would be a man must be a nonconformist. He who would gather immortal palms must not be hindered by the name of goodness, but must explore if it be goodness. Nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of your own mind. Absolve you to yourself, and you shall have the suffrage of the world. I remember an answer which when quite young I was prompted to make to a valued adviser, who would importune me with the dear old doctrines of the church. On my saying, What have I to do with the sacredness of traditions, if I live wholly from within? my friend suggested, -- "But these impulses come from below, not from above." I replied, "They do not seem to me to be such; but if I am the Devil, then the Devil will live then from the Devil." No law can be sacred to me but that of my nature. Good and bad are names very readily transferable to that or this; the only right is what is after my constitution, the only wrong what is against it. A man is to carry himself in the presence of all opposition, as if every thing were titular and ephemeral but he. I am ashamed to think how easily we capitulate to badges and names and societies and dead institutions. Every decent and well-spoken individual affects and sways me more right. I ought to go upright and vital, and speak the rude truth in all ways. If malice and vanity we are to be the coat of philanthropy, shall that pass? If an angry bigot assumes this bountiful cause of Abolition, and comes to me with his last news from Barbadoes, why should I not say to him, 'Go love thy infant; love thy nigger; be good-natured and modest: have that grace; and never varnish your hard, uncharitable heart with this incredible tenderness for black folk a thousand miles off. Thy love afar is spite at home.' and graceless would be such greeting, but truth is handsomer than the affectation of love. Your go

must have some edge to it, -- else it is none. The doctrine of hatred must be preached as the count of the doctrine of love when that pules and whines. I shun father and mother and wife and brother my genius calls me. I would write on the lintels of the door-post, *Whim*. I hope it is somewhat better at last, but we cannot spend the day in explanation. Expect me not to show cause why I seal exclude company. Then, again, do not tell me, as a good man did to-day, of my obligation to put a man in good situations. Are they *my* poor? I tell thee, thou foolish philanthropist, that I grudge the the dime, the cent, I give to such men as do not belong to me and to whom I do not belong. There of persons to whom by all spiritual affinity I am bought and sold; for them I will go to prison, if not but your miscellaneous popular charities; the education at college of fools; the building of meeting to the vain end to which many now stand; alms to sots; and the thousandfold Relief Societies; -- I confess with shame I sometimes succumb and give the dollar, it is a wicked dollar which by and I have the manhood to withhold.

A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds, adored by little statesmen and philosophers divines. With consistency a great soul has simply nothing to do. He may as well concern himself a shadow on the wall. Speak what you think now in hard words, and to-morrow speak what to-morrow in hard words again, though it contradict every thing you said to-day. -- 'Ah, so you shall be sure misunderstood.' -- Is it so bad, then, to be misunderstood? Pythagoras was misunderstood, and So and Jesus, and Luther, and Copernicus, and Galileo, and Newton, and every pure and wise spirit I took flesh. To be great is to be misunderstood.

I suppose no man can violate his nature. All the sallies of his will are rounded in by the law of his the inequalities of Andes and Himmaleh are insignificant in the curve of the sphere. Nor does it make you gauge and try him. A character is like an acrostic or Alexandrian stanza; -- read it forward, back or across, it still spells the same thing. In this pleasing, contrite wood-life which God allows me, I record day by day my honest thought without prospect or retrospect, and, I cannot doubt, it will be symmetrical, though I mean it not, and see it not. My book should smell of pines and resound with of insects. The swallow over my window should interweave that thread or straw he carries in his web also. We pass for what we are. Character teaches above our wills. Men imagine that they communicate their virtue or vice only by overt actions, and do not see that virtue or vice emit a breath every moment.

