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CARMEN
SECULARE
H.V.A. 
FERGUSON



C A R M E N S E C U L A R E

A Poem

By H. V. A. FERGUSON



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D. K. W. W. 26 '36

Dedication

To Theodore Roosevelt

President of the United States

Who with high ideals, purity of character,
complete moral courage, incisiveness
of mind, and executive force, com-
bines a measure of that genuine
literary grace which ought
to mark the states-
men of a great
Republic.

P R E F A C E

I do not expect this little book to be much read by any but the scholarly and thoughtful. If I have suggested that great wealth, coupled with an inordinate desire for its acquisition, constitutes a danger to the nation, relaxing its morals and debasing its intellectual life, I have also endeavored to point out that nothing is to be gained by turning pessimist. The safety of the Republic is in itself, and so far it has never failed to do the right thing in a great crisis.

THE AUTHOR.

*Vancouver, Washington,
April 14, 1905.*

CARMEN SECULARE

QUINTUS: *A Wealthy, City-bred Lawyer.*

CRISPO: *A Lettered and Ambitious Farmer.*

QUINTUS.

No, Crispo, do not quit your rustic seat
For scenes from which all peaceful days retreat:
Deem not the green roof of the beechen tree
Inferior to the fretted canopy,
Nor think the town's congested thoroughfare
Sweeter than uplands cooled by morning air.
Still let the lark-note be your matin-bell,
And when the whip-poor-will mourns in the dell,
Murmur an *Ave*, if indeed you pray,
And wisely let the mad world go its way.
Believe me, there is more of genuine joy
In labors such as now your hours employ
Than ever crowned ambition's barren years,
Which brim with bitterness and secret tears.
The men who turned the whole world upside-down
Have found small satisfaction in renown,
And, sick of fame, and all the aches it brings,
As gardeners have forgot that they were kings.

CRISPO.

You might have mentioned bean-flowers, barley-rigs,
 Hop-vines, marsh-mallows, and the hazel twigs:
 Also the she-goats, heifers, and young pigs.
 There are a hundred things you might rehearse,
 With which bucolic singers deck their verse:
 All that unreal world, that Arcady,
 Shown on the sides of antique pottery.
 Be such the joy of the unlettered clown:
 Give me the turnpike leading to the town.
 I quite agree with him who thought to find
 His proper field of study in mankind.

QUINTUS.

When years bring wisdom, men draw quiet breath,
 And dread uncouth confusion worse than death.
 What has the bellowing city that allures
 A staid and unambitious mind like yours?

CRISPO.

A thousand things: and if I died before
 I saw the town, and heard the rabble's roar,
 Though there be many things that make me blest,
 I'd think myself defrauded of the best.

QUINTUS.

I thought the "best," by every sage allowed,
 Meant wholesome distance from the venal crowd:
 The husbandman's retirement, wisely sought,
 By virtue marked and philosophic thought;
 With just enough of toil to give life zest,
 And welcome evening with its pledge of rest;

C A R M E N S E C U L A R E

Exempt from actions that abuse the night,
And never shamefaced in the morning light,—
The only life consistent with the plan
Of rounding out creation with a man.

CRISPO.

Irksome to some, I grant, the populous street,—
But are there none to whom the mob is sweet?
Chiefly the lawyer, who, when clients bid,
Makes his responses as the Pythian did;
Whose modest house, such is his just renown,
Remains the oracle of all the town. (1)

QUINTUS.

Have you not read how, in more spacious days,
When legal spouters gained immortal bays,
Perspiring genius bawled at least a week
For some sour wine, a ham-bone, and a leek? (2)
Litigious folk are just as kind today,
And pay poor Fufius in the self-same way.
I know great swallows of Institutes
Who needs must boil the Pandects or their boots:
So lean the larder and unfed the maw
Of those that browse the barren fields of law.

CRISPO.

Yes, I have noted how the lawyers die,—
Of old age, if the gibbet pass them by.
A tougher set of sinners never proved
How heaven by wickedness remains unmoved.
As for *your* want of raiment, roof, and bread,
You shame Lucullus when your board is spread.

Do we not see your coachman on the seat,
 When your coupé goes dashing down the street?
 Do you not smile down on your threadbare friends,
 And slap your pockets, big with dividends?

QUINTUS.

Oh, bless you, bless you, I am one of those
 Whom lucky accident reprieved from woes.
 A sallow spinster, palsy-twitched and old,
 And cumbered with her title-deeds and gold,
 Remembered Quintus when she took to bed,
 And poured *post mortem* blessings on his head.
 Her pet dog had been stolen. ('Twas a pug,
 That drowed hard by her on a Persian rug).
 Trial by jury, a great speech by me,
 And the thief punished, as he ought to be:
 For which, much gratitude. So, once a year,
 I wet her tombstone with a pious tear,—
 Nor can I less, for, but for her good will,
 I had been out at heel and elbow still.
 But this is not the theme I had in view ;
 So let me turn the query back to you.
 Why would you leave your little Sabine farm?
 Has virtuous life, with labor, lost its charm?
 Is not the yearly round of all you do
 Diversified with pleasures,—guiltless, too?
 What is there in the brain-distracting town
 To bid the rural king resign his crown?
 Are care, and sorrow, pain, and pale disease,
 Are vulgar splendor, and fictitious ease,
 Ambitious misery, and dreams of wealth
 Better than peace, contentment, virtue, health?

Who knows beatitude, unless 'tis he
 Who lives and thrives by rustic industry,
 Beloved of all the gods that wait on man,
 And sure of favors when he prays to Pan? (3)
 Or, if a grist of proverbs may conclude
 What I am moved to offer for your good,
 Then take them, thus condensed in Chilo's way (4)
 From what the philomaths have had to say:
 Only the wise are noble, nor can he
 Be truly wise who wants humility;
 Nor humble, but as he remains content
 And docile under Virtue's government;
 Nor heir of any virtue worth the name
 While, puppy-wise, he trots behind the heels of Fame.

CRISPO.

Oh, these are commonplaces: anyone
 Can preach in pastorals, as you have done,
 Or quote grave saws from Doctor Dryasdust,
 Whose sapience is mere pedantic rust.
 I'm weary, weary of this humdrum life.
 I want new scenes, excitement, jargon, strife:
 The stirring conflict, where the field is free,
 And the green chaplet crowns the victory.
 I'm like my bantam cock, that walks about,
 Pecks barley, crows, and leads his harem out,
 And struts, two inches longer in the leg,
 Because some odalisque has laid an egg.
 I hate the microcosm where I abide.
 I stretch my arms, I touch it on each side,
 And long for some such unobstructed space
 As may permit a man to run a race.

