CHAPTER VI. - 1869-1885.

Edinburgh - Colleagues - FARRAGO VITAE - I. The Family Circle - Fleeming and his Sons - Highland Life - The Cruise of the Steam Launch - Summer in Styria - Rustic Manners - II. The Drama - Private Theatricals - III. Sanitary Associations - The Phonograph - IV. Fleeming's Acquaintance with a Student - His late Maturity of Mind - Religion and Morality - His Love of Heroism - Taste in Literature - V. His Talk - His late Popularity - Letter from M. Trelat.

THE remaining external incidents of Fleeming's life, pleasures, honours, fresh interests, new friends, are not such as will bear to be told at any length or in the temporal order. And it is now time to lay narration by, and to look at the man he was and the life he lived, more largely.

Edinburgh, which was thenceforth to be his home, is a metropolitan small town; where college professors and the lawyers of the Parliament House give the tone, and persons of leisure, attracted by educational advantages, make up much of the bulk of society. Not, therefore, an unlettered place, yet not pedantic, Edinburgh will compare favourably with much larger cities. A hard and

disputatious element has been commented on by strangers: it would not touch Fleeming, who was himself regarded, even in this metropolis of disputation, as a thorny table-mate. To golf unhappily he did not take, and golf is a cardinal virtue in the city of the winds. Nor did he become an archer of the Queen's Body-Guard, which is the Chiltern Hundreds of the distasted golfer. He did not even frequent the Evening Club, where his colleague Tait (in my day) was so punctual and so genial. So that in some ways he stood outside of the lighter and kindlier life of his new home. I should not like to say that he was generally popular; but there as elsewhere, those who knew him well enough to love him, loved him well. And he, upon his side, liked a place where a dinner party was not of necessity unintellectual, and where men stood up to him in argument.

The presence of his old classmate, Tait, was one of his early attractions to the chair; and now that Fleeming is gone again, Tait still remains, ruling and really teaching his great classes. Sir Robert Christison was an old friend of his mother's; Sir Alexander Grant, Kelland, and Sellar, were new acquaintances and highly valued; and these too, all but the last, have been taken from their friends and labours. Death has been busy in the Senatus. I will speak elsewhere of Fleeming's demeanour to his students; and it will be enough to add here that his relations with his colleagues in general were pleasant to himself.

Edinburgh, then, with its society, its university work, its delightful scenery, and its skating in the winter, was thenceforth his base of operations. But he shot meanwhile erratic in many directions: twice to America, as we have seen, on telegraph voyages; continually to London on business; often to Paris; year after year to the Highlands to shoot, to fish, to learn reels and Gaelic, to make the acquaintance and fall in love with the character of Highlanders; and once to Styria, to hunt chamois and dance with peasant maidens. All the while, he was pursuing the course of his electrical studies, making fresh inventions, taking up the phonograph, filled with theories of graphic representation; reading, writing, publishing, founding sanitary associations, interested in technical education, investigating the laws of metre, drawing, acting, directing private theatricals, going a long way to see an actor - a long way to see a picture; in the very bubble of the tideway of contemporary interests. And all the while he was busied about his father and mother, his wife, and in particular his sons; anxiously watching, anxiously guiding these, and plunging with his whole fund of youthfulness into their sports and interests. And all the while he was himself maturing - not in character or body, for these remained young - but in the stocked mind, in the tolerant knowledge of life and man, in pious acceptance of the universe. Here is a farrago for a chapter: here is a world of interests and activities, human, artistic, social, scientific, at each of which he sprang with impetuous pleasure, on each of which he squandered energy, the arrow drawn to the head,

the whole intensity of his spirit bent, for the moment, on the momentary purpose. It was this that lent such unusual interest to his society, so that no friend of his can forget that figure of Fleeming coming charged with some new discovery: it is this that makes his character so difficult to represent. Our fathers, upon some difficult theme, would invoke the Muse; I can but appeal to the imagination of the reader. When I dwell upon some one thing, he must bear in mind it was only one of a score; that the unweariable brain was teeming at the very time with other thoughts; that the good heart had left no kind duty forgotten.

I.

In Edinburgh, for a considerable time, Fleeming's family, to three generations, was united: Mr. and Mrs. Austin at Hailes, Captain and Mrs. Jenkin in the suburb of Merchiston, Fleeming himself in the city. It is not every family that could risk with safety such close interdomestic dealings; but in this also Fleeming was particularly favoured. Even the two extremes, Mr. Austin and the Captain, drew together. It is pleasant to find that each of the old gentlemen set a high value on the good looks of the other, doubtless also on his own; and a fine picture they made as they walked the green terrace at Hailes, conversing by the hour. What they talked of is still a mystery to those who knew them; but Mr. Austin always declared that on these occasions he learned much. To both of these families of elders, due service was paid of attention; to both, Fleeming's easy circumstances had brought joy; and the eyes of all were on the grandchildren. In Fleeming's scheme of duties, those of the family stood first; a man was first of all a child, nor did he cease to be so, but only took on added obligations, when he became in turn a father. The care of his parents was always a first thought with him, and their gratification his delight. And the care of his sons, as it was always a grave subject of study with him, and an affair never neglected, so it brought him a thousand satisfactions. 'Hard work they are,' as he once wrote, 'but what fit work!' And again: 'O,

it's a cold house where a dog is the only representative of a child!' Not that dogs were despised; we shall drop across the name of Jack, the harum-scarum Irish terrier ere we have done; his own dog Plato went up with him daily to his lectures, and still (like other friends) feels the loss and looks visibly for the reappearance of his master; and Martin, the cat, Fleeming has himself immortalised, to the delight of Mr. Swinburne, in the columns of the SPECTATOR. Indeed there was nothing in which men take interest, in which he took not some; and yet always most in the strong human bonds, ancient as the race and woven of delights and duties.

He was even an anxious father; perhaps that is the part where optimism is hardest tested. He was eager for his sons; eager for their health, whether of mind or body; eager for their education; in that, I should have thought, too eager. But he kept a pleasant face upon all things, believed in play, loved it himself, shared boyishly in theirs, and knew how to put a face of entertainment upon business and a spirit of education into entertainment. If he was to test the progress of the three boys, this advertisement would appear in their little manuscript paper:- 'Notice: The Professor of Engineering in the University of Edinburgh intends at the close of the scholastic year to hold examinations in the following subjects: (1) For boys in the fourth class of the Academy - Geometry and Algebra; (2) For boys at Mr. Henderson's school - Dictation and Recitation; (3) For boys taught exclusively

by their mothers - Arithmetic and Reading.' Prizes were given; but what prize would be so conciliatory as this boyish little joke? It may read thin here; it would smack racily in the playroom. Whenever his sons 'started a new fad' (as one of them writes to me) they 'had only to tell him about it, and he was at once interested and keen to help.' He would discourage them in nothing unless it was hopelessly too hard for them; only, if there was any principle of science involved, they must understand the principle; and whatever was attempted, that was to be done thoroughly. If it was but play, if it was but a puppetshow they were to build, he set them the example of being no sluggard in play. When Frewen, the second son, embarked on the ambitious design to make an engine for a toy steamboat, Fleeming made him begin with a proper drawing - doubtless to the disgust of the young engineer; but once that foundation laid, helped in the work with unflagging gusto, 'tinkering away,' for hours, and assisted at the final trial 'in the big bath' with no less excitement than the boy. 'He would take any amount of trouble to help us,' writes my correspondent. 'We never felt an affair was complete till we had called him to see, and he would come at any time, in the middle of any work.' There was indeed one recognised playhour, immediately after the despatch of the day's letters; and the boys were to be seen waiting on the stairs until the mail should be ready and the fun could begin. But at no other time did this busy man suffer his work to interfere with that first duty to his children; and there is a pleasant tale of the inventive Master Frewen, engaged at the time upon a toy

crane, bringing to the study where his father sat at work a half-wound reel that formed some part of his design, and observing, 'Papa, you might finiss windin' this for me; I am so very busy to-day.'