There will be an agreement in whatever variety of actions, so they be each honest and natural in themselves. For of one will, the actions will be harmonious, however unlike they seem. These varieties are lost at a little distance, at a little height of thought. One tendency unites them all. The voyage of the world is a zigzag line of a hundred tacks. See the line from a sufficient distance, and it straightens itself to an average tendency. Your genuine action will explain itself, and will explain your other genuine actions. Conformity explains nothing. Act singly, and what you have already done singly will justify you in the world. Greatness appeals to the future. If I can be firm enough to-day to do right, and scorn eyes, I must be so much right before as to defend me now. Be it how it will, do right now. Always scorn appears, but you always may. The force of character is cumulative. All the foregone days of virtue work their way in this. What makes the majesty of the heroes of the senate and the field, which so fills the imagination, is the consciousness of a train of great days and victories behind. They shed an united light on the伟大 actor. He is attended as by a visible escort of angels. That is it which throws thunder into Chatham and dignity into Washington's port, and America into Adams's eye. Honor is venerable to us because it is ephemeral. It is always ancient virtue. We worship it to-day because it is not of to-day. We love it because it is not a trap for our love and homage, but is self-dependent, self-derived, and of an old immaculate pedigree, even if shown in a young person.

I hope in these days we have heard the last of conformity and consistency. Let the words be gazetted as ridiculous henceforward. Instead of the gong for dinner, let us hear a whistle from the Spartan fife never bow and apologize more. A great man is coming to eat at my house. I do not wish to please him, but I wish that he should wish to please me. I will stand here for humanity, and though I would make it appear, it would make it true. Let us affront and reprimand the smooth mediocrity and squalid contentment

times, and hurl in the face of custom, and trade, and office, the fact which is the upshot of all history; there is a great responsible Thinker and Actor working wherever a man works; that a true man believes no other time or place, but is the centre of things. Where he is, there is nature. He measures you, a man, and all events. Ordinarily, every body in society reminds us of somewhat else, or of some other person. Character, reality, reminds you of nothing else; it takes place of the whole creation. The man may be so much, that he must make all circumstances indifferent. Every true man is a cause, a country, an age; requires infinite spaces and numbers and time fully to accomplish his design; -- and posterity will follow his steps as a train of clients. A man like Caesar is born, and for ages after we have a Roman Empire; Christ is born, and millions of minds so grow and cleave to his genius, that he is confounded with the possible and the possible of man. An institution is the lengthened shadow of one man; as, Monachism, of St. Antony; the Reformation, of Luther; Quakerism, of Fox; Methodism, of Wesley; Abolition, of Clapton Scipio, Milton called "the height of Rome"; and all history resolves itself very easily into the biography of a few stout and earnest persons.

Let a man then know his worth, and keep things under his feet. Let him not peep or steal, or skulk down with the air of a charity-boy, a bastard, or an interloper, in the world which exists for him. Even a man in the street, finding no worth in himself which corresponds to the force which built a tower or sculptured a marble god, feels poor when he looks on these. To him a palace, a statue, or a costly jewel is an alien and forbidding air, much like a gay equipage, and seem to say like that, 'Who are you, Sir?' They all are his, suitors for his notice, petitioners to his faculties that they will come out and take possession. The picture waits for my verdict: it is not to command me, but I am to settle its claims. That popular fable of the sot who was picked up dead drunk in the street, carried to the duke's house, washed and dressed and laid in the duke's bed, and, on his waking, treated with all obsequious ceremony like the duke, and assured that he had been insane, owes its popularity to the fact, that it symbolizes the state of man, who is in the world a sort of sot, but now and then wakes up, exercises his reason, and finds himself a true prince.

Our reading is mendicant and sycophantic. In history, our imagination plays us false. Kingdom and lordship, power and estate, are a gaudier vocabulary than private John and Edward in a small house. Common day's work; but the things of life are the same to both; the sum total of both is the same. Is this deference to Alfred, and Scanderbeg, and Gustavus? Suppose they were virtuous; did they practice virtue? As great a stake depends on your private act to-day, as followed their public and renowned acts. When private men shall act with original views, the lustre will be transferred from the actions of kings to those of gentlemen.

The world has been instructed by its kings, who have so magnetized the eyes of nations. It has been by this colossal symbol the mutual reverence that is due from man to man. The joyful loyalty with which men have everywhere suffered the king, the noble, or the great proprietor to walk among them by his own, make his own scale of men and things, and reverse theirs, pay for benefits not with money, but with honor, and represent the law in his person, was the hieroglyphic by which they obscurely signified their consciousness of their own right and comeliness, the right of every man.

