Chapter 15
Of Love and Friendship

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ESSAY XV
OF LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP

Who is it that says, "There is no love but among equals?" Be it who it may, it is a saying universally known, and that is in every one's mouth. The contrary is precisely the truth, and is the great secret of every thing that is admirable in our moral nature.

By love it is my intention here to understand, not a calm, tranquil, and, as it were, half-pronounced feeling, but a passion of the mind. We may doubtless entertain an approbation of other men, without adverting to the question how they stand in relation to ourselves, as equals or otherwise. But the sentiment I am here considering, is that where the person in whom it resides most strongly sympathizes with the joys and sorrows of another, desires his gratification, hopes for his welfare, and shrinks from the anticipation of his being injured; in a word, is the sentiment which has most the spirit of sacrifice in it, and prepares the person in whom it dwells, to postpone his own advantage to the advantage of him who is the object of it.

Having placed love among the passions, which is no vehement assumption, I then say, there can be no passion, and by consequence no love, where there is not imagination. In cases where every thing is understood, and measured, and reduced to rule, love is out of the question. Whenever this sentiment prevails, I must have my attention fixed more on the absent than the present, more upon what I do not see than on what I do see. My thoughts will be taken up with the future or the past, with what is to come or what has been. Of the present there is necessarily no image. Sentiment is nothing, till you have arrived at a mystery and a veil, something that is seen obscurely, that is just hinted at in the distance, that
has neither certain outline nor color, but that is left for the mind to fill up according to its pleasure and in the best manner it is able.

The great model of the affection of love in human beings, is the sentiment which subsists between parents and children.

Let not this appear a paradox. There is another relation in human society to which this epithet has more emphatically been given: but, if we analyze the matter strictly, we shall find that all that is most sacred and beautiful in the passion between the sexes, has relation to offspring. What Milton calls, "The rites mysterious of connubial love," would have little charm in them in reflection, to a mind one degree above the brutes, were it not for the mystery they include, of their tendency to give existence to a new human creature like ourselves. Were it not for this circumstance, a man and a woman would hardly ever have learned to live together; there scarcely could have been such a thing as domestic society; but every intercourse of this sort would have been "casual, joyless, unendeared;" and the propensity would have brought along with it nothing more of beauty, luster and grace, than the pure animal appetites of hunger and thirst. Bearing in mind these considerations, I do not therefore hesitate to say, that the great model of the affection of love in human beings, is the sentiment which subsists between parents and children.

The original feature in this sentiment is the conscious feeling of the protector and the protected. Our passions cannot subsist in lazy indolence; passion and action must operate on each other; passion must produce action, and action give strength to the tide of passion. We do not vehemently desire, where we can do nothing. It is in a very faint way that I entertain a wish to possess the faculty of flying; and an ordinary man can scarcely be said to desire to be a king or an emperor. None but a madman, of plebeian rank, falls in love with a princess. But shew me a good thing within my reach; convince me that it is in my power to attain it; demonstrate to me that it is fit for me, and I am fit for it; then begins the career of passion. In the same manner, I cannot love a person vehemently, and strongly interest myself in his miscarriages or success, till I feel that I can be something to him. Love cannot dwell in a state of impotence. To affect and be affected, this is the common nature I require; this is the being that is like unto myself; all other likeness resides in the logic and the definition, but has nothing to do with feeling or with practice.
What can be more clear and sound in explanation, than the love of a parent to his child? The affection he bears and its counterpart are the ornaments of the world, and the spring of every thing that makes life worth having. Whatever besides has a tendency to illustrate and honor our nature, descends from these, or is copied from these, grows out of them as the branches of a tree from the trunk, or is formed upon them as a model, and derives from them its shape, its character, and its soul. Yet there are men so industrious and expert to strip the world we live in of all that adorns it, that they can see nothing glorious in these affections, but find the one to be all selfishness, and the other all prejudice and superstition.

The love of the parent to his child is nursed and fostered by two plain considerations; first, that the subject is capable of receiving much, and secondly, that my power concerning it is great and extensive.

When an infant is presented to my observation, what a wide field of sentiment and reflection is opened to me! Few minds are industrious and ductile enough completely to compass this field, if the infant is only accidentally brought under their view. But, if it is an infant with which I begin to be acquainted to-day, and my acquaintance with which shall not end perhaps till one of us ceases to exist, how is it possible that the view of its little figure should not lead me to the meditation of its future history, the successive stages of human life, and the various scenes and mutations and vicissitudes and fortunes through which it is destined to pass? The Book of Fate lies open before me. This infant, powerless and almost impassive now, is reserved for many sorrows and many joys, and will one day possess a power, formidable and fearful to afflict those within its reach, or calculated to diffuse blessings, wisdom, virtue, happiness, to all around. I conceive all the various destinations of which man is susceptible; my fancy at least is free to select that which pleases me best; I unfold and pursue it in all its directions, observe the thorns and difficulties with which it is beset, and conjure up to my thoughts all that it can boast of inviting, delightful and honorable.