I put together here a few brief extracts from Fleeming's letters, none very important in itself, but all together building up a pleasant picture of the father with his sons.

'JAN. 15TH, 1875. - Frewen contemplates suspending soap bubbles by silk threads for experimental purposes. I don't think he will manage that. Bernard' [the youngest] 'volunteered to blow the bubbles with enthusiasm.'

'JAN. 17TH. - I am learning a great deal of electrostatics in consequence of the perpetual cross-examination to which I am subjected. I long for you on many grounds, but one is that I may not be obliged to deliver a running lecture on abstract points of science, subject to cross- examination by two acute students. Bernie does not cross-examine much; but if anyone gets discomfited, he laughs a sort of little silver-whistle giggle, which is trying to the unhappy blunderer.'

'MAY 9TH. - Frewen is deep in parachutes. I beg him not to drop from the top landing in one of his own making.'

'JUNE 6TH, 1876. - Frewen's crank axle is a failure just at present - but he bears up.'

'JUNE 14TH. - The boys enjoy their riding. It gets them whole funds of adventures. One of their caps falling off is matter for delightful reminiscences; and when a horse breaks his step, the occurrence becomes a rear, a shy, or a plunge as they talk it over. Austin, with quiet confidence, speaks of the greater pleasure in riding a spirited horse, even if he does give a little trouble. It is the stolid brute that he dislikes. (N.B. You can still see six inches between him and the saddle when his pony trots.) I listen and sympathise and throw out no hint that their achievements are not really great.'

'JUNE 18TH. - Bernard is much impressed by the fact that I can be useful to Frewen about the steamboat' [which the latter irrepressible inventor was making]. 'He says quite with awe, "He would not have got on nearly so well if you had not helped him."'

'JUNE 27TH. - I do not see what I could do without Austin. He talks so pleasantly and is so truly good all through.'

'JUNE 27TH. - My chief difficulty with Austin is to get him measured for a pair of trousers. Hitherto I have failed, but I keep a stout heart and mean to succeed. Frewen the observer, in describing the paces of two horses, says, "Polly takes twenty-seven

steps to get round the school. I couldn't count Sophy, but she takes more than a hundred."'

'FEB. 18TH, 1877. - We all feel very lonely without you. Frewen had to come up and sit in my room for company last night and I actually kissed him, a thing that has not occurred for years. Jack, poor fellow, bears it as well as he can, and has taken the opportunity of having a fester on his foot, so he is lame and has it bathed, and this occupies his thoughts a good deal.'

'FEB. 19TH. - As to Mill, Austin has not got the list yet. I think it will prejudice him very much against Mill - but that is not my affair. Education of that kind! . . . I would as soon cram my boys with food and boast of the pounds they had eaten, as cram them with literature.'

But if Fleeming was an anxious father, he did not suffer his anxiety to prevent the boys from any manly or even dangerous pursuit. Whatever it might occur to them to try, he would carefully show them how to do it, explain the risks, and then either share the danger himself or, if that were not possible, stand aside and wait the event with that unhappy courage of the looker-on. He was a good swimmer, and taught them to swim. He thoroughly loved all manly exercises; and during their holidays, and principally in the Highlands, helped and encouraged them to excel in as many as possible: to shoot, to fish, to walk, to pull

an oar, to hand, reef and steer, and to run a steam launch. In all of these, and in all parts of Highland life, he shared delightedly. He was well onto forty when he took once more to shooting, he was forty-three when he killed his first salmon, but no boy could have more single-mindedly rejoiced in these pursuits. His growing love for the Highland character, perhaps also a sense of the difficulty of the task, led him to take up at forty-one the study of Gaelic; in which he made some shadow of progress, but not much: the fastnesses of that elusive speech retaining to the last their independence. At the house of his friend Mrs. Blackburn, who plays the part of a Highland lady as to the manner born, he learned the delightful custom of kitchen dances, which became the rule at his own house and brought him into yet nearer contact with his neighbours. And thus at forty-two, he began to learn the reel; a study, to which he brought his usual smiling earnestness; and the steps, diagrammatically represented by his own hand, are before me as I write.

It was in 1879 that a new feature was added to the Highland life: a steam launch, called the PURGLE, the Styrian corruption of Walpurga, after a friend to be hereafter mentioned. 'The steam launch goes,' Fleeming wrote. 'I wish you had been present to describe two scenes of which she has been the occasion already: one during which the population of Ullapool, to a baby, was harnessed to her hurrahing - and the other in which the same population sat with its legs over a little pier, watching Frewen

and Bernie getting up steam for the first time.' The PURGLE was got with educational intent; and it served its purpose so well, and the boys knew their business so practically, that when the summer was at an end, Fleeming, Mrs. Jenkin, Frewen the engineer, Bernard the stoker, and Kenneth Robertson a Highland seaman, set forth in her to make the passage south. The first morning they got from Loch Broom into Gruinard bay, where they lunched upon an island; but the wind blowing up in the afternoon, with sheets of rain, it was found impossible to beat to sea; and very much in the situation of castaways upon an unknown coast, the party landed at the mouth of Gruinard river. A shooting lodge was spied among the trees; there Fleeming went; and though the master, Mr. Murray, was from home, though the two Jenkin boys were of course as black as colliers, and all the castaways so wetted through that, as they stood in the passage, pools formed about their feet and ran before them into the house, yet Mrs. Murray kindly entertained them for the night. On the morrow, however, visitors were to arrive; there would be no room and, in so out-of-the-way a spot, most probably no food for the crew of the PURGLE; and on the morrow about noon, with the bay white with spindrift and the wind so strong that one could scarcely stand against it, they got up steam and skulked under the land as far as Sanda Bay. Here they crept into a seaside cave, and cooked some food; but the weather now freshening to a gale, it was plain they must moor the launch where she was, and find their way overland to some place of shelter. Even to get their baggage from on board was no light business; for the dingy was blown so far to