The magnetism which all original action exerts is explained when we inquire the reason of self-trust. What is the Trustee? What is the aboriginal Self, on which a universal reliance may be grounded? What is the nature and power of that science-baffling star, without parallax, without calculable elements, which casts a ray of beauty even into trivial and impure actions, if the least mark of independence appear? This leads us to that source, at once the essence of genius, of virtue, and of life, which we call Spontaneous Instinct. We denote this primary wisdom as Intuition, whilst all later teachings are tutions. In that force, the last fact behind which analysis cannot go, all things find their common origin. For, the self-being which in calm hours rises, we know not how, in the soul, is not diverse from things, from spiritual light, from time, from man, but one with them, and proceeds obviously from the same source whence life and being also proceed. We first share the life by which things exist, and afterwards see them in their appearances in nature, and forget that we have shared their cause. Here is the fountain of action and of thought. Here are the lungs of that inspiration which giveth man wisdom, and which cannot be denied.

without impiety and atheism. We lie in the lap of immense intelligence, which makes us receivers of truth and organs of its activity. When we discern justice, when we discern truth, we do nothing of ourselves, but allow a passage to its beams. If we ask whence this comes, if we seek to pry into the causes, all philosophy is at fault. Its presence or its absence is all we can affirm. Every man discriminates between the voluntary acts of his mind, and his involuntary perceptions, and knows his involuntary perceptions a perfect faith is due. He may err in the expression of them, but he knows these things are so, like day and night, not to be disputed. My wilful actions and acquisitions are but roving; -- the idlest reverie, the faintest native emotion, command my curiosity and respect. Though people contradict as readily the statement of perceptions as of opinions, or rather much more readily they do not distinguish between perception and notion. They fancy that I choose to see this or that. But perception is not whimsical, but fatal. If I see a trait, my children will see it after me, and in course of time, all mankind, -- although it may chance that no one has seen it before me. For my perception is much a fact as the sun.

The relations of the soul to the divine spirit are so pure, that it is profane to seek to interpose helps; be that when God speaketh he should communicate, not one thing, but all things; should fill the world with his voice; should scatter forth light, nature, time, souls, from the centre of the present thought; and date and new create the whole. Whenever a mind is simple, and receives a divine wisdom, old things fall away, -- means, teachers, texts, temples fall; it lives now, and absorbs past and future into the present. All things are made sacred by relation to it, -- one as much as another. All things are dissolved to the centre by their cause, and, in the universal miracle, petty and particular miracles disappear. If, then, a man claims to know and speak of God, and carries you backward to the phraseology of some old mouldered nation in another country, in another world, believe him not. Is the acorn better than the nut which is its fulness and completion? Is the parent better than the child into whom he has cast his seed of being? Whence, then, this worship of the past? The centuries are conspirators against the sanity and authority of the soul. Time and space are but physiological colors which the eye makes, but the soul sees the light; where it is, is day; where it was, is night; and history is an impertinence and an injury, if it be nothing more than a cheerful apologue or parable of my being and becoming.

Man is timid and apologetic; he is no longer upright; he dares not say 'I think,' 'I am,' but quotes sages or sage. He is ashamed before the blade of grass or the blowing rose. These roses under my window have no reference to former roses or to better ones; they are for what they are; they exist with God to-day, and there is no time to them. There is simply the rose; it is perfect in every moment of its existence. Before it has burst, its whole life acts; in the full-blown flower there is no more; in the leafless root there is nothing. Its nature is satisfied, and it satisfies nature, in all moments alike. But man postpones or remembers. He does not live in the present, but with reverted eye laments the past, or, heedless of the riches that surround him, stands on tiptoe to foresee the future. He cannot be happy and strong until he too lives with the present, above time.

This should be plain enough. Yet see what strong intellects dare not yet hear God himself, unless I tell them that I know not what David, or Jeremiah, or Paul. We shall not always set so great a value on a few texts, on a few lives. We are like children who repeat by rote the sentences of grandames and, as they grow older, of the men of talents and character they chance to see, -- painfully recollecting the exact words they spoke; afterwards, when they come into the point of view which those had who uttered these sayings, they understand them, and are willing to let the words go; for, at any time, they can repeat words as good when occasion comes. If we live truly, we shall see truly. It is as easy for the strong man to be strong, as it is for the weak to be weak. When we have new perception, we shall gladly disburden our memory of its hoarded treasures as old rubbish. When a man lives with God, his voice shall be as the murmur of the brook and the rustle of the corn.