But if the infant that is near to me lays hold of my imagination and affections at the moment in which he falls under my observation, how much more do I become interested in him, as he advances from year to year! At first, I have the blessing of the gospel upon me, in that, "having not seen, yet I believe." But, as his powers expand, I understand him better. His little eye begins to sparkle with meaning; his
tongue tells a tale that may be understood; his very tones, and gestures, and attitudes, all inform me concerning what he shall be. I am like a florist, who has received a strange plant from a distant country. At first he sees only the stalk, and the leaves, and the bud having yet no other color than that of the leaves. But as he watches his plant from day to day, and from hour to hour, the case which contains the flower divides, and betrays first one color and then another, till the shell gradually subsides more and more towards the stalk, and the figure of the flower begins now to be seen, and its radiance and its pride to expand itself to the ravished observer.--Every lesson that the child leans, every comment that he makes upon it, every sport that he pursues, every choice that he exerts, the demeanor that he adopts to his playfellows, the modifications and character of his little fits of authority or submission, all make him more and more an individual to me, and open a wider field for my sagacity or my prophecy, as to what he promises to be, and what he may be made.

But what gives, as has already been observed, the point and the finish to all the interest I take respecting him, lies in the vast power I possess to influence and direct his character and his fortune. At first it is abstract power, but, when it has already been exerted (as the writers on politics as a science have observed of property), the sweat of my brow becomes mingled with the apple I have gathered, and my interest is greater. No one understands my views and projects entirely but myself, and the scheme I have conceived will suffer, if I do not complete it as I began.

And there are men that say, that all this mystery, the most beautiful attitude of human nature, and the crown of its glory, is pure selfishness!

Let us now turn from the view of the parental, to that of the filial affection. The great mistake that has been made on this subject, arises from the taking it nakedly and as a mere abstraction. It has been sagely remarked, that when my father did that which occasioned me to come into existence, he intended me no benefit, and therefore I owe him no thanks. And the inference which has been made from this wise position is, that the duty of children to parents is a mere imposture, a trick, employed by the old to defraud the young out of their services. I grant most readily, that the mere material ligament that binds together the father and the child, by itself is worthless, and that he who owes nothing more than this to
his father, owes him nothing. The natural, unanimated relationship is like the grain of mustard-seed in the discourses of Jesus Christ, "which indeed is the least of all seeds; but, when it is unfolded and grows up, it becomes a mighty tree, so that the birds of the air may come and lodge in its branches."

The hard and insensible man may know little of the debt he owes to his father; but he that is capable of calling up the past, and beholding the things that are not as if they now were, will see the matter in a very different light. Incalculable are the privations (in a great majority of instances), the toils, the pains, the anxieties, that every child imposes on his father from the first hour of his existence. If he could know the ceaseless cares, the tender and ardent feelings, the almost incredible efforts and exertions, that have accompanied him in his father's breast through the whole period of his growth, instead of thinking that he owed his parent nothing, he would stand still and wonder that one human creature could do so much for another.

I grant that all this may be done for a child by a stranger, and that then in one sense the obligation would be greater. It is however barely possible that all this should be done. The stranger wants the first exciting cause, the consideration, "This creature by the great scheme of nature belongs to me, and is cast upon my care." And, as the tie in the case of the stranger was not complete in the beginning, so neither can it be made so in the sequel. The little straggler is like the duckling hatched in the nest of a hen; there is danger every day, that as the nursling begins to be acquainted with its own qualities, it may plunge itself into another element, and swim away from its benefactor.

Even if we put all these considerations out of the question, still the affection of the child to its parent of adoption, wants the kernel, and, if I may so speak, the soul, of the connection which has been formed and modeled by the great hand of nature. If the mere circumstance of filiation and descent creates no debt, it however is the principle of a very close connection. One of the most memorable mysteries of nature, is how, out of the slightest of all connections (for such, literally speaking, is that between father and child), so many coincidences should arise. The child resembles his parent in feature, in temperament, in turn of mind, and in class of disposition, while at the same time in many particulars, in these same respects, he is a new and individual creature. In one view therefore the child is merely the
father multiplied and repeated. Now one of the indefeasible principles of affection is the partaking of a common nature; and as man is a species by himself, so to a certain degree is every nation and every family; and this consideration, when added to the moral and spiritual ties already treated of, undoubtedly has a tendency to give them their zest and perfection.