leeward every trip, that they must carry her back by hand along the beach. But this once managed, and a cart procured in the neighbourhood, they were able to spend the night in a pot-house on Ault Bea. Next day, the sea was unapproachable; but the next they had a pleasant passage to Poolewe, hugging the cliffs, the falling swell bursting close by them in the gullies, and the black scarts that sat like ornaments on the top of every stack and pinnacle, looking down into the PURGLE as she passed. The climate of Scotland had not done with them yet: for three days they lay storm-stayed in Poolewe, and when they put to sea on the morning of the fourth, the sailors prayed them for God's sake not to attempt the passage. Their setting out was indeed merely tentative; but presently they had gone too far to return, and found themselves committed to double Rhu Reay with a foul wind and a cross sea. From half-past eleven in the morning until half-past five at night, they were in immediate and unceasing danger. Upon the least mishap, the PURGLE must either have been swamped by the seas or bulged upon the cliffs of that rude headland. Fleeming and Robertson took turns baling and steering; Mrs. Jenkin, so violent was the commotion of the boat, held on with both hands; Frewen, by Robertson's direction, ran the engine, slacking and pressing her to meet the seas; and Bernard, only twelve years old, deadly sea-sick, and continually thrown against the boiler, so that he was found next day to be covered with burns, yet kept an even fire. It was a very thankful party that sat down that evening to meat in the Hotel at Gairloch. And perhaps, although the thing was new in the

family, no one was much surprised when Fleeming said grace over that meal. Thenceforward he continued to observe the form, so that there was kept alive in his house a grateful memory of peril and deliverance. But there was nothing of the muff in Fleeming; he thought it a good thing to escape death, but a becoming and a healthful thing to run the risk of it; and what is rarer, that which he thought for himself, he thought for his family also. In spite of the terrors of Rhu Reay, the cruise was persevered in and brought to an end under happier conditions.

One year, instead of the Highlands, Alt Aussee, in the Steiermark, was chosen for the holidays; and the place, the people, and the life delighted Fleeming. He worked hard at German, which he had much forgotten since he was a boy; and what is highly characteristic, equally hard at the patois, in which he learned to excel. He won a prize at a Schutzen-fest; and though he hunted chamois without much success, brought down more interesting game in the shape of the Styrian peasants, and in particular of his gillie, Joseph. This Joseph was much of a character; and his appreciations of Fleeming have a fine note of their own. The bringing up of the boys he deigned to approve of: 'FAST SO GUT WIE EIN BAUER,' was his trenchant criticism. The attention and courtly respect with which Fleeming surrounded his wife, was something of a puzzle to the philosophic gillie; he announced in the village that Mrs. Jenkin - DIE SILBERNE FRAU, as the folk had prettily named her from some silver ornaments - was a 'GEBORENE GRAFIN' who had married

beneath her; and when Fleeming explained what he called the English theory (though indeed it was quite his own) of married relations, Joseph, admiring but unconvinced, avowed it was 'GAR SCHON.' Joseph's cousin, Walpurga Moser, to an orchestra of clarionet and zither, taught the family the country dances, the Steierisch and the Landler, and gained their hearts during the lessons. Her sister Loys, too, who was up at the Alp with the cattle, came down to church on Sundays, made acquaintance with the Jenkins, and must have them up to see the sunrise from her house upon the Loser, where they had supper and all slept in the loft among the hay. The Mosers were not lost sight of; Walpurga still corresponds with Mrs. Jenkin, and it was a late pleasure of Fleeming's to choose and despatch a wedding present for his little mountain friend. This visit was brought to an end by a ball in the big inn parlour; the refreshments chosen, the list of guests drawn up, by Joseph; the best music of the place in attendance; and hosts and guests in their best clothes. The ball was opened by Mrs. Jenkin dancing Steierisch with a lordly Bauer, in gray and silver and with a plumed hat; and Fleeming followed with Walpurga Moser.

There ran a principle through all these holiday pleasures. In Styria as in the Highlands, the same course was followed: Fleeming threw himself as fully as he could into the life and occupations of the native people, studying everywhere their dances and their language, and conforming, always with pleasure, to their rustic etiquette. Just as the ball at Alt Aussee was designed for the

taste of Joseph, the parting feast at Attadale was ordered in every particular to the taste of Murdoch the Keeper. Fleeming was not one of the common, so-called gentlemen, who take the tricks of their own coterie to be eternal principles of taste. He was aware, on the other hand, that rustic people dwelling in their own places, follow ancient rules with fastidious precision, and are easily shocked and embarrassed by what (if they used the word) they would have to call the vulgarity of visitors from town. And he, who was so cavalier with men of his own class, was sedulous to shield the more tender feelings of the peasant; he, who could be so trying in a drawing-room, was even punctilious in the cottage. It was in all respects a happy virtue. It renewed his life, during these holidays, in all particulars. It often entertained him with the discovery of strange survivals; as when, by the orders of Murdoch, Mrs. Jenkin must publicly taste of every dish before it was set before her guests. And thus to throw himself into a fresh life and a new school of manners was a grateful exercise of Fleeming's mimetic instinct; and to the pleasures of the open air, of hardships supported, of dexterities improved and displayed, and of plain and elegant society, added a spice of drama.

II.

Fleeming was all his life a lover of the play and all that belonged to it. Dramatic literature he knew fully. He was one of the not very numerous people who can read a play: a knack, the fruit of much knowledge and some imagination, comparable to that of reading score. Few men better understood the artificial principles on which a play is good or bad; few more unaffectedly enjoyed a piece of any merit of construction. His own play was conceived with a double design; for he had long been filled with his theory of the true story of Griselda; used to gird at Father Chaucer for his misconception; and was, perhaps first of all, moved by the desire to do justice to the Marquis of Saluces, and perhaps only in the second place, by the wish to treat a story (as he phrased it) like a sum in arithmetic. I do not think he quite succeeded; but I must own myself no fit judge. Fleeming and I were teacher and taught as to the principles, disputatious rivals in the practice, of dramatic writing.

Acting had always, ever since Rachel and the Marseillaise, a particular power on him. 'If I do not cry at the play,' he used to say, 'I want to have my money back.' Even from a poor play with poor actors, he could draw pleasure. 'Giacometti's ELISABETTA,' I find him writing, 'fetched the house vastly. Poor Queen Elizabeth! And yet it was a little good.' And again, after a night of

Salvini: 'I do not suppose any one with feelings could sit out OTHELLO, if Iago and Desdemona were acted.' Salvini was, in his view, the greatest actor he had seen. We were all indeed moved and bettered by the visit of that wonderful man. - 'I declare I feel as if I could pray!' cried one of us, on the return from HAMLET. - 'That is prayer,' said Fleeming. W. B. Hole and I, in a fine enthusiasm of gratitude, determined to draw up an address to Salvini, did so, and carried it to Fleeming; and I shall never forget with what coldness he heard and deleted the eloquence of our draft, nor with what spirit (our vanities once properly mortified) he threw himself into the business of collecting signatures. It was his part, on the ground of his Italian, to see and arrange with the actor; it was mine to write in the ACADEMY a notice of the first performance of MACBETH. Fleeming opened the paper, read so far, and flung it on the floor. 'No,' he cried, 'that won't do. You were thinking of yourself, not of Salvini!' The criticism was shrewd as usual, but it was unfair through ignorance; it was not of myself that I was thinking, but of the difficulties of my trade which I had not well mastered. Another unalloyed dramatic pleasure which Fleeming and I shared the year of the Paris Exposition, was the MARQUIS DE VILLEMER, that blameless play, performed by Madeleine Brohan, Delaunay, Worms, and Broisat - an actress, in such parts at least, to whom I have never seen full justice rendered. He had his fill of weeping on that occasion; and when the piece was at an end, in front of a cafe, in the mild, midnight air, we had our fill of talk about the art of acting.