And now at last the highest truth on this subject remains unsaid; probably cannot be said; for all that is the far-off remembering of the intuition. That thought, by what I can now nearest approach to say this. When good is near you, when you have life in yourself, it is not by any known or accustomed way that you shall not discern the foot-prints of any other; you shall not see the face of man; you shall not know

name;---- the way, the thought, the good, shall be wholly strange and new. It shall exclude example experience. You take the way from man, not to man. All persons that ever existed are its forgotten ministers. Fear and hope are alike beneath it. There is somewhat low even in hope. In the hour of there is nothing that can be called gratitude, nor properly joy. The soul raised over passion behold and eternal causation, perceives the self-existence of Truth and Right, and calms itself with knowi all things go well. Vast spaces of nature, the Atlantic Ocean, the South Sea, -- long intervals of tin centuries, -- are of no account. This which I think and feel underlay every former state of life and circumstances, as it does underlie my present, and what is called life, and what is called death.

Life only avails, not the having lived. Power ceases in the instant of repose; it resides in the momen transition from a past to a new state, in the shooting of the gulf, in the darting to an aim. This one world hates, that the soul *becomes*; for that for ever degrades the past, turns all riches to poverty, & reputation to a shame, confounds the saint with the rogue, shoves Jesus and Judas equally aside. V do we prize of self-reliance? Inasmuch as the soul is present, there will be power not confident bu To talk of reliance is a poor external way of speaking. Speak rather of that which relies, because it and is. Who has more obedience than I masters me, though he should not raise his finger. Round & revolve by the gravitation of spirits. We fancy it rhetoric, when we speak of eminent virtue. We do see that virtue is Height, and that a man or a company of men, plastic and permeable to principles law of nature must overpower and ride all cities, nations, kings, rich men, poets, who are not.

This is the ultimate fact which we so quickly reach on this, as on every topic, the resolution of all ever-blessed ONE. Self-existence is the attribute of the Supreme Cause, and it constitutes the mea good by the degree in which it enters into all lower forms. All things real are so by so much virtue contain. Commerce, husbandry, hunting, whaling, war, eloquence, personal weight, are somewhat engage my respect as examples of its presence and impure action. I see the same law working in r conservation and growth. Power is in nature the essential measure of right. Nature suffers nothing in her kingdoms which cannot help itself. The genesis and maturation of a planet, its poise and orl bended tree recovering itself from the strong wind, the vital resources of every animal and vegetal demonstrations of the self-sufficing, and therefore self-relying soul.

Thus all concentrates: let us not rove; let us sit at home with the cause. Let us stun and astonish th intruding rabble of men and books and institutions, by a simple declaration of the divine fact. Bid invaders take the shoes from off their feet, for God is here within. Let our simplicity judge them, & docility to our own law demonstrate the poverty of nature and fortune beside our native riches.

But now we are a mob. Man does not stand in awe of man, nor is his genius admonished to stay at put itself in communication with the internal ocean, but it goes abroad to beg a cup of water of the other men. We must go alone. I like the silent church before the service begins, better than any pre How far off, how cool, how chaste the persons look, begirt each one with a precinct or sanctuary! always sit. Why should we assume the faults of our friend, or wife, or father, or child, because the around our hearth, or are said to have the same blood? All men have my blood, and I have all mer for that will I adopt their petulance or folly, even to the extent of being ashamed of it. But your isc must not be mechanical, but spiritual, that is, must be elevation. At times the whole world seems t conspiracy to importune you with emphatic trifles. Friend, client, child, sickness, fear, want, chari knock at once at thy closet door, and say, -- 'Come out unto us.' But keep thy state; come not into confusion. The power men possess to annoy me, I give them by a weak curiosity. No man can cor me but through my act. "What we love that we have, but by desire we bereave ourselves of the lov