But even this is not the most agreeable point of view in which we may consider the filial affection. I come back to my first position, that where there is no imagination, there can be no passion, and by consequence no love. No parent ever understood his child, and no child ever understood his parent. We have seen that the affectionate parent considers his child like a flower in the bud, as a mine of power that is to be unfolded, as a creature that is to act and to pass through he knows not what, as a canvas that "gives ample room and verge enough," for his prophetic soul to hang over in endless visions, and his intellectual pencil to fill up with various scenes and fortunes. And, if the parent does not understand his child, certainly as little does the child understand his parent. Wherever this relation subsists in its fairest form, the parent is as a God, a being qualified with supernatural powers, to his offspring. The child consults his father as an oracle; to him he proposes all his little questions; from him he learns his natural philosophy, his morals, his rules of conduct, his religion, and his creed. The boy is uninformed on every point; and the father is a vast Encyclopedia, not merely of sciences, but of feelings, of sagacity, of practical wisdom, and of justice, which the son consults on all occasions, and never consults in vain. Senseless and inexpert is that parent, who endeavors to govern the mind by authority, and to lay down rugged and peremptory dogmas to his child; the child is fully and unavoidably prepared to receive every thing with unbounded deference, and to place total reliance in the oracle which nature has assigned him. Habits, how beautiful! Inestimable benefit of nature, that has given me a prop against which to sustain my unripened strength, and has not turned me loose to wander with tottering steps amid the vast desert of society!

But it is not merely for contemplative wisdom that the child honors his parent; he sees in him a vast fund of love, attachment and sympathy. That he cannot mistake; and it is all a mystery to him. He says, What am I, that I should be the object of this? and whence comes it? He sees neither the fountain from which it springs, nor the banks that confine it. To him it is an ocean, unfathomable, and
without a shore.

To the bounty of its operations he trusts implicitly. The stores of judgment and knowledge he finds in his father, prompt him to trust it. In many instances where it appeared at first obscure and enigmatical, the event has taught him to acknowledge its soundness. The mutinousness of passion will sometimes excite a child to question the decrees of his parent; it is very long before his understanding, as such, comes to set up a separate system, and teaches him to controvert the decisions of his father.

Perhaps I ought earlier to have stated, that the filial connection we have here to consider, does not include those melancholy instances where some woful defect or utter worthlessness in the parent counteracts the natural course of the affections, but refers only to cases, where the character of father is on the whole sustained with honor, and the principle of the connection is left to its true operation. In such cases the child not only observes for himself the manifestations of wisdom and goodness in his parent, but is also accustomed to hear well of him from all around. There is a generous conspiracy in human nature, not to counteract the honor borne by the offspring to him from whom he sprung, and the wholesome principle of superiority and dependence which is almost indispensable between persons of different ages dwelling under the same roof. And, exclusively of this consideration, the men who are chiefly seen by the son are his father's friends and associates; and it is the very bent, and, as it were, law of our nature, that we do not associate much, but with persons whom we favor, and who are prepared to mention us with kindness and honor.

Thus every way the child is deeply imbued with veneration for his parent, and forms the habit of regarding him as his book of wisdom, his philosopher and guide. He is accustomed to hear him spoken of as a true friend, an active ally, and a pattern of justice and honor; and he finds him so. Now these are the true objects of affection,—wisdom and beneficence; and the human heart loves this beneficence better when it is exercised towards him who loves, first, because inevitably in almost all instances we are best pleased with the good that is done to ourselves, and secondly, because it can scarcely happen but that we in that case understand it best, both in its operation and its effects.

The active principles of religion are all molded upon this familiar and sensible
relation of father and child: and to understand what the human heart is capable to conceive on this subject, we have only to refer to the many eloquent and glowing treatises that have been written upon the love of God to his creatures, and the love that the creature in return owes to his God. I am not now considering religion in a speculative point of view, or inquiring among the different sects and systems of religion what it is that is true; but merely producing religion as an example of what have been the conceptions of the human mind in successive ages of the world on the subject of love.

This All that we behold, the immensity of the universe, the admirable harmony and subtlety of its structure, as they appear in the vastest and the minutest bodies, is considered by religion, as the emanation of pure love, a mighty impulse and ardor in its great author to realize the idea existing in his mind, and to produce happiness. The Providence that watches over us, so that not a sparrow dies unmarked, and that "the great Sensorium of the world vibrates, if a hair of our head but falls to the ground in the remotest desert of his creation," is still unremitting, never-satiated love. And, to go from this to the peculiarities of the Christian doctrine, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends: God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son to suffer, to be treated contumeliously, and to die with ignominy, that we might live."