But what gave the stage so strong a hold on Fleeming was an inheritance from Norwich, from Edward Barron, and from Enfield of the SPEAKER. The theatre was one of Edward Barron's elegant hobbies; he read plays, as became Enfield's son-in-law, with a good discretion; he wrote plays for his family, in which Eliza Barron used to shine in the chief parts; and later in life, after the Norwich home was broken up, his little granddaughter would sit behind him in a great armchair, and be introduced, with his stately elocution, to the world of dramatic literature. From this, in a direct line, we can deduce the charades at Claygate; and after money came, in the Edinburgh days, that private theatre which took up so much of Fleeming's energy and thought. The company - Mr. and Mrs. R. O. Carter of Colwall, W. B. Hole, Captain Charles Douglas, Mr. Kunz, Mr. Burnett, Professor Lewis Campbell, Mr. Charles Baxter, and many more - made a charming society for themselves and gave pleasure to their audience. Mr. Carter in Sir Toby Belch it would be hard to beat. Mr. Hole in broad farce, or as the herald in the TRACHINIAE, showed true stage talent. As for Mrs. Jenkin, it was for her the rest of us existed and were forgiven; her powers were an endless spring of pride and pleasure to her husband; he spent hours hearing and schooling her in private; and when it came to the performance, though there was perhaps no one in the audience more critical, none was more moved than Fleeming. The rest of us did not aspire so high. There were always five performances and weeks of busy rehearsal; and whether we came to sit and stifle as

the prompter, to be the dumb (or rather the inarticulate) recipients of Carter's dog whip in the TAMING OF THE SHREW, or having earned our spurs, to lose one more illusion in a leading part, we were always sure at least of a long and an exciting holiday in mirthful company.

In this laborious annual diversion, Fleeming's part was large. I never thought him an actor, but he was something of a mimic, which stood him in stead. Thus he had seen Got in Poirier; and his own Poirier, when he came to play it, breathed meritoriously of the model. The last part I saw him play was Triplet, and at first I thought it promised well. But alas! the boys went for a holiday, missed a train, and were not heard of at home till late at night. Poor Fleeming, the man who never hesitated to give his sons a chisel or a gun, or to send them abroad in a canoe or on a horse, toiled all day at his rehearsal, growing hourly paler, Triplet growing hourly less meritorious. And though the return of the children, none the worse for their little adventure, brought the colour back into his face, it could not restore him to his part. I remember finding him seated on the stairs in some rare moment of quiet during the subsequent performances. 'Hullo, Jenkin,' said I, 'you look down in the mouth.' - 'My dear boy,' said he, 'haven't you heard me? I have not one decent intonation from beginning to end.'

But indeed he never supposed himself an actor; took a part, when he

took any, merely for convenience, as one takes a hand at whist; and found his true service and pleasure in the more congenial business of the manager. Augier, Racine, Shakespeare, Aristophanes in Hookham Frere's translation, Sophocles and AEschylus in Lewis Campbell's, such were some of the authors whom he introduced to his public. In putting these upon the stage, he found a thousand exercises for his ingenuity and taste, a thousand problems arising which he delighted to study, a thousand opportunities to make these infinitesimal improvements which are so much in art and for the artist. Our first Greek play had been costumed by the professional costumer, with unforgetable results of comicality and indecorum: the second, the TRACHINIAE, of Sophocles, he took in hand himself, and a delightful task he made of it. His study was then in antiquarian books, where he found confusion, and on statues and bas-reliefs, where he at last found clearness; after an hour or so at the British Museum, he was able to master 'the chiton, sleeves and all'; and before the time was ripe, he had a theory of Greek tailoring at his fingers' ends, and had all the costumes made under his eye as a Greek tailor would have made them. 'The Greeks made the best plays and the best statues, and were the best architects: of course, they were the best tailors, too,' said he; and was never weary, when he could find a tolerant listener, of dwelling on the simplicity, the economy, the elegance both of means and effect, which made their system so delightful.

But there is another side to the stage-manager's employment. The

discipline of acting is detestable; the failures and triumphs of that business appeal too directly to the vanity; and even in the course of a careful amateur performance such as ours, much of the smaller side of man will be displayed. Fleeming, among conflicting vanities and levities, played his part to my admiration. He had his own view; he might be wrong; but the performances (he would remind us) were after all his, and he must decide. He was, in this as in all other things, an iron taskmaster, sparing not himself nor others. If you were going to do it at all, he would see that it was done as well as you were able. I have known him to keep two culprits (and one of these his wife) repeating the same action and the same two or three words for a whole weary afternoon. And yet he gained and retained warm feelings from far the most of those who fell under his domination, and particularly (it is pleasant to remember) from the girls. After the slipshod training and the incomplete accomplishments of a girls' school, there was something at first annoying, at last exciting and bracing, in this high standard of accomplishment and perseverance.

III.

It did not matter why he entered upon any study or employment, whether for amusement like the Greek tailoring or the Highland reels, whether from a desire to serve the public as with his sanitary work, or in the view of benefiting poorer men as with his labours for technical education, he 'pitched into it' (as he would have said himself) with the same headlong zest. I give in the Appendix a letter from Colonel Fergusson, which tells fully the nature of the sanitary work and of Fleeming's part and success in it. It will be enough to say here that it was a scheme of protection against the blundering of builders and the dishonesty of plumbers. Started with an eye rather to the houses of the rich, Fleeming hoped his Sanitary Associations would soon extend their sphere of usefulness and improve the dwellings of the poor. In this hope he was disappointed; but in all other ways the scheme exceedingly prospered, associations sprang up and continue to spring up in many quarters, and wherever tried they have been found of use.

Here, then, was a serious employment; it has proved highly useful to mankind; and it was begun besides, in a mood of bitterness, under the shock of what Fleeming would so sensitively feel - the death of a whole family of children. Yet it was gone upon like a holiday jaunt. I read in Colonel Fergusson's letter that his

schoolmates bantered him when he began to broach his scheme; so did I at first, and he took the banter as he always did with enjoyment, until he suddenly posed me with the question: 'And now do you see any other jokes to make? Well, then,' said he, 'that's all right. I wanted you to have your fun out first; now we can be serious.' And then with a glowing heat of pleasure, he laid his plans before me, revelling in the details, revelling in hope. It was as he wrote about the joy of electrical experiment. 'What shall I compare them to? A new song? - a Greek play?' Delight attended the exercise of all his powers; delight painted the future. Of these ideal visions, some (as I have said) failed of their fruition. And the illusion was characteristic. Fleeming believed we had only to make a virtue cheap and easy, and then all would practise it; that for an end unquestionably good, men would not grudge a little trouble and a little money, though they might stumble at laborious pains and generous sacrifices. He could not believe in any resolute badness. 'I cannot quite say,' he wrote in his young manhood, 'that I think there is no sin or misery. This I can say: I do not remember one single malicious act done to myself. In fact it is rather awkward when I have to say the Lord's Prayer. I have nobody's trespasses to forgive.' And to the point, I remember one of our discussions. I said it was a dangerous error not to admit there were bad people; he, that it was only a confession of blindness on our part, and that we probably called others bad only so far as we were wrapped in ourselves and lacking in the transmigratory forces of imagination. I undertook to

describe to him three persons irredeemably bad and whom he should admit to be so. In the first case, he denied my evidence: 'You cannot judge a man upon such testimony,' said he. For the second, he owned it made him sick to hear the tale; but then there was no spark of malice, it was mere weakness I had described, and he had never denied nor thought to set a limit to man's weakness. At my third gentleman, he struck his colours. 'Yes,' said he, 'I'm afraid that is a bad man.' And then looking at me shrewdly: 'I wonder if it isn't a very unfortunate thing for you to have met him.' I showed him radiantly how it was the world we must know, the world as it was, not a world expurgated and prettified with optimistic rainbows. 'Yes, yes,' said he; 'but this badness is such an easy, lazy explanation. Won't you be tempted to use it, instead of trying to understand people?'