C A R M E N S E C U L A R E

'Tis strange how folk, in fashion's garb arrayed,
Profess themselves enamored of the spade.
Pitchfork, and gabardine, and clouted shoe,—
These things seem quite idealized to you.
If starch and broadcloth really make you fret:
If nothing will suffice but you must sweat,
Put on the frock, and tell me what you get?
Dunghill heroics, and the stench of kine.
You seem to think vulgarities divine.

QUINTUS.

I thought, indeed, that peace to him was sweet
Who wooed the Muses in his still retreat: (5)
Who blew at will the flutes of Arcadie,
Or hived the honey of the Attic bee;
For, though the world has never heard your name,
I deemed your verse might sometime win you fame,
And prove the neatherd an authentic son,—
Horatius and Theocritus in one.
Like book-worm Burton, you have probed the past, (6)
And burned the rush-light like old Theophrast.
Almost you might teach Digby where to find
The treasures of the medieval mind: (7)
Ay, bid the lawn-clad prelates, one or two,
Their *Novum Testamentum* read anew,
Attentive, while the farmer of hard fist
Disclosed the precious meanings they had missed—
Less bent, I fear, to praise the book's contents
Than to indulge a smile at priests' expense.
Urania, too, the queen of all the Nine,
Has led you up her stairway crystalline,

And showed you wonders on the starry plain
That lie beyond the ken of eyes profane,—
That high-browed priestess, whose disciples find
Through her the pathway to th' Almighty Mind, (8)
And nightly are instructed from the book
In which archangels might delight to look.
'Twas you that taught my budding mind to know
What nard and balm in Maro's gardens grow ;
And many a time, when lessons had been read,
And Dian climbed her watchtower overhead,
You led me forth, beyond the pines a space,
To show the spotted fawn upon her face ;
Taught me what orbs are fixed, which wanderers are,
And spelled Chaldea's science star by star,
From the huge Dragon of the scaly fold
To brawny-limbed Orion, armed in gold :
From red Antares, which the seaman hails,
And by whose beam he trims his homeward sails,
To Sagittarius, where, with shafts that gleam,
He drives the cattle to the milky stream ; (9)
And many a time you led me through the sky
Till the cock blew his clarion, shrill and high,—
Till morning's herald star swam into view,
And all the grassy ways were wet with dew.
Why, even yet I smell the meadowy breath
That showed the night was sloping to its death :
I hear the first crisp air that stirs at morn
Shaking the javelins of th' embattled corn :
The first "Hail Mary" from the bird whose breast
Brooded the pale-blue eggs within the nest,

And, high above, the lark's song, just begun,
 To greet, as Persians did, the coming sun,
 And with regret behold the east grow gray,
 The night was so much sweeter than the day.

II.

CRISPO.

My Quintus, in these things I simply find
 An innocent joy, and discipline of mind.
 I might have dreamed of epic honors once,
 (Who hath not dreamed, and found himself a dunce?)
 But verse, as youth's presumption disappears,
 Is not the labor of my days or years.
 If I could sing, indeed, as Homer sung,
 When nature and the human heart were young,
 To sing were well: but what should I do here?
 Wear hobnailed boots, and "chronicle small beer."
 The cup of solitude which I have drunk
 Might suit the lip of some ascetic monk,
 Some meagre beadsman, whom the cloister-bell
 Sends to his knees at midnight in his cell,
 But cowl and beads are not the prize for me,
 Who have a mission in society.
 I hear the world say, "Come, and play your part.
 Select your field. The sword, the gown, the mart—
 All these are open, and pretenders now
 Snatch laurels that were better on your brow."
 And when I hear, and then think what I am,
 Rocking with idle canvas in the calm,
 I grow ashamed, and almost wonder why
 The world should harbor such a thing as I.

QUINTUS.

False pride, old friend, false pride. Why, one would think .

That Pyrrhus could not sleep a single wink,
Excogitating still his high designs.

What walls do you beleaguer with your lines?

And have you stopped to think how you would show,

The farmer in the general's chapeau?

As for the bench and gown, the *cadi's* trade,

You know the figure Sancho Panza made,

Albe his mother-wit and homely sense

Proved equal to Alfonso's precedents.

No; if my friend were Pyrrhus, I'm afraid

He'd prove an awkward 'prentice at his trade,

But were the great king *you*, he still would be

Great, through a rational simplicity;

For Pyrrhus, with no honors on his brows,

No doubt, would shear his sheep, and milk his cows,

Hang up his bacon-flitches, watch the moon,

Ploughing and planting neither late nor soon,

Or jolt to market, Doris by his side,

And bar his door against intrusive pride.

At least, he would, if he had been endowed

With half the sense that stocks the common crowd.

For you, I held you far above your kind

In real dignity and strength of mind:

A just observer, and a man who knew

Solid from unsubstantial, false from true.

CRISPO.

The same old story. May no man aspire

To stray a mile beyond his country fire,

C A R M E N S E C U L A R E

Or seek society outside his steers,
But some wise man must din into his ears
That all the good we know beneath the moon
Is eating porridge with a wooden spoon?

QUINTUS.

But what will you, who know the breeds of fowls,
Or how to mend a thatch when winter howls,
Do where the human hubbub rises loud?
Merely efface yourself amid the crowd.

CRISPO.

No, merely put away rusticity,
And profit by a hundred things I see.
Social attrition wears the edges down,
And smoothes away the angles of the clown,
Who, though he fail to mend grammatic faults,
Yet by the grace of God may learn to waltz,
And, being careful not to prate of letters,
Pass for a Chesterfield among his betters.

QUINTUS.

Well, there was once a time when Socrates
Could get street-hearers, and Diogenes ;
But that day passed when Athens bowed to fate,
And you were born two thousand years too late :
For I assume you do not mean to be
A parasite in gay society.

CRISPO.

A parasite? Nay, I would play the sage,
And mark the manners of this Gilded Age.

QUINTUS.

Say rather that you count the joys too few
Which health and virtue still allot to you,
And, sick of sober pleasures, faithful friends,
Would light your half-burnt candle at both ends.
Hear now a word of wisdom, in the way
It might have been expressed in Cowper's day.
On shipboard once, (I've known the ridgy sea,
And shared Ulysses' briny misery,)
I climbed one morning to the mainmast-head,
Before the sickly east was streaked with red,
To see an ocean sunrise: to behold
The first slant splendor of the solar gold,
And watch the heaving waste (pitch-black at night)
Flash into sapphire when kissed by the light.
And when the day burst—rocking to and fro
Upon the topmast, feathers pure as snow—
I saw a great white owl, with large brown eyes.
An off-shore wind, that whistled through wild skies,
Had swept him seaward, and the weary thing,
Helpless in daylight, and with flagging wing,
Was resting there until the wished-for night
Should nerve his pinions for the homeward flight.
And I imagined I could hear him say,
"Flying is pleasanter by night than day,
But there's no sense in either sort of flight,
Unless one knows beforehand where to light."
You'll fare much like the owl of which I tell,
If you go down to Babylon to dwell:
Though there may be some question whether *you*
Will get back to the place from which you flew.