If we cannot at once rise to the sanctities of obedience and faith, let us at least resist our temptation to enter into the state of war, and wake Thor and Woden, courage and constancy, in our Saxon breast to be done in our smooth times by speaking the truth. Check this lying hospitality and lying affect no longer to the expectation of these deceived and deceiving people with whom we converse. Say O father, O mother, O wife, O brother, O friend, I have lived with you after appearances hitherto. Henceforward I am the truth's. Be it known unto you that henceforward I obey no law less than th law. I will have no covenants but proximities. I shall endeavour to nourish my parents, to support

family, to be the chaste husband of one wife, -- but these relations I must fill after a new and unprincipled way. I appeal from your customs. I must be myself. I cannot break myself any longer for you, or you can love me for what I am, we shall be the happier. If you cannot, I will still seek to deserve to be loved. I will not hide my tastes or aversions. I will so trust that what is deep is holy, that I will do before the sun and moon whatever only rejoices me, and the heart appoints. If you are noble, I will be noble; if you are not, I will not hurt you and myself by hypocritical attentions. If you are true, but not in the same truth with me, cleave to your companions; I will seek my own. I do this not selfishly, but humbly. It is alike your interest, and mine, and all men's, however long we have dwelt in lies, to live in truth. Does this sound harsh to-day? You will soon love what is dictated by your nature as well as mine, for we follow the truth, it will bring us out safe at last. -- But so you may give these friends pain. Yes, we cannot sell my liberty and my power, to save their sensibility. Besides, all persons have their own reason, when they look out into the region of absolute truth; then will they justify me, and do the right thing.

The populace think that your rejection of popular standards is a rejection of all standard, and mere antinomianism; and the bold sensualist will use the name of philosophy to gild his crimes. But the consciousness abides. There are two confessionals, in one or the other of which we must be shriven. You may fulfil your round of duties by clearing yourself in the *direct*, or in the *reflex* way. Consider whether you have satisfied your relations to father, mother, cousin, neighbour, town, cat, and dog; whether these can upbraid you. But I may also neglect this reflex standard, and absolve me to myself. I have my own stern claims and perfect circle. It denies the name of duty to many offices that are called duties. I can discharge its debts, it enables me to dispense with the popular code. If any one imagines that I am lax, let him keep its commandment one day.

And truly it demands something godlike in him who has cast off the common motives of humanity, and ventured to trust himself for a taskmaster. High be his heart, faithful his will, clear his sight, that he may good earnest be doctrine, society, law, to himself, that a simple purpose may be to him as strong a necessity is to others!

If any man consider the present aspects of what is called by distinction *society*, he will see the need of new ethics. The sinew and heart of man seem to be drawn out, and we are become timorous, desponding, and whimperers. We are afraid of truth, afraid of fortune, afraid of death, and afraid of each other. Our society yields no great and perfect persons. We want men and women who shall renovate life and our society, but we see that most natures are insolvent, cannot satisfy their own wants, have an ambition out of proportion to their practical force, and do lean and beg day and night continually. Our housekeepers, our mendicant, our arts, our occupations, our marriages, our religion, we have not chosen, but society has chosen for us. We are parlour soldiers. We shun the rugged battle of fate, where strength is born.

If our young men miscarry in their first enterprises, they lose all heart. If the young merchant fails, he is ruined. If the finest genius studies at one of our colleges, and is not installed in an office within a year afterwards in the cities or suburbs of Boston or New York, it seems to his friends and to himself that he is right in being disheartened, and in complaining the rest of his life. A sturdy lad from New Hampshire or Vermont, who in turn tries all the professions, who *teams it, farms it, peddles*, keeps a school, edits a newspaper, goes to Congress, buys a township, and so forth, in successive years, and always falls, falls on his feet, is worth a hundred of these city dolls. He walks abreast with his days, and feels no shame in not 'studying a profession,' for he does not postpone his life, but lives already. He has no chance, but a hundred chances. Let a Stoic open the resources of man, and tell men they are not like willows, but can and must detach themselves; that with the exercise of self-trust, new powers shall be given. Let him tell them that a man is the word made flesh, born to shed healing to the nations, that he should be ashamed of compassion, and that the moment he acts from himself, tossing the laws, the books, the idolatries, and the world out of the window, we pity him no more, but thank and revere him, -- and that teacher shall restore man to splendor, and make his name dear to all history.