In the year 1878, he took a passionate fancy for the phonograph: it was a toy after his heart, a toy that touched the skirts of life, art, and science, a toy prolific of problems and theories. Something fell to be done for a University Cricket Ground Bazaar. 'And the thought struck him,' Mr. Ewing writes to me, 'to exhibit Edison's phonograph, then the very newest scientific marvel. The instrument itself was not to be purchased - I think no specimen had then crossed the Atlantic - but a copy of the TIMES with an account of it was at hand, and by the help of this we made a phonograph which to our great joy talked, and talked, too, with the purest American accent. It was so good that a second instrument was got

ready forthwith. Both were shown at the Bazaar: one by Mrs. Jenkin to people willing to pay half a crown for a private view and the privilege of hearing their own voices, while Jenkin, perfervid as usual, gave half-hourly lectures on the other in an adjoining room - I, as his lieutenant, taking turns. The thing was in its way a little triumph. A few of the visitors were deaf, and hugged the belief that they were the victims of a new kind of fancy-fair swindle. Of the others, many who came to scoff remained to take raffle tickets; and one of the phonographs was finally disposed of in this way, falling, by a happy freak of the ballot-box, into the hands of Sir William Thomson.' The other remained in Fleeming's hands, and was a source of infinite occupation. Once it was sent to London, 'to bring back on the tinfoil the tones of a lady distinguished for clear vocalisations; at another time Sir Robert Christison was brought in to contribute his powerful bass'; and there scarcely came a visitor about the house, but he was made the subject of experiment. The visitors, I am afraid, took their parts lightly: Mr. Hole and I, with unscientific laughter, commemorating various shades of Scotch accent, or proposing to 'teach the poor dumb animal to swear.' But Fleeming and Mr. Ewing, when we butterflies were gone, were laboriously ardent. Many thoughts that occupied the later years of my friend were caught from the small utterance of that toy. Thence came his inquiries into the roots of articulate language and the foundations of literary art; his papers on vowel sounds, his papers in the SATURDAY REVIEW upon the laws of verse, and many a strange approximation, many a just note, thrown

out in talk and now forgotten. I pass over dozens of his interests, and dwell on this trifling matter of the phonograph, because it seems to me that it depicts the man. So, for Fleeming, one thing joined into another, the greater with the less. He cared not where it was he scratched the surface of the ultimate mystery - in the child's toy, in the great tragedy, in the laws of the tempest, or in the properties of energy or mass - certain that whatever he touched, it was a part of life - and however he touched it, there would flow for his happy constitution interest and delight. 'All fables have their morals,' says Thoreau, 'but the innocent enjoy the story.' There is a truth represented for the imagination in these lines of a noble poem, where we are told, that in our highest hours of visionary clearness, we can but

'see the children sport upon the shore
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.'

To this clearness Fleeming had attained; and although he heard the voice of the eternal seas and weighed its message, he was yet able, until the end of his life, to sport upon these shores of death and mystery with the gaiety and innocence of children.

IV.

It was as a student that I first knew Fleeming, as one of that modest number of young men who sat under his ministrations in a soul-chilling class-room at the top of the University buildings. His presence was against him as a professor: no one, least of all students, would have been moved to respect him at first sight: rather short in stature, markedly plain, boyishly young in manner, cocking his head like a terrier with every mark of the most engaging vivacity and readiness to be pleased, full of words, full of paradox, a stranger could scarcely fail to look at him twice, a man thrown with him in a train could scarcely fail to be engaged by him in talk, but a student would never regard him as academical. Yet he had that fibre in him that order always existed in his class-room. I do not remember that he ever addressed me in language; at the least sign of unrest, his eye would fall on me and I was quelled. Such a feat is comparatively easy in a small class; but I have misbehaved in smaller classes and under eyes more Olympian than Fleeming Jenkin's. He was simply a man from whose reproof one shrank; in manner the least buckrammed of mankind, he had, in serious moments, an extreme dignity of goodness. So it was that he obtained a power over the most insubordinate of students, but a power of which I was myself unconscious. I was inclined to regard any professor as a joke, and Fleeming as a particularly good joke, perhaps the broadest in the vast pleasantry of my curriculum.

I was not able to follow his lectures; I somehow dared not misconduct myself, as was my customary solace; and I refrained from attending. This brought me at the end of the session into a relation with my contemned professor that completely opened my eyes. During the year, bad student as I was, he had shown a certain leaning to my society; I had been to his house, he had asked me to take a humble part in his theatricals; I was a master in the art of extracting a certificate even at the cannon's mouth; and I was under no apprehension. But when I approached Fleeming, I found myself in another world; he would have naught of me. 'It is quite useless for YOU to come to me, Mr. Stevenson. There may be doubtful cases, there is no doubt about yours. You have simply NOT attended my class.' The document was necessary to me for family considerations; and presently I stooped to such pleadings and rose to such adjurations, as made my ears burn to remember. He was quite unmoved; he had no pity for me. - 'You are no fool,' said he, 'and you chose your course.' I showed him that he had misconceived his duty, that certificates were things of form, attendance a matter of taste. Two things, he replied, had been required for graduation, a certain competency proved in the final trials and a certain period of genuine training proved by certificate; if he did as I desired, not less than if he gave me hints for an examination, he was aiding me to steal a degree. 'You see, Mr. Stevenson, these are the laws and I am here to apply them,' said he. I could not say but that this view was tenable, though it was new to me; I changed my attack: it was only for my father's eye that I required

his signature, it need never go to the Senatus, I had already certificates enough to justify my year's attendance. 'Bring them to me; I cannot take your word for that,' said he. 'Then I will consider.' The next day I came charged with my certificates, a humble assortment. And when he had satisfied himself, 'Remember,' said he, 'that I can promise nothing, but I will try to find a form of words.' He did find one, and I am still ashamed when I think of his shame in giving me that paper. He made no reproach in speech, but his manner was the more eloquent; it told me plainly what a dirty business we were on; and I went from his presence, with my certificate indeed in my possession, but with no answerable sense of triumph. That was the bitter beginning of my love for Fleeming; I never thought lightly of him afterwards.