C A R M E N S E C U L A R E

CRISPO.

Why, do you think——

QUINTUS.

I think, to speak you plain,
That you invite no ordinary pain;
For to fine spirits, unalloyed with dirt,
Humiliation is a mortal hurt,
Though that is only one wound, 'mong the rest,
To which you obstinately bare your breast.
You'll never find, what not a few desire,
A seat provided at a rich man's fire.
The poet once could claim the world's regard,
And got his keep by saying, "I'm a bard."
But times are altered, and the wretch expires
Whose only asset is his lyric wires.

CRISPO.

You don't pretend to say that cities lack
For civil breeding? Has the race gone back
To skins and acorns?

QUINTUS.

Polished manners yet
On hypocrites a worthless varnish set
Of staid demeanor, but too cold and thin
To any more than just japan the skin,—
A mere steel-blue politeness. This veneer,
Is this the thing you sigh for? Who will cheer
Your honest leisure with a soul sincere?
Who, like your neighbors, hang upon your words,
And swallow all that lore of flocks and herds?

No. Spite of all your power to plot and plan,
 YOU SHALL PERCEIVE THE LITTLENESS
 OF MAN.

Few to admire, and none to love or trust,
 Time shall intensify your deep disgust.
 Then scenes that charmed your unexacting eye
 Shall rise to plague your dull satiety,
 Invite you back, if only for a day,
 And make you sicken at enforced delay.
 In place of urban pomp, whose gilded show
 But serves to emphasize the general woe,
 How shall you sigh, and sigh in vain, to see
 The signs of pastoral simplicity:
 The spreading elm, the wealthy flocks' retreat
 When August's ardent beams imbrowned
 the wheat; (10)
 The reapers, with bare throats, the teded hay;
 The whistling blackbird, and the scolding jay;
 The kine, that with the evening star came home,
 Whose strutting udders crowned the pails with foam;
 October's fatness, dropping from each tree,
 And white-armed Phyllis at her housewifery,
 And every other rustic sight and sound
 That taught you where true happiness was found.

III.

CRISPO.

Of course. The man with law-books on his arm
 Must eulogize the drudgery of the farm.
 Bent o'er his last, the cobbler, tired of stitches,
 Envies the tailor who composed his breeches.

C A R M E N S E C U L A R E

The cross-legg'd tailor, sick of seam and band,
Enviest the blacksmith, with his sinewy hand.
And I've known bankers, with no power of speech,
Who thought their true vocation was to preach.
No doubt blind Homer thought *his* lot severe:
With eyes, he might have been a charioteer.
Even Hector, dear to all heroic hearts,
Half envied Alexander's showy parts,
And almost coveted the power that won
The Argive beauty, when the deed was done.
'Tis this endemic weakness makes us men,
And taints nine-and-three-quarters out of ten.
I own the weakness. Foolish or discreet,
Upon the Appian Way I set my feet,
Nor will I thrust the fixed ambition down
Till I have tried my fortune in the town.

QUINTUS.

What would you do?

CRISPO.

I seek to serve the State.

QUINTUS.

A good ambition, but, I fear, too great.
How would you serve it?

CRISPO.

As the Roman did,
Who left his cornfield when the people bid,
Discharged a patriot's duties, and laid down
The ensigns of his office (sword or gown),

Conscious (reward enough) the commonwealth
Had gained in freedom, strength, or moral health.

QUINTUS.

What is the goal to which ambition plods,—
The prætor's baton, or the axe and rods?

CRISPO.

Why, either one, if you would make the point
That any faculty is out of joint—

QUINTUS.

No, Crispo: even Timon's bitter tongue
Should sing your praises. Neither old nor young,
In wisdom ripe, in knowledge unsurpassed,
In speech with Crassus worthy to be classed, (11)
I know no statesman half so well equipped.
Nor do I smile because I think you hipped
With that too common frailty that one finds,—
That "last infirmity of noble minds,"
The itch for office. I but smile to see
Your milk-tooth candor and simplicity.

CRISPO.

Philosopher and simpleton at once:
A mixture of the wise man and the dunce.
I miss your drift.

QUINTUS.

I'll try to make it plain.
How many *jugera* do you sow to grain?

CRISPO.

Some score, or thirty. Then, I ted my hay,
And keep a smatch of forest.

QUINTUS.

And we'll say
 Your cattle equal twenty, horses four,
 Pigs, geese, and pullets twice as many more :
 Enough for you, who lead a frugal life,
 To keep yourself, your young ones, and your wife ;
 To put a little grape-juice under ground
 For cheerful use when holidays come round ;
 To buy a book or two, if not too dear,
 And see the city once or twice a year.
 This little world, which knows you for its lord,
 Reduced to sesterces, would scarce afford
 Enough to furnish forth Asinius' board, (12)
 Not twice, but *once*,—and even then 'twould be
 Beneath his customary luxury.
 You, who command a pittance at the most,
 How would *you* win the senatorial post ?

CRISPO.

Why, through the *people*, with their sovereign voice,
 Who still in public servants have a choice,
 Choose nobly, and delight to elevate
 The most accomplished members of the State,—
 And sometimes think a farmer fit to touch
 Elbows with lawyers, orators, and such.

QUINTUS.

Lord help you. He who shows his hardened face
 Among the "conscript fathers" *buys* his place.
 Once in three hundred years observers see
 A fan-tailed comet in its perigee ;
 And once in a whole lifetime *plebs* may show

His sunburnt visage in the senate-row.
 But to what purpose? Though his hard old head
 Holds more than the whole senate ever read,
 He's just a cipher: reads a speech or two,
 And like the burnt-out Pleiad fades from view,
 When, prompt as an old pike snaps up a dace,
 Some moneybags is seated in his place.

CRISPO.

In plain words, then, the poor man is debarred?

QUINTUS.

A creature quite unworthy of regard.
 While you have shocked your corn, and cocked your
 hay,
 The world of action slid unseen away:
 Left you tide-stranded, and, in things of state,
 Much like an almanac of last year's date.
 And yet 'twas better to have dwelt retired
 Than to have marked a change so undesired.
 Now bone-dust, or guano, oil, or lard,
 Old junk, old clothes, or soap, both soft and hard,
 Claim precedent in the law-maker's hall,
 And crowd the rough-hewn statesman to the wall;
 And all can do the trick who boast the power
 To check a million out within an hour.