If on the other hand we consider the love which the creature must naturally pay to his creator, we shall find that the affection we can suppose the most ingenuous child to bear to the worthiest parent, is a very faint image of the passion which may be expected to grow out of this relation. In God, as he is represented to us in the books of the worthiest divines, is every thing that can command love; wisdom to conceive, power to execute, and beneficence actually to carry into effect, whatever is excellent and admirable. We are lost in contemplating the depth and immensity of his perfections. "Every good and every perfect gift is from the universal Father, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." The most soothing and gratifying of all sentiments, is that of entire confidence in the divine goodness, a reliance which no adversity can shake, and which supports him that entertains it under every calamity, that sees the finger of God in every thing that comes to pass, that says, "It is good for me to be afflicted," believes, that "all things work together for blessings" to the pious and the just, and is intimately persuaded that "our light
affliction, which is but for a moment, is the means and the earnest of a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

If we descend from these great archetypes, the love between parent and child, and between the creator and his creature, we shall still find the same inequality the inseparable attendant upon the most perfect ties of affection. The ancients seem to have conceived the truest and most exalted ideas on the subject of friendship. Among the most celebrated instances are the friendship of Achilles and Patroclus, Orestes and Pylades, Aeneas and Achates, Cyrus and Araspes, Alexander and Hephaestion, Scipio and Laelius. In each of these the parties are, the true hero, the man of lofty ambition, the magnificent personage in whom is concentrated every thing that the historian or the poet was able to realize of excellence, and the modest and unpretending individual in whom his confidence was reposed. The grand secret of the connection is unfolded in the saying of the Macedonian conqueror, "Craterus loves the king, but Hephaestion loves Alexander." Friendship is to the loftier mind the repose, the unbending of the soul. The great man (whatever may be the department in which his excellence consists) has enough of his greatness, when he stands before the world, and receives the homage that is paid to his merits. Ever and anon he is anxious to throw aside this incumbrance, and be as a man merely to a man. He wishes to forget the "pride, pomp, and circumstance" of greatness, and to be that only which he is himself. He desires at length to be sure, that he receives no adulation, that he is accosted with no insincerity, and that the individual to whose society he has thought proper to withdraw, has no by-ends, no sinister purposes in all his thoughts. What he seeks for, is a true friend, a being who sincerely loves, one who is attached to him, not for the accidents that attend him, but for what most strictly belongs to him, and of which he cannot be divested. In this friend there is neither interested intention nor rivalry.

Such are the characteristic features of the superior party in these exemplars of friendship among the ancients. Of the unpretending, unassuming party Homer, the great master of the affections and emotions in remoter ages, has given us the fullest portrait in the character of Patroclus. The distinguishing feature of his disposition is a melting and affectionate spirit, the centered essence of tenderness and humanity. When Patroclus comes from witnessing the disasters of
the Greeks, to collect a report of which he had been sent by Achilles, he is "overwhelmed with floods of tears, like a spring which pours down its waters from the steep edge of a precipice." It is thus that Jupiter characterizes him when he lies dead in the field of battle:

Thou [addressing himself in his thoughts to Hector] hast slain the friend of Achilles, not less memorable for the blandness of his temper, than the bravery of his deeds. It is thus that Menelaus undertakes to excite the Grecian chiefs to rescue his body: long as he lived, he was unremitting in kindness to all. When Achilles proposes the games at the funeral, he says, "On any other occasion my horses should have started for the prize, but now it cannot be. They have lost their incomparable groom, who was accustomed to refresh their limbs with water, and anoint their flowing manes; and they are inconsolable." Briseis also makes her appearance among the mourners, avowing that, "when her husband had been slain in battle, and her native city laid in ashes, this generous man prevented her tears, averring to her, that she should be the wife of her conqueror, and that he would himself spread the nuptial banquet for her in the hero's native kingdom of Phthia."

The reciprocity which belongs to a friendship between unequals may well be expected to give a higher zest to their union. Each party is necessary to the other. The superior considers him towards whom he pours out his affection, as a part of himself.

The head is not more native to the heart, The hand more instrumental to the mouth. He cannot separate himself from him, but at the cost of a fearful maim. When the world is shut out by him, when he retires into solitude, and falls back upon himself, then his unpretending friend is most of all necessary to him. He is his consolation and his pleasure, the safe coffer in which he reposit all his anxieties and sorrows. If the principal, instead of being a public man, is a man of science, this kind of unbending becomes certainly not the less welcome to him. He wishes occasionally to forget the severity of his investigations, neither to have his mind any longer wound up and stretched to the height of meditation, nor to feel that he needs to be any way on his guard, or not completely to give the rein to all his sallies and the sportiveness of his soul. Having been for a considerable time shut up in sequestered reflection, he wishes, it may be, to have the world, the busy impassioned world, brought to his ears, without his being obliged to enter into its
formalities and mummeries. If he desires to speak of the topics which had so deeply engaged him, he can keep as near the edge as he pleases, and drop or resume them as his fancy may prompt. And it seems useless to say, how much his modest and unassuming friend will be gratified in being instrumental to relieve the