It is easy to see that a greater self-reliance must work a revolution in all the offices and relations of man; in their religion; in their education; in their pursuits; their modes of living; their association; in their

in their speculative views.

1. In what prayers do men allow themselves! That which they call a holy office is not so much as manly. Prayer looks abroad and asks for some foreign addition to come through some foreign virtue loses itself in endless mazes of natural and supernatural, and mediatorial and miraculous. Prayer that a particular commodity, -- any thing less than all good, -- is vicious. Prayer is the contemplation of life from the highest point of view. It is the soliloquy of a beholding and jubilant soul. It is the soul of God pronouncing his works good. But prayer as a means to effect a private end is meanness and the soul supposes dualism and not unity in nature and consciousness. As soon as the man is at one with God he is not beg. He will then see prayer in all action. The prayer of the farmer kneeling in his field to weep over the prayer of the rower kneeling with the stroke of his oar, are true prayers heard throughout nature, that cheap ends. Caratach, in Fletcher's Bonduca, when admonished to inquire the mind of the god Aun replies, --

"His hidden meaning lies in our endeavours;
Our valors are our best gods."

Another sort of false prayers are our regrets. Discontent is the want of self-reliance: it is infirmity. Regret calamities, if you can thereby help the sufferer; if not, attend your own work, and already the soul begins to be repaired. Our sympathy is just as base. We come to them who weep foolishly, and sit and cry for company, instead of imparting to them truth and health in rough electric shocks, putting the soul more in communication with their own reason. The secret of fortune is joy in our hands. Welcome evermore to gods and men is the self-helping man. For him all doors are flung wide: him all tongues crown, all honors crown, all eyes follow with desire. Our love goes out to him and embraces him, because he does not need it. We solicitously and apologetically caress and celebrate him, because he held on his way scorns our disapprobation. The gods love him because men hated him. "To the persevering mortal Zoroaster, "the blessed Immortals are swift."

As men's prayers are a disease of the will, so are their creeds a disease of the intellect. They say we foolish Israelites, 'Let not God speak to us, lest we die. Speak thou, speak any man with us, and we will obey.' Everywhere I am hindered of meeting God in my brother, because he has shut his own temple and recites fables merely of his brother's, or his brother's brother's God. Every new mind is a new classification. If it prove a mind of uncommon activity and power, a Locke, a Lavoisier, a Hutton, a Bentham, a Fourier, it imposes its classification on other men, and lo! a new system. In proportion to the depth of the thought, and so to the number of the objects it touches and brings within reach of the soul his complacency. But chiefly is this apparent in creeds and churches, which are also classifications of powerful minds acting on the elemental thought of duty, and man's relation to the Highest. Such is Calvinism, Quakerism, Swedenborgism. The pupil takes the same delight in subordinating every soul to the new terminology, as a girl who has just learned botany in seeing a new earth and new seasons. It will happen for a time, that the pupil will find his intellectual power has grown by the study of his master's mind. But in all unbalanced minds, the classification is idolized, passes for the end, and runs on speedily exhaustible means, so that the walls of the system blend to their eye in the remote horizon, the walls of the universe; the luminaries of heaven seem to them hung on the arch their master built. I cannot imagine how you aliens have any right to see, -- how you can see; 'It must be somehow that you stole the light from us.' They do not yet perceive, that light, unsystematic, indomitable, will break through the cabin, even into theirs. Let them chirp awhile and call it their own. If they are honest and do well, their neat new pinfold will be too strait and low, will crack, will lean, will rot and vanish, and the light, all young and joyful, million-orbed, million-colored, will beam over the universe as on the first morning.

2. It is for want of self-culture that the superstition of Travelling, whose idols are Italy, England, France, retains its fascination for all educated Americans. They who made England, Italy, or Greece venerable in the imagination did so by sticking fast where they were, like an axis of the earth. In manly hours, that duty is our place. The soul is no traveller; the wise man stays at home, and when his necessities call him, on any occasion call him from his house, or into foreign lands, he is at home still, and shall

men sensible by the expression of his countenance, that he goes the missionary of wisdom and virtue visits cities and men like a sovereign, and not like an interloper or a valet.