IV.

CRISPO.

I'm not so sure that that's a thing to make
 A wise man's eyes wet or his heart to ache.
 Your "rough-hewn statesman" had his noisy day,
 And no one suffered when he passed away.

His homespun breeches, and his ruffled shirt,
(The wristbands wide, and seldom free from dirt) ;
His coat, claw-hammer-tailed, of swallow-blue,
(With one or both his elbows sticking through) ;
His silver buttons, and his vest of buff ;
His shaven upper lip, besmudged with snuff ;
The corncob pipe he smoked, the "weed" he chewed,
The juleps that he drank, the punch he brewed ;
The bell-crowned hat he wiped with pious care ;
The buckled dancing-pumps he used to wear ;
The cane he flourished when he walked abroad ;
His conversation, strengthened with "By God,"
Or "By th' Eternal," and th' emphatic "Sir"
By which he proved he was not born to err ;
His perorations in the nation's halls,
Which cracked the plaster on the quaking walls,
And, after that, conduced to make us know
The startling fact that grampuses still blow,—
What would this scarecrow do upon the stage ?
What message bring to a more cultured age ?
You smiled at him yourself, a while ago,
When you saw *plebs'* face in the senate-row.
'Tis certain an irreverant world would laugh,
And overwhelm him with its saucy chaff :
The same as if, with bare and dirty feet,
The crowd met Socrates in Bleeker street.

QUINTUS.

Your language pains me. Such remarks, from you,
Are inexcusable. Flat treason, too,—

Disloyalty to all that one should hold
 In reverent love, for they were hearts of gold,
 Those quaint old fellows——

CRISPO.

Yes, I see them yet:
 Immortal for their backwoods etiquette,
 The Davy Crocketts, with their unrepaid chins,
 The snarling Randolphins, with their fallow skins.
 You think, with heads immersed in the blue sky,
 They felt less humanly than you or I:
 And yet they broke their hearts at loss of place,
 And took revenge by hating all the race.
 They loved cards, routs, gay women, and good wine,—
 Also their posts, for when did one resign?
 And they were proud, too: ay, like Miss McBride,
 Twice proud, because they gloried in their pride.
 As for their wisdom, why, 'twas only when
 These pedants ceased to vex the sons of men
 That statecraft's stunted bush begun to be
 Bark-full of sap, and broadened to a tree.

QUINTUS.

Let it be granted. Let those worthies be
 The cornfield's nubbins to such men as we:
 Still, taking up the argument *ad rem*,
 Why need *you* seek the cabbage diadem?
 For such I call the crown, whate'er the cause
 That gains its champion the mob's applause.
 Now I predict that Crispo, whom I know,
 Will stay at home, and let ambition go.

Corn in your bins, a snug roof overhead,
You neither lack for shelter nor for bread;
And if books cloy, and conversation fail,
Who has such pippins, cheese, and home-brewed ale?
A Welshman's fare, but such as none may slight, (13)
If good digestion wait on appetite.

CRISPO.

Need I the words of Socrates repeat?
I do not live that I may merely eat. (14)
And yet, the rational delights I find
Are unsufficing to my jaded mind.
Thus, when my evening lamp is trimmed and lit,
There are some volumes over which I sit,—
Some rare old authors, famed for sense and wit,
Who, though to sepulchres long since consigned,
Are still the matchless mentors of mankind;
Who cheer, console, and teach me wisdom's way
With admonitions as of yesterday,—
So much do thoughts, becoming living things,
Outlast the mortuary brass of kings.
But dead men weary me. And hence I seek
To hear Contemporaneous Wisdom speak,—
Clothed in the flesh, with all his faculties,
The living creature set before my eyes.
Though it may seem to make the green leaves shoot,
No painting can impart the taste of fruit;
And so a book, minutely though we scan,
But shows a simulacrum, not the man.
In philosophic Plato I rejoice,
But how much better to have heard his voice:

C A R M E N S E C U L A R E

Though his severe prospectus, it might be,
Had barred the academic door to me. (15)
Cleanthes, in the stadium trained to fight,
Became a water-carrier every night,
And labored by the red flare of the torch
That he might listen in the Painted Porch (16)
To wise old Zeno. I would do the same,
Though I might never win Cleanthes' fame.
We read the Greek's oration on the crown,
And judge him worthy of his high renown;
But, as his candid rival aptly said,
When to the Rhodians the speech he read, (17)
"If you admire a paraphrase so weak,
What would you think if he himself should speak?"
If one might gather at the social board
All starry spirits, and hail one as lord,
Who would not place Chrysippus on his right? (18)
Or hear blind Melesigenes recite?
But most, I think, I should have joyed to hear
The voice of him who gave the world "King Lear,"—
That many-sided master of the heart,
Who dwarfs the ancients with his god-like art.
Strange, is it not, that while he lived not one,
Save Spenser, knew the glory of that sun? (19)
The classic blockheads merely praised his muse
When she was shod with Ovid's worn-out shoes. (20)
When he was kneeling on his laureate knees
To read Elizabeth his comedies,
She never dreamed—that queen with the hard phiz—
That all the gracious patronage was *his*;

That the wool-comber's son, of humble birth,
Was condescending to the Tudor earth :
Though that has always been the state of things
Since God made poets and the mob made kings.
Ben Jonson poured the ale into his skin
Which Shakespeare paid for at the Mermaid Inn,
Remarked his wit, saw all his genius shine,
And never handed down a single line,—
Nothing at all of what made many a night
Like the gods' banquets on Olympus' height. (21)
Had such a famous chance but come to me,
I think I might have served posterity ;
For what had been more pleasing, more unique
Than to see Shakespeare, and to hear him speak ?
I should have writ, at least, an interview,
Enlivened by a comic flash or two,
And thumb-nail-sketched the most peculiar man
That trod neat's leather since the world began.
Why, even in the case of that he bear,
That literary grizzly in his lair,
(The grouty Doctor with the scrofular face),—
I'd be a Boswell, almost, in his case,
Glad, like the Scotsman, to lick up wise crumbs,
And stand behind his chair with twiddling thumbs.
And dear old Goldsmith, whom a look could grieve,
Wearing his honest heart upon his sleeve,
Playing his flute to get a crust of bread,
Or a night's lodging in a peasant's shed,—
I would have wandered with him, well content
To have my heels out and my breeches rent,

Just so he might instruct me how to find
(In those books of frayed edges, called mankind),
The wisdom which *he* found, despite his woes,
And made immortal both in verse and prose.
The selfsame passion which *I* have, I find,
Is epidemical with all mankind.
We dream of greatness in our days of youth,
Having a deal to say of trust, and truth ;
We strive to *be* great in our riper years,
But mostly find endeavor crowned with tears :
Yet greatness still attracts us, and we run—
Mere children still—to see the men who *won*.
Hence, like a rustic, I desire to see
Some chief examples of the *bel esprit*,—
Poets, and thinkers ; ay, and him whose speech
To Tully's height of eloquence can reach,
When in the forum, with Apollo's grace
And Jove's own frown, he pleads the orphan's case,
Or shakes the senate, as he crucifies
Some hard-browed Catiline of sullen eyes.
It needs must be, where pomp and splendor reign,
That such stand out like poppies in my grain ;
For, whatsoever height a state may reach,
One thing is still its crown—true eloquence of
speech. (22)

QUINTUS.