Once, and once only, after our friendship was truly founded, did we come to a considerable difference. It was, by the rules of poor humanity, my fault and his. I had been led to dabble in society journalism; and this coming to his ears, he felt it like a disgrace upon himself. So far he was exactly in the right; but he was scarce happily inspired when he broached the subject at his own table and before guests who were strangers to me. It was the sort of error he was always ready to repent, but always certain to repeat; and on this occasion he spoke so freely that I soon made an excuse and left the house with the firm purpose of returning no more. About a month later, I met him at dinner at a common friend's. 'Now,' said he, on the stairs, 'I engage you - like a

lady to dance - for the end of the evening. You have no right to quarrel with me and not give me a chance.' I have often said and thought that Fleeming had no tact; he belied the opinion then. I remember perfectly how, so soon as we could get together, he began his attack: 'You may have grounds of quarrel with me; you have none against Mrs. Jenkin; and before I say another word, I want you to promise you will come to HER house as usual.' An interview thus begun could have but one ending: if the quarrel were the fault of both, the merit of the reconciliation was entirely Fleeming's.

When our intimacy first began, coldly enough, accidentally enough on his part, he had still something of the Puritan, something of the inhuman narrowness of the good youth. It fell from him slowly, year by year, as he continued to ripen, and grow milder, and understand more generously the mingled characters of men. In the early days he once read me a bitter lecture; and I remember leaving his house in a fine spring afternoon, with the physical darkness of despair upon my eyesight. Long after he made me a formal retractation of the sermon and a formal apology for the pain he had inflicted; adding drolly, but truly, 'You see, at that time I was so much younger than you!' And yet even in those days there was much to learn from him; and above all his fine spirit of piety, bravely and trustfully accepting life, and his singular delight in the heroic.

His piety was, indeed, a thing of chief importance. His views (as

they are called) upon religious matters varied much; and he could never be induced to think them more or less than views. 'All dogma is to me mere form,' he wrote; 'dogmas are mere blind struggles to express the inexpressible. I cannot conceive that any single proposition whatever in religion is true in the scientific sense; and yet all the while I think the religious view of the world is the most true view. Try to separate from the mass of their statements that which is common to Socrates, Isaiah, David, St. Bernard, the Jansenists, Luther, Mahomet, Bunyan - yes, and George Eliot: of course you do not believe that this something could be written down in a set of propositions like Euclid, neither will you deny that there is something common and this something very valuable. . . . I shall be sorry if the boys ever give a moment's thought to the question of what community they belong to - I hope they will belong to the great community.' I should observe that as time went on his conformity to the church in which he was born grew more complete, and his views drew nearer the conventional. 'The longer I live, my dear Louis,' he wrote but a few months before his death, 'the more convinced I become of a direct care by God - which is reasonably impossible - but there it is.' And in his last year he took the communion.

But at the time when I fell under his influence, he stood more aloof; and this made him the more impressive to a youthful atheist. He had a keen sense of language and its imperial influence on men; language contained all the great and sound metaphysics, he was wont

to say; and a word once made and generally understood, he thought a real victory of man and reason. But he never dreamed it could be accurate, knowing that words stand symbol for the indefinable. I came to him once with a problem which had puzzled me out of measure: what is a cause? why out of so many innumerable millions of conditions, all necessary, should one be singled out and ticketed 'the cause'? 'You do not understand,' said he. 'A cause is the answer to a question: it designates that condition which I happen to know and you happen not to know.' It was thus, with partial exception of the mathematical, that he thought of all means of reasoning: they were in his eyes but means of communication, so to be understood, so to be judged, and only so far to be credited. The mathematical he made, I say, exception of: number and measure he believed in to the extent of their significance, but that significance, he was never weary of reminding you, was slender to the verge of nonentity. Science was true, because it told us almost nothing. With a few abstractions it could deal, and deal correctly; conveying honestly faint truths. Apply its means to any concrete fact of life, and this high dialect of the wise became a childish jargon.

Thus the atheistic youth was met at every turn by a scepticism more complete than his own, so that the very weapons of the fight were changed in his grasp to swords of paper. Certainly the church is not right, he would argue, but certainly not the anti-church either. Men are not such fools as to be wholly in the wrong, nor

yet are they so placed as to be ever wholly in the right. Somewhere, in mid air between the disputants, like hovering Victory in some design of a Greek battle, the truth hangs undiscerned. And in the meanwhile what matter these uncertainties? Right is very obvious; a great consent of the best of mankind, a loud voice within us (whether of God, or whether by inheritance, and in that case still from God), guide and command us in the path of duty. He saw life very simple; he did not love refinements; he was a friend to much conformity in unessentials. For (he would argue) it is in this life as it stands about us, that we are given our problem; the manners of the day are the colours of our palette; they condition, they constrain us; and a man must be very sure he is in the right, must (in a favourite phrase of his) be 'either very wise or very vain,' to break with any general consent in ethics. I remember taking his advice upon some point of conduct. 'Now,' he said, 'how do you suppose Christ would have advised you?' and when I had answered that he would not have counselled me anything unkind or cowardly, 'No,' he said, with one of his shrewd strokes at the weakness of his hearer, 'nor anything amusing.' Later in life, he made less certain in the field of ethics. 'The old story of the knowledge of good and evil is a very true one,' I find him writing; only (he goes on) 'the effect of the original dose is much worn out, leaving Adam's descendants with the knowledge that there is such a thing - but uncertain where.' His growing sense of this ambiguity made him less swift to condemn, but no less stimulating in counsel. 'You grant yourself certain freedoms. Very well,' he

would say, 'I want to see you pay for them some other way. You positively cannot do this: then there positively must be something else that you can do, and I want to see you find that out and do it.' Fleeming would never suffer you to think that you were living, if there were not, somewhere in your life, some touch of heroism, to do or to endure.

This was his rarest quality. Far on in middle age, when men begin to lie down with the bestial goddesses, Comfort and Respectability, the strings of his nature still sounded as high a note as a young man's. He loved the harsh voice of duty like a call to battle. He loved courage, enterprise, brave natures, a brave word, an ugly virtue; everything that lifts us above the table where we eat or the bed we sleep upon. This with no touch of the motive-monger or the ascetic. He loved his virtues to be practical, his heroes to be great eaters of beef; he loved the jovial Heracles, loved the astute Odysseus; not the Robespierres and Wesleys. A fine buoyant sense of life and of man's unequal character ran through all his thoughts. He could not tolerate the spirit of the pick-thank; being what we are, he wished us to see others with a generous eye of admiration, not with the smallness of the seeker after faults. If there shone anywhere a virtue, no matter how incongruously set, it was upon the virtue we must fix our eyes. I remember having found much entertainment in Voltaire's SAUL, and telling him what seemed to me the drollest touches. He heard me out, as usual when displeased, and then opened fire on me with red-hot shot. To

belittle a noble story was easy; it was not literature, it was not art, it was not morality; there was no sustenance in such a form of jesting, there was (in his favourite phrase) 'no nitrogenous food' in such literature. And then he proceeded to show what a fine fellow David was; and what a hard knot he was in about Bathsheba, so that (the initial wrong committed) honour might well hesitate in the choice of conduct; and what owls those people were who marvelled because an Eastern tyrant had killed Uriah, instead of marvelling that he had not killed the prophet also. 'Now if Voltaire had helped me to feel that,' said he, 'I could have seen some fun in it.' He loved the comedy which shows a hero human, and yet leaves him a hero, and the laughter which does not lessen love.