I have no churlish objection to the circumnavigation of the globe, for the purposes of art, of study, benevolence, so that the man is first domesticated, or does not go abroad with the hope of finding somewhat greater than he knows. He who travels to be amused, or to get somewhat which he does not carry, travels away from himself, and grows old even in youth among old things. In Thebes, in Pisa, the will and mind have become old and dilapidated as they. He carries ruins to ruins.

Travelling is a fool's paradise. Our first journeys discover to us the indifference of places. At home that at Naples, at Rome, I can be intoxicated with beauty, and lose my sadness. I pack my trunk, enter my friends, embark on the sea, and at last wake up in Naples, and there beside me is the stern fact itself, unrelenting, identical, that I fled from. I seek the Vatican, and the palaces. I affect to be intoxicated with sights and suggestions, but I am not intoxicated. My giant goes with me wherever I go.

3. But the rage of travelling is a symptom of a deeper unsoundness affecting the whole intellectuality. The intellect is vagabond, and our system of education fosters restlessness. Our minds travel when our bodies are forced to stay at home. We imitate; and what is imitation but the travelling of the mind? Our houses are built with foreign taste; our shelves are garnished with foreign ornaments; our opinions, our tastes, our faculties, lean, and follow the Past and the Distant. The soul created the arts wherever it flourished. It was in his own mind that the artist sought his model. It was an application of his own mind to the thing to be done and the conditions to be observed. And why need we copy the Doric or the Ionic? Beauty, convenience, grandeur of thought, and quaint expression are as near to us as to any. The American artist will study with hope and love the precise thing to be done by him, considering the climate, the soil, the length of the day, the wants of the people, the habit and form of the government. He will create a house in which all these will find themselves fitted, and taste and sentiment will be satisfied also.

Insist on yourself; never imitate. Your own gift you can present every moment with the cumulative force of a whole life's cultivation; but of the adopted talent of another, you have only an extemporaneous possession. That which each can do best, none but his Maker can teach him. No man yet knows what he can do, nor can, till that person has exhibited it. Where is the master who could have taught Shakespeare? There is not the master who could have instructed Franklin, or Washington, or Bacon, or Newton? Every great man is unique. The Scipionism of Scipio is precisely that part he could not borrow. Shakespeare will never be equalled by the study of Shakespeare. Do that which is assigned you, and you cannot hope too much or dare too much. There is at this moment for you an utterance brave and grand as that of the colossal chisel of Phidias, or the trowel of the Egyptians, or the pen of Moses, or Dante, but different from all these. Not possible for any soul all rich, all eloquent, with thousand-cloven tongue, to deign to repeat itself; but if you can hear these patriarchs say, surely you can reply to them in the same pitch of voice; for the ear and the tongue are two organs of one nature. Abide in the simple and noble regions of thy life, obey thy heart, and thou will reproduce the Foreworld again.

4. As our Religion, our Education, our Art look abroad, so does our spirit of society. All men plunge themselves on the improvement of society, and no man improves.

Society never advances. It recedes as fast on one side as it gains on the other. It undergoes continual changes; it is barbarous, it is civilized, it is christianized, it is rich, it is scientific; but this change is not amelioration. For every thing that is given, something is taken. Society acquires new arts, and loses old instincts. What a contrast between the well-clad, reading, writing, thinking American, with a watch, a pencil, and a bill of exchange in his pocket, and the naked New Zealander, whose property is a club, a spear, a mat, and an undivided twentieth of a shed to sleep under! But compare the health of the two, and you shall see that the white man has lost his aboriginal strength. If the traveller tell us truly, still savage with a broad axe, and in a day or two the flesh shall unite and heal as if you struck the blow on the pitch, and the same blow shall send the white to his grave.

The civilized man has built a coach, but has lost the use of his feet. He is supported on crutches, b so much support of muscle. He has a fine Geneva watch, but he fails of the skill to tell the hour by A Greenwich nautical almanac he has, and so being sure of the information when he wants it, the the street does not know a star in the sky. The solstice he does not observe; the equinox he knows and the whole bright calendar of the year is without a dial in his mind. His note-books impair his his libraries overload his wit; the insurance-office increases the number of accidents; and it may b question whether machinery does not encumber; whether we have not lost by refinement some en Christianity entrenched in establishments and forms, some vigor of wild virtue. For every Stoic w Stoic; but in Christendom where is the Christian?