Stay where you are, and when you feel the mood,
Go out into the nearest field or wood ;
Select a theme that offers room to spout,
And pour th' extemporaneous torrent out.
Then, if you listen to yourself, you'll hear
The notable oration of the year.

CRISPO.

You speak in jest, or, like the fox, decry
Your neighbor's grapes, that hang an ell too high.

QUINTUS.

I neither jest, nor do I rail, because
It suits my bias to withhold applause.
As for the "conscript fathers," such as prate,
(For some are worse than tongue-tied: happy fate:)
Less masterful, less graphic, but more loud,
They seldom scatter from the blazing cloud
That spoken lightning which of old could make
A tyrant with a quartan-ague shake.
The dull debater's height is all they reach.
I've heard more real dignity of speech
From farmers, like yourself, who stopped their ploughs
At noontide, and beneath the shady boughs,
Or in their cornfields leaning on their hoes,
Discussed the public questions as they rose,
Than you will get from spouters of renown
Who rant before full senate in the town.
The *Dunciad* might have saved them—one or two—
Achieving what orations could not do:
Without one spark of wit, one verbal flower,
(The happy inspiration of the hour,)—
Such stupid parturitions, all by rote,
That Tully, had he heard, had cut his throat.
Yet there's a consolation: none can say
That state orations are unduly gay.
The tropes are missing, and need not be scorned:
For how can mental sawdust be adorned?

Let them spout on, and let us still be fleeced
 That Buncomb's backwoods fame may be increased.
 Let them still scrawl, and sometimes *speak* their
 screeds,
 And print ten thousand books that no one ever
 reads. (23)

V.

CRISPO.

At least, there must be poets that still write?

QUINTUS.

Not one. The singing tribe has vanished quite.
 Odes, virelays, *vers de société*,
 The sachet-scented nothings of the day:
 Mere iridescent bubbles, lightly blown,
 Mere futile carving on a cherry-stone,—
 Such is the grist that all the song-mills grind,
 For poets seem to lack the thing we call a mind.
 Affairs are worse, by odds, than in the time
 When Pudding Barlow scrawled heroic rhyme,
 Or when, with frills, pomatum and low shoes,
 The traveled Willis feebly wooed the Muse,
 Hillhouse whelped plays with unrewarded pains,
 And Ware stole what he could of Pollok's brains.
 The loves and doves of Simms's and Dana's day
 Were equal, God knows, to the Wilcox lay,
 Or Carlton's invoice of *nux vomica*;
 For one could read *some* things the dabblers wrote
 Without the feather tickling in his throat.
 For the "great novelists," whom genius fires
 To poke the ashes of the nation's sires,

C A R M E N S E C U L A R E

They desecrate the tombs that hold their clay
Until the poor ghosts rage, and seem to say
To literary mister and to miss,—
“Great Cæsar, have we lived and died for this?
Biographers have cost us many groans,
But why need folk like *you* disturb our bones?
For God’s sake, quit, ye ghouls, your graveyard quest,
And leave us, since we earned it, to our rest.”
The drama? Lo, the tragic paragon,
The pugilist, who pulls the buskin on,
Bellows his lines, devoid of all remorse,
Makes love, foils villains, shoes a kicking horse,
And then repeats, while pit and boxes shout,
The blow that knocked the other bruiser out.
The insult heaped upon Melpomene
Should clap the whole gang in the pillory.

CRISPO.

Enough, enough. If things be as you say,
I ought to take my turn at eating hay.
Tomorrow I may wear the weaver’s ears,*
The stall-companion of my colts and steers,
And cousin-german to th’ Assyrian king;
For such blind eyes as mine must surely bring
Some strange translation.—But I will not prate.
I only know that yonder at the gate
My testy jehu jerks the reins and swears, (24)
More restless than the team of sorrel mares,
Which cannot understand how one that’s wise
Should leave them to the torture of the flies,

* Bottom, the weaver, in “Midsummer Night’s Dream.”

Whilst, like an old crow on a pollard tree,
 He caws, and calls his noise philosophy.
 Yet ere we part, your farmer friend to please,
 Concisely diagnose this strange disease:
 This intellectual dearth and desolation,
 This universal blankness of the nation.

QUINTUS.

'Tis wealth, my friend, the curse of young and old,
 This madman's frenzy to get heaps of gold.
 The Mammon-venom through all veins has run:
 Red lepers, we, plague-smitten, and undone.
 As to the end—but why make that our theme,
 And write our annals backward? 'Tis a dream
 To think the proud republic of the West
 Conceals no cankerworm within her breast.
 Virtue, and freedom; pride, ambitious war;
 Glory, and luxury; the falling star,—
 Such is the order. And this side the sea
 We shall but duplicate past history:
 And a new Tacitus shall write the book
 In which remoter times shall blush to look.

CRISPO.

That's very spirited: but are you sure
 You do not need to try the water-cure?
 Permit me, pray, to make a brief remark,
 And light my farthing candle in the dark.
 The world through two great periods has passed.
 Ours is the third grand epoch, and the last.
 For ages Force was master, and grim War
 Over the necks of nations drave his car.