It was this taste for what is fine in human-kind, that ruled his choice in books. These should all strike a high note, whether brave or tender, and smack of the open air. The noble and simple presentation of things noble and simple, that was the 'nitrogenous food' of which he spoke so much, which he sought so eagerly, enjoyed so royally. He wrote to an author, the first part of whose story he had seen with sympathy, hoping that it might continue in the same vein. 'That this may be so,' he wrote, 'I long with the longing of David for the water of Bethlehem. But no man need die for the water a poet can give, and all can drink it to the end of time, and their thirst be quenched and the pool never dry - and the thirst and the water are both blessed.' It was in the Greeks particularly that he found this blessed water; he loved 'a fresh

air' which he found 'about the Greek things even in translations'; he loved their freedom from the mawkish and the rancid. The tale of David in the Bible, the ODYSSEY, Sophocles, AEschylus, Shakespeare, Scott; old Dumas in his chivalrous note; Dickens rather than Thackeray, and the TALE OF TWO CITIES out of Dickens: such were some of his preferences. To Ariosto and Boccaccio he was always faithful; BURNT NJAL was a late favourite; and he found at least a passing entertainment in the ARCADIA and the GRAND CYRUS. George Eliot he outgrew, finding her latterly only sawdust in the mouth; but her influence, while it lasted, was great, and must have gone some way to form his mind. He was easily set on edge, however, by didactic writing; and held that books should teach no other lesson but what 'real life would teach, were it as vividly presented.' Again, it was the thing made that took him, the drama in the book; to the book itself, to any merit of the making, he was long strangely blind. He would prefer the AGAMEMNON in the prose of Mr. Buckley, ay, to Keats. But he was his mother's son, learning to the last. He told me one day that literature was not a trade; that it was no craft; that the professed author was merely an amateur with a door-plate. 'Very well,' said I, 'the first time you get a proof, I will demonstrate that it is as much a trade as bricklaying, and that you do not know it.' By the very next post, a proof came. I opened it with fear; for he was indeed, as the reader will see by these volumes, a formidable amateur; always wrote brightly, because he always thought trenchantly; and sometimes wrote brilliantly, as the worst of whistlers may

sometimes stumble on a perfect intonation. But it was all for the best in the interests of his education; and I was able, over that proof, to give him a quarter of an hour such as Fleeming loved both to give and to receive. His subsequent training passed out of my hands into those of our common friend, W. E. Henley. 'Henley and I,' he wrote, 'have fairly good times wigging one another for not doing better. I wig him because he won't try to write a real play, and he wigs me because I can't try to write English.' When I next saw him, he was full of his new acquisitions. 'And yet I have lost something too,' he said regretfully. 'Up to now Scott seemed to me quite perfect, he was all I wanted. Since I have been learning this confounded thing, I took up one of the novels, and a great deal of it is both careless and clumsy.'

V.

He spoke four languages with freedom, not even English with any marked propriety. What he uttered was not so much well said, as excellently acted: so we may hear every day the inexpressive language of a poorly-written drama assume character and colour in the hands of a good player. No man had more of the VIS COMICA in private life; he played no character on the stage, as he could play himself among his friends. It was one of his special charms; now when the voice is silent and the face still, it makes it impossible to do justice to his power in conversation. He was a delightful companion to such as can bear bracing weather; not to the very vain; not to the owlishly wise, who cannot have their dogmas canvassed; not to the painfully refined, whose sentiments become articles of faith. The spirit in which he could write that he was 'much revived by having an opportunity of abusing Whistler to a knot of his special admirers,' is a spirit apt to be misconstrued. He was not a dogmatist, even about Whistler. 'The house is full of pretty things,' he wrote, when on a visit; 'but Mrs. -'s taste in pretty things has one very bad fault: it is not my taste.' And that was the true attitude of his mind; but these eternal differences it was his joy to thresh out and wrangle over by the hour. It was no wonder if he loved the Greeks; he was in many ways a Greek himself; he should have been a sophist and met Socrates; he would have loved Socrates, and done battle with him staunchly and

manfully owned his defeat; and the dialogue, arranged by Plato, would have shown even in Plato's gallery. He seemed in talk aggressive, petulant, full of a singular energy; as vain you would have said as a peacock, until you trod on his toes, and then you saw that he was at least clear of all the sicklier elements of vanity. Soundly rang his laugh at any jest against himself. He wished to be taken, as he took others, for what was good in him without dissimulation of the evil, for what was wise in him without concealment of the childish. He hated a draped virtue, and despised a wit on its own defence. And he drew (if I may so express myself) a human and humorous portrait of himself with all his defects and qualities, as he thus enjoyed in talk the robust sports of the intelligence; giving and taking manfully, always without pretence, always with paradox, always with exuberant pleasure; speaking wisely of what he knew, foolishly of what he knew not; a teacher, a learner, but still combative; picking holes in what was said even to the length of captiousness, yet aware of all that was said rightly; jubilant in victory, delighted by defeat: a Greek sophist, a British schoolboy.

Among the legends of what was once a very pleasant spot, the old Savile Club, not then divorced from Savile Row, there are many memories of Fleeming. He was not popular at first, being known simply as 'the man who dines here and goes up to Scotland'; but he grew at last, I think, the most generally liked of all the members. To those who truly knew and loved him, who had tasted the real

sweetness of his nature, Fleeming's porcupine ways had always been a matter of keen regret. They introduced him to their own friends with fear; sometimes recalled the step with mortification. It was not possible to look on with patience while a man so lovable thwarted love at every step. But the course of time and the ripening of his nature brought a cure. It was at the Savile that he first remarked a change; it soon spread beyond the walls of the club. Presently I find him writing: 'Will you kindly explain what has happened to me? All my life I have talked a good deal, with the almost unfailing result of making people sick of the sound of my tongue. It appeared to me that I had various things to say, and I had no malevolent feelings, but nevertheless the result was that expressed above. Well, lately some change has happened. If I talk to a person one day, they must have me the next. Faces light up when they see me. - "Ah, I say, come here," - "come and dine with me." It's the most preposterous thing I ever experienced. It is curiously pleasant. You have enjoyed it all your life, and therefore cannot conceive how bewildering a burst of it is for the first time at forty-nine.' And this late sunshine of popularity still further softened him. He was a bit of a porcupine to the last, still shedding darts; or rather he was to the end a bit of a schoolboy, and must still throw stones, but the essential toleration that underlay his disputatiousness, and the kindness that made of him a tender sicknurse and a generous helper, shone more conspicuously through. A new pleasure had come to him; and as with all sound natures, he was bettered by the pleasure.

I can best show Fleeming in this later stage by quoting from a vivid and interesting letter of M. Emile Trelat's. Here, admirably expressed, is how he appeared to a friend of another nation, whom he encountered only late in life. M. Trelat will pardon me if I correct, even before I quote him; but what the Frenchman supposed to flow from some particular bitterness against France, was only Fleeming's usual address. Had M. Trelat been Italian, Italy would have fared as ill; and yet Italy was Fleeming's favourite country.

Vous savez comment j'ai connu Fleeming Jenkin! C'etait en Mai 1878. Nous etions tous deux membres du jury de l'Exposition Universelle. On n'avait rien fait qui vaille a la premiere seance de notre classe, qui avait eu lieu le matin. Tout le monde avait parle et reparle pour ne rien dire. Cela durait depuis huit heures; il etait midi. Je demandai la parole pour une motion d'ordre, et je proposai que la seance fut levee a la condition que chaque membre francais, EMPORTAT a dejeuner un jure etranger. Jenkin applaudit. 'Je vous emimene dejeuner,' lui criai-je. 'Je veux bien.' . . . Nous partimes; en chemin nous vous rencontrions; il vous presente et nous allons dejeuner tous trois aupres du Trocadero.