There is no more deviation in the moral standard than in the standard of height or bulk. No greater now than ever were. A singular equality may be observed between the great men of the first and o ages; nor can all the science, art, religion, and philosophy of the nineteenth century avail to educate men than Plutarch's heroes, three or four and twenty centuries ago. Not in time is the race progres Phocion, Socrates, Anaxagoras, Diogenes, are great men, but they leave no class. He who is really class will not be called by their name, but will be his own man, and, in his turn, the founder of a s arts and inventions of each period are only its costume, and do not invigorate men. The harm of th improved machinery may compensate its good. Hudson and Behring accomplished so much in the fishing-boats, as to astonish Parry and Franklin, whose equipment exhausted the resources of scie art. Galileo, with an opera-glass, discovered a more splendid series of celestial phenomena than ai since. Columbus found the New World in an undocked boat. It is curious to see the periodical dist perishing of means and machinery, which were introduced with loud laudation a few years or cent before. The great genius returns to essential man. We reckoned the improvements of the art of war the triumphs of science, and yet Napoleon conquered Europe by the bivouac, which consisted of f back on naked valor, and disencumbering it of all aids. The Emperor held it impossible to make a army, says Las Casas, "without abolishing our arms, magazines, commissaries, and carriages, until imitation of the Roman custom, the soldier should receive his supply of corn, grind it in his hand- bake his bread himself."

Society is a wave. The wave moves onward, but the water of which it is composed does not. The s particle does not rise from the valley to the ridge. Its unity is only phenomenal. The persons who i nation to-day, next year die, and their experience with them.

And so the reliance on Property, including the reliance on governments which protect it, is the wa reliance. Men have looked away from themselves and at things so long, that they have come to es religious, learned, and civil institutions as guards of property, and they deprecate assaults on these they feel them to be assaults on property. They measure their esteem of each other by what each h not by what each is. But a cultivated man becomes ashamed of his property, out of new respect fo nature. Especially he hates what he has, if he see that it is accidental, -- came to him by inheritanc or crime; then he feels that it is not having; it does not belong to him, has no root in him, and mere there, because no revolution or no robber takes it away. But that which a man is does always by no acquire, and what the man acquires is living property, which does not wait the beck of rulers, or n revolutions, or fire, or storm, or bankruptcies, but perpetually renews itself wherever the man brea "Thy lot or portion of life," said the Caliph Ali, "is seeking after thee; therefore be at rest from see it." Our dependence on these foreign goods leads us to our slavish respect for numbers. The politi meet in numerous conventions; the greater the concourse, and with each new uproar of announcer delegation from Essex! The Democrats from New Hampshire! The Whigs of Maine! the young pa himself stronger than before by a new thousand of eyes and arms. In like manner the reformers su conventions, and vote and resolve in multitude. Not so, O friends! will the God deign to enter and you, but by a method precisely the reverse. It is only as a man puts off all foreign support, and sta that I see him to be strong and to prevail. He is weaker by every recruit to his banner. Is not a mar than a town? Ask nothing of men, and in the endless mutation, thou only firm column must preser appear the upholder of all that surrounds thee. He who knows that power is inborn, that he is weal he has looked for good out of him and elsewhere, and so perceiving, throws himself unhesitatingl

thought, instantly rights himself, stands in the erect position, commands his limbs, works miracles man who stands on his feet is stronger than a man who stands on his head.

So use all that is called Fortune. Most men gamble with her, and gain all, and lose all, as her wheel turns. But do thou leave as unlawful these winnings, and deal with Cause and Effect, the chancellors of the Will work and acquire, and thou hast chained the wheel of Chance, and shalt sit hereafter out of her reach from her rotations. A political victory, a rise of rents, the recovery of your sick, or the return of your friend, or some other favorable event, raises your spirits, and you think good days are preparing for you. Do not believe it. Nothing can bring you peace but yourself. Nothing can bring you peace but the love of principles.

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