Then for a thousand years or so, we find,
Bead-counting Superstition ruled mankind.
Mitres and croziers—these were lordlier things
Than globes and sceptres in the hands of kings ;
And of the list of tyrants, all accurst,
The sanctimonious tyrants were the worst.
Swords rusted, priests in limbo, now we view
The Age of Money, which, to paint it true,
(Polite, profound, magnificent, humane,)
Does more to mitigate the poor man's pain
In one day's compass than a cycle did.
For me, I hold the world to be well rid,
Not only of the friar's shaven crown,
But of the hackbuteers who stormed a town
To rape the women. Take the fairest page,
Quaint with the colors of a by-gone age,
(The peasant's hovel, with its walls of mud,
The rich man's license, with his love of blood,)
And say if anyone, outcept an ass,
From ours to medieval times would pass?
No. All this solemn prate about the past,
Wherein we see departed virtue glassed,
Is cankered Envy, trying to disguise
Its gall by talking big and looking wise.
No matter how, with misanthropic breath,
Timon devotes the rotten world to death,
His curses fail: no plagues infect the air,
But wholesomeness and health reign everywhere.
The manly creed which Terence's line exprest (25)
Has found an echo in the human breast,

And men, grown sympathetic with their kind,
Abhor the snapping-turtle frame of mind.
A juster, broader, and more heavenly law
Has robbed the rich man of his miser's claw.
Hearts beat with natural feeling. A new day
Beams on the race with charitable ray,
And he to whom excessive riches fall
Pours, like the sun, his bounty upon all,
And fortune uses, as it ever should,
Its "bright occasions of dispensing good." (26)
All this warped gospel of the hate of wealth,—
What is it but a want of moral health?
Sound at the heart, the Tree of Liberty
Bourgeons and blossoms; for a kindly sky
Invites its growth, and hid suns shine again,
Crowning the benediction of the rain.
The woodlark haunts it, and still pours his throat
In many an unpremeditated note,
And no vile birds, as yet, with clanging wings,
Disturb the dear enthusiast as he sings.

QUINTUS.

No kites nor hawks, it seems, which *you* can find.
I rather envy you your frame of mind.
May I assume, intending no offence,
That in your agricultural innocence
You praise those malefactors: that vile brood,
Which daubs our country's flag with Asia's blood,
Urging necessity, the tyrant's plea,
For strangling liberty across the sea?

CRISPO.

I quite approve, and so, I think, should you,
Could you but take the just and liberal view.
The blunted spear, and myrtle-wreathen sword,
"Such as Harmodious drew on Athens' tyrant lord,"
May grace a pageant or a melodrame,
But only naked steel, the cold, blue flame,
Is adequate, at times, to arm the hand
Of Freedom, who must conquer and command,
Though the red drops of the pavilioned field
Spatter the lilies in her consular shield.
For though she slays, she but asserts the right
To lead barbaric millions up to light:
Cleanse, comfort, clothe, guide, guard, inform the
 mind,
The shepherd of the lost sheep of mankind:
And if, as on her holy way she wend,
The sister Arts on all her steps attend,
And Commerce, following the diurnal sun,
Make the world's morning and her evening one,
Scatter her blessings with benignant hands,
And bind in social ties the distant lands,—
Must all become a scorn and vile offence,
Because wise Thrift acquires a competence?
As a high moralist you hardly shine.
When the late-comer lifts and prunes the vine,
He stands entitled to his proper pay,
And the old parable holds good today.

VI

QUINTUS.

From war's exploits, which, after all, compare
With Gilpin's ride from Edmonton to Ware,
Come back to what engaged us first, good friend:
The sadness of ill-bent ambition's end,
The incommensurate profit which it finds,
And the calm judgment of all valid minds
That comely life and death outvalue all
The splendors of the king's processional.
The Stagyrite tells us—and you hold him wise—
That happiness is action's only prize.
Or take that other thin, abstemious Greek,
Of whom but now I heard you warmly speak.*
He taught that virtue is the only good,
And added, that the peasant's fire of wood,
His frugal table, his rude hut of boards,
And such delights as country life affords,
Are better than ambition's painful quest,
And that, or long or short, his life is best
Who closest lives to nature.

CRISPO.

That might do
For Antoninus (27), and perhaps for you,
Though your philosophy is not exprest
By any threadbare cloak about your breast.
For me, I would bear burdens. That would be,
Or so I think, supreme felicity:

* Zeno.

To share in the *res publica*: to feel
 The *Ego's* value in the commonweal,—
 Though that's a duty, and no mere desire,
 If we would keep our civic scheme entire.

QUINTUS.

You know the answer of the ex-Vizier,
 When the king sought a trusty minister:
 "The surest test of courtly competence
 Is when a man, endowed with native sense,
 Will not fare townwards through his suburb gate
 To be bedeviled with affairs of state." (28)

CRISPO.

A left-hand compliment: but let that pass.
 There may be happiness in raking grass,
 Wisdom be his who strides behind the plow,
 And virtue in the sweat-drops on his brow.
 But give me leave, if heaven wills, to find
 Such labor as may dignify the mind,
 That being, rightly judged, most grave of all
 Which is from *polis* named political.

QUINTUS.

Well, I have compassed, in a sort of way,
 The mob's applause, for which you seem to pray;
 Stretched forth the hand, like Paul, before my peers,
 And moved their indignation, smiles, and tears;
 Expended days and nights—and Treasury notes—
 And beat my rivals in the count of votes;
 And, having tasted what the millions crave,
 The thing I see most clearly is the grave:

C A R M E N S E C U L A R E

The goal-post of endeavor of all kinds,
The *finis* of the most immortal minds.
The jackdaw in the steeple cried out, *Caru*,—
Just that, and nothing more,—at all he saw ;
And, like the poet, who admired the bird
For thus condensing what he saw and heard, (29)
(Convinced that all we do or suffer here
Is just the same stale show staged every year,)
I hold none happy but the just and good,
And that those bipeds have a skull of wood
Who ache for praise, and cast a covetous eye
Upon the mad world's pomp and vanity.
How vain the ardor of the aspiring crowd !
And what a strange disease afflicts the proud !
For, in the last analysis of things,
What are the glories of empurpled kings :
All those paste jewels which ambition craves,
And which, when won, are only worn by slaves ?
The dictionary-maker puts the case, (30)
And through a king admonishes the race :
The royal Swede, who wrapped him in his cloak,
And slept beside Mazeppa 'neath the oak,
Unmoved, although the fortune of the war
Had left him nothing but his roquelaure.
With no more feeling than a cube of ice,
And only his ambition for a vice,
He set the chess-board, played his martial game,
And marched his soldiers' legs off to win fame,
Till Fate called off the farce at Frederickshall,
And knocked his head in with a cannon-ball.