Et, depuis ce temps, nous avons ete de vieux amis. Non seulement nous passions nos journees au jury, ou nous etions toujours

ensemble, cote-a-cote. Mais nos habitudes s'etaient faites telles que, non contents de dejeuner en face l'un de l'autre, je le ramenais diner presque tous les jours chez moi. Cela dura une quinzaine: puis il fut rappele en Angleterre. Mais il revint, et nous fimes encore une bonne etape de vie intellectuelle, morale et philosophique. Je crois qu'il me rendait deja tout ce que j'eprouvais de sympathie et d'estime, et que je ne fus pas pour rien dans son retour a Paris.

Chose singuliere! nous nous etions attaches l'un a l'autre par les sous-entendus bien plus que par la matiere de nos conversations. A vrai dire, nous etions presque toujours en discussion; et il nous arrivait de nous rire au nez l'un et l'autre pendant des heures, tant nous nous etonnions reciproquement de la diversite de nos points de vue. Je le trouvais si Anglais, et il me trouvais si Francais! Il etait si franchement revolte de certaines choses qu'il voyait chez nous, et je comprenais si mal certaines choses qui se passaient chez vous! Rien de plus interessant que ces contacts qui etaient des contrastes, et que ces rencontres d'idees qui etaient des choses; rien de si attachant que les echappees de coeur ou d'esprit auxquelles ces petits conflits donnaient a tout moment cours. C'est dans ces conditions que, pendant son sejour a Paris en 1878, je conduisis un peu partout mon nouvel ami. Nous allâmes chez Madame Edmond Adam, ou il vit passer beaucoup d'hommes politiques avec lesquels il causa. Mais c'est chez les ministres qu'il fut interesse. Le moment etait, d'ailleurs, curieux en

France. Je me rappelle que, lorsque je le presentai au Ministre du Commerce, il fit cette spirituelle repartie: 'C'est la seconde fois que je viens en France sous la Republique. La premiere fois, c'etait en 1848, elle s'etait coiffee de travers: je suis bien heureux de saluer aujourd'hui votre excellence, quand elle a mis son chapeau droit.' Une fois je le menai voir couronner la Rosiere de Nanterre. Il y suivit les ceremonies civiles et religieuses; il y assista au banquet donne par le Maire; il y vit notre de Lesseps, auquel il porta un toast. Le soir, nous revinmes tard a Paris; il faisait chaud; nous etions un peu fatigues; nous entrâmes dans un des rares cafes encore ouverts. Il devint silencieux. - 'N'etes-vous pas content de votre journee?' lui dis-je. - 'O, si! mais je reflechis, et je me dis que vous etes un peuple gai - tous ces braves gens etaient gais aujourd'hui. C'est une vertu, la gaiete, et vous l'avez en France, cette vertu!' Il me disait cela melancoliquement; et c'etait la premiere fois que je lui entendais faire une louange adressee a la France. . . . Mais il ne faut pas que vous voyiez la une plainte de ma part. Je serais un ingrat si je me plaignais; car il me disait souvent: 'Quel bon Francais vous faites!' Et il m'aimait a cause de cela, quoiqu'il semblât n'ainier pas la France. C'etait la un trait de son originalite. Il est vrai qu'il s'en tirait en disant que je ne ressemblai pas a mes compatriotes, ce a quoi il ne connaissait rien! - Tout cela etait fort curieux; car, moi-meme, je l'aimais quoiqu'il en eût a mon pays!

En 1879 il amena son fils Austin a Paris. J'attirai celui-ci. Il dejeunait avec moi deux fois par semaine. Je lui montrai ce qu'etait l'intimite francaise en le tutoyant paternellement. Cela reserra beaucoup nos liens d'intimite avec Jenkin. . . . Je fis inviter mon ami au congres de l'ASSOCIATION FRANCAISE POUR L'AVANCEMENT DES SCIENCES, qui se tenait a Rheims en 1880. Il y vint. J'eus le plaisir de lui donner la parole dans la section du genie civil et militaire, que je presidais. II y fit une tres interessante communication, qui me montrait une fois de plus l'originalite de ses vaes et la sûrete de sa science. C'est a l'issue de ce congres que je passai lui faire visite a Rochefort, ou je le trouvai installe en famille et ou je presentai pour la premiere fois mes hommages a son eminente compagne. Je le vis la sous un jour nouveau et touchant pour moi. Madame Jenkin, qu'il entourait si galamment, et ses deux jeunes fils donnaient encore plus de relief a sa personne. J'emportai des quelques heures que je passai a cote de lui dans ce charmant paysage un souvenir emu.

J'etais alle en Angleterre en 1882 sans pouvoir gagner Edimbourg. J'y retournai en 1883 avec la commission d'assainissement de la ville de Paris, dont je faisais partie. Jenkin me rejoignit. Je le fis entendre par mes collegues; car il etait fondateur d'une societe de salubrite. Il eut un grand succes parmi nous. Mais ce voyaye me restera toujours en memoire parce que c'est la que se fixa defenitivement notre forte amitie. Il m'invita un jour a diner a son club et au moment de me faire asseoir a cote de lui, il

me retint et me dit: 'Je voudrais vous demander de m'accorder quelque chose. C'est mon sentiment que nos relations ne peuvent pas se bien continuer si vous ne me donnez pas la permission de vous tutoyer. Voulez-vous que nous nous tutoyions?' Je lui pris les mains et je lui dis qu'une pareille proposition venant d'un Anglais, et d'un Anglais de sa haute distinction, c'etait une victoire, dont je serais fier toute ma vie. Et nous commencions a user de cette nouvelle forme dans nos rapports. Vous savez avec quelle finesse il parlait le francais: comme il en connaissait tous les tours, comme il jouait avec ses difficultes, et meme avec ses petites gamineries. Je crois qu'il a ete heureux de pratiquer avec moi ce tutoiement, qui ne s'adapte pas a l'anglais, et qui est si francais. Je ne puis vous peindre l'etendue et la variete de nos conversations de la soiree. Mais ce que je puis vous dire, c'est que, sous la caresse du TU, nos idees se sont elevees. Nous avions toujours beaucoup ri ensemble; mais nous n'avions jamais laisse des banalites s'introduire dans nos echanges de pensees. Ce soir-la, notre horizon intellectual s'est elargie, et nous y avons pousse des reconnaissances profondes et lointaines. Apres avoir vivement cause a table, nous avons longuement cause au salon; et nous nous separions le soir a Trafalgar Square, apres avoir longe les trotters, stationne aux coins des rues et deux fois rebrousse chemie en nous reconduisant l'un l'autre. Il etait pres d'une heure du matin! Mais quelle belle passe d'argumentation, quels beaux echanges de sentiments, quelles fortes confidences patriotiques nous avions fournies! J'ai compris ce soir la que

Jenkin ne detestait pas la France, et je lui serrai fort les mains en l'embrassant. Nous nous quittions aussi amis qu'on puisse l'etre; et notre affection s'etait par lui etendue et comprise dans un TU francais.