C A R M E N S E C U L A R E

Dead, graved, and epitaphed, how does he rank?
Why, he was tough, and slept upon a plank,
And when he saw a beauty flick her fan,
Like Joseph from the queen, he turned and ran.
Can such poor ghosts of virtue gild the years
He filled with fire and famine, blood and tears?
Motassem gives a city to the sword,
And sheds the blood dear to the Christian's Lord;
The next day lifts a beggar from the ditch,
Robes him in silk, and makes him more than rich.
If, Minos-like, we judge the kingly shade,
Which act shall kick the beam when he is weighed?
And, judgment entered, whether true or feigned,
What boots it that the Soldan ever reigned?
For lo, the meagre facts which I remark
But for a scholar still were in the dark.
Greater than he have climbed the giddy height
Which Glory blisters with its blinding light.
They lived, they died—and what shall Fame supply?
A half-a-page of dubious history.
You know how Gray sings in his classic strain
About the "heavier toil, superior pain,"
The "storied urn, and animated bust:"
Also what Shakespeare says of Cæsar's dust.
If Julius stops a chink, as well he may,
Why trouble so about our common clay?
What shall it matter, if we breathe and eat
Safe from the Dog-star and December's sleet,
Conscious of years well spent, and work well done,
And with no motive to retard the sun

C A R M E N S E C U L A R E

Upon the dial, unless it should be
To practise some forgotten charity,— (31)
What shall it matter if the harlot Fame
Add not her suffix to a dead man's name,
And the white daisies, growing o'er his breast,
Instead of marble mark his place of rest?
Timocreon lived, and from his epitaph
We know he dined well, and raised many a laugh;
But if to be remembered thus is fame,
What more may Zengis or Iskander claim?
No bliss peculiar crowns ambitious strife:
Disgust attends the most successful life.
The Arab monarch reigned for fifty years,
Rich, envied, great, and then confessed, with tears,
That all the happy days which he had seen,
When numbered with exactness, *were fourteen.* (32)
Peasant or prince, man reaps the same result,
And all that he can say is, *Deus vult.*
Nothing but unsuccess and moral drouth:
The taste of artemisia in the mouth.
'Tis so with letters, and all forms of art:
We stimulate the brain, and starve the heart.
To carve like Phidias, or to blow sweet breath
In Lydian flutes—can one or both stop death?
And after death, what shall we reap, O friend?
Carve, sing, or reason, what shall be the end?
The statues that were reckoned most sublime
Were often smashed and roasted for their lime.
The whispering Ilissus hears no more
The harps that Homer, 'Pindar strang of yore,

And distant strangers, of barbaric tongue,
Neglect or misinterpret what they sung.
Laertes's orchard only yields its fruits
To such as grub with patience 'mid Greek roots;
And for the Grove, the Garden, and the Porch,—
What hands now trim the philosophic torch?
Clean-minded Epicurus, best of men,
Supplies a figure for a sensual den,
And Aristotle triumphs over fate
When we use syllogisms in debate,
Though half the time we do not understand
Who placed the ancient weapon in our hand.

CRISPO.

All which is mere rhetorical pretence.
You lack both fortitude and common sense.
True life is action,—the ambitious stir,
Which makes toil noble. Whom do you prefer,
The princes that elect the private path,
Like Diocletian, Charles, (33) and Amurath,
(Content with concubines, or monkish beads,)
Or gray-haired greatness, which still dares and bleeds,
Reprieves a nation from its doubts and fears,
And dies like Dandolo at ninety years?
There never yet was ruler who put by
The glittering "round and top of sovereignty,"
Who did not daily see within his glass
The ears that made him an egregious ass.
And such, my friend, should I be, such should you,
To shun promotion if it were in view.

QUINTUS.

Well, that depends. If my promotion means
A long farewell to all endearing scenes ;
If I must lose my friends, and learn to see
The hidden meanness of humanity ;
If I must simulate, with frenzied zeal,
Affection or regard I do not feel ;
If I, to bolster up my brief renown,
Must kiss the dirty babies of the town,
Shake hands with all the mob, be bored to death,
And smell the onions on the freeman's breath ;
If all is brag and bluster, grab and steal,
Then let some other serve the commonweal.
For my part, I shall more than be content
To use the blessings which the gods have sent,
Nor prompt their wrath to snatch those blessings back
By whining prayers for things I think I lack.
How counsels Wisdom? "Ere the bold eye fail,
And aching age's rheums the bright orb veil ;
While manhood, still unbent, is green and hale,
And on the distaff, hourly growing thin,
Some threads are left for Lachesis to spin, (34)
And Chronos only bids our temples show
Where he has marked us with the fatal snow,—
The wise are they who calmly turn aside,
And leave to fools the puppet-shows of pride ;
Espouse Content, the kirtled country maid,
Who hates the glitter of the rich brocade ;
See not in combats, sure to prove in vain,
Commensurate exchange of peace for pain,

Nor, wedding years to folly, play a part
That earns contempt, or breaks the player's heart."
Forget your dream, and to your wounds apply
The soothing plaster of philosophy,
Which quickly mends ambition's broken shins,
And is a cure-all for most sorts of sins.
While sweltering wretches in the town are pent,
The slaves of "glory," or on business bent,
We, with such leisure as your toil allows,
Will pass the sultry hours beneath the boughs,
Hard by the domiciles of finch and wren,
That warm the speckled eggs in sight of men,—
As if to teach them, in their greed and strife,
The simple duties of a virtuous life.
Invigorated by the woodland air,
And warmed in fancy by a scene so fair,
We'll hold great disputations, like the man
Who wrote the famous book called Tusculan ;
And when we've run the gamut of the mind,
And both our throats to dryness are inclined,
A mug of milk, superior as a drink,
Shall lubricate the valves, and help us think.
Though none may set the learned orations down,
You shall not want for posthumous renown.
Your neighbors shall be there to hear and see,
Myself and wife, your wife, and children three ;
The genial county judge, who does not think
That only Blackstone made good use of ink,
And all the farm-hands, standing in a ring.
There you shall spout, or, if it like you, sing,

As Homer held his open-air levee
At Neon-teichos 'neath the poplar-tree.
What better can I wish you, rustic friend,
Than such a life as this, down to the end?
Yes, one wish more. When Muses bid you write,
May every robust folio you indite
Deserve the cedarn casket, sweet as nard, (35)
And may the turf at last rest lightly on the bard.

CRISPO.

Adieu, adieu. Be happy, if you can,
And quite forget the littleness of man.
Remember that the spacious earth has woods,—
Best anodyne for misanthropic moods.
The trout are rising to the coachman fly,
And there are anglers' omens in the sky.
Forget your pie-crust-colored Institutes,
And spend a forenoon in your wading-boots. (36)
I'll look for you tomorrow. Fare you well,—
And in the meantime, *Vive la Bagatelle*. (37)

APPENDIX

NOTES

I

“For what is more noble than for an old man, who has held the highest honors and offices of the state, to be able justly to say for himself that which the Pythian Apollo says in Ennius, that he is the person from whom, if not nations and kings, yet all his fellow-citizens, solicit advice.”—*Cicero, De Oratore*, Bk. I, cap. 45.

2

Surgis tu pallidus Ajax
Dicturus dubia pro libertate, bubulco
Judice. * * * * *
Quod vocis pretium? siccus petasunculus, et vas
Pelamydum; aut veteres, Afrorum epimēnia, bulbi;
Aut vinum Tiberi devectum, quinque lagenae.
Juvenal, Sat. VII, 115-121.

3

Fortunatus et ille, Deos qui novit agrestes,
Panaque, Sylvanumque senem, Nymphasque sorores:
Illum non populi fasces, non purpura regum
Flexit, et infidos agitans discordia fratres;
Aut conjurato descendens Dacus ab Istro,
Non res Romanae perituraque regna.
Virgil, Georgica, Lib. II, 493-498.

4

“In all that he expressed Chilo was very brief and elliptical, so that his manner of speaking became proverbial.”
Fenelon's Ancient Philosophers.

5

"But woods, and groves, and solitude itself, to me afford such delight, that I reckon it among the chief blessings of poetry that it is cultivated far from the noise and bustle of the world, without a client to besiege my doors, or a criminal to distress me with his tears and squalor. Free from those distractions, the poet retires to scenes of solitude, where peace and innocence reside, and there he treads on consecrated ground."—*Curvatus Maternus*, the tragedy writer, in *Tacitus's Dialogue Concerning Oratory*.

6

As in the wonderful *Anatomy of Melancholy*.

7

Kenelm Digby, author of *Mores Catholici*, that elaborate but scarcely valuable mosaic of quotations and learned footnotes.

8

"An undevout astronomer is mad."—*Blair* (?).

9

"The comparison of the ramified Milky Way with a celestial river led the Arabs to designate parts of the constellation Sagittarius, whose bow falls in a region rich in stars, as *the cattle going to drink*."—*Humboldt, Cosmos*, Vol. 3, p. 144, note.

10

—siccās insana Canicula messes

Jam dudum coquit, et patula pecus omne sub ulmo est.

Persius, Sat. III, 5-6.

11

Lucius Crassus, described by *Cicero* as "the best lawyer among the orators."

12

Meaning any modern counterpart of *Asinius Gallus*, in the way of riches and sumptuous display at table. See *Tacitus, Annals*, Vol. I, p. 74, Oxford translation.

NOTES

13

"I will make an end of my dinner; there's pippins and cheese to come."—*Merry Wives of Windsor, Shak.*, Act I, scene 2.

Parson Hugh's dish was served up long before by Virgil:

Sunt nobis mitia poma,
Castanea molles, et pressi copia lactis.

14

Socrates is reported to have said to an Athenian glutton: "The difference between you and me is this: I eat that I may live; you live that you may eat."

15

Over the philosopher's door was the legend, "Let no one enter here who is ignorant of geometry."

16

Cleanthes was a pugilist; worked at night as a porter; saved his earnings; attended the lectures of Zeno, and on the death of that master became the head of the Stoic school.

17

Æschines, who after his defeat by Demosthenes, opened a school of rhetoric at Rhodes.

18

Chrysippus, the Stoic, who wrote 750 books, and of whom it was said that "had the gods used logic, they would have used the logic of Chrysippus."

19

See *Spenser's* estimation of Shakespeare in the *Tears of the Muses*.

20

As when he composed such works as *Venus and Adonis*, *Lucrece*, *A Lover's Complaint*, and, I might add, the overpraised *Sonnets*.

21

"Many were the wit-combates betwixt him and Ben Jonson, which two I behold like a Spanish Great Galleon and an

[49]

C A R M E N S E C U L A R E

English Man of War; master Jonson, like the former, was built far higher in his learning, solid, but slow in his performances. Shakespeare with the English Man of War, lesser in bulk, but lighter in sailing, could turn with all tides, tack about and take advantage of all winds, by the quickness of his Wit and Invention."—*John Fuller*.

22

"I am an admirer of all eloquence; I hold it venerable, and even sacred, in all its departments; in solemn tragedy, of which you, Maternus, are so great a master; in the majesty of the epic, the gayety of the lyric muse, the wanton elegy, the keen iambic, and the pointed epigram. All have their charms, and Eloquence, whatever may be the subject which she chooses to adorn, is, in my mind, to be preferred to all other arts."—*Tacitus, Oratory, cap. 10.*

23

In the form of the everlasting and worthless Congressional Record.

24

Sed jumenta vocant, et sol inclinat: eundum est;
Nam mihi commota jamdudum mulio virga
Annuit.

Juvenal, Sat. III, 298-300.

25

Homo sum: humani nihil a me alienum puto.
Terence, Heautontimorumenos, Act I, scene 1.

26

I do not assert that all rich men are charitable; but I would contend that enough of them hold their riches (in a sense) as a trust to be administered for the good of their fellowmen, to make the charitable disposition of wealth more or less a distinguishing characteristic of our national life: a point in social and moral development to which the other nations have yet to attain. The growing tendency of the possessors of wealth to promote the happiness and welfare of

N O T E S

mankind was noticed by two famous thinkers more than a century ago, and that tendency has certainly been increasing ever since.—See the remarks of *Burke* and *Dr. Johnson* in *Boswell's Life*, Fitzgerald's edition, p. 328.

27

Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, the imperial Stoic.

28

A Turkish rehash of the anecdote of Chilo of Lacedæmon.—When Chilo was made ephorus, in the 55th Olympiad, his brother discovered much jealous resentment, whereupon Chilo said, "I have been chosen because I was thought fitter than you to suffer the injury done me in drawing me from my retirement, to be plunged in business and rendered a slave."

29

Vincent Bourne whose *Jackdaw* Cowper happily translated out of the Latin in which he wrote it.

He sees that this great roundabout,
The world, with all its motley rout,
Church, army, physic, law,
Its customs and its businesses,
Are no concern at all of his,
And says—what says he? *Caw.*

* * * * *

Thrice happy bird. I, too, have seen
Much of the vanities of men,
And, sick of having seen 'em,
Would cheerfully these limbs resign
For such a pair of wings as thine,
And such a head between 'em.

30

Dr. Samuel Johnson, in the *Vanity of Human Wishes*, his best poem.

31

"If I could wish for immortality on earth, it would be for the power of relieving the distressed."—*Maria Theresa* of *Austria*.

C A R M E N S E C U L A R E

32

Abdalahman of Cordova.

33

Charles V. of Spain.

34

Dum nova canities, dum prima et recta senectus,
 Dum superest Lachesi, quod torqueat, et pedibus me
 Porto meis, nullo. dextram subeunte bacillo.

Juvenal, Sat. III, 26-28.

35

—et cedro digna locutus,
 Linquere nec scombros metuentia carmina nec thus.

Persius, Sat. I, 42-43.

36

Satirarum ego, ni pudet illas,
 Adjutor gelidos veniam caligatus in agros.

Juvenal, Sat. III, 303-304.

37

"My rule is, *Vive la Bagatelle.*"—Dean Swift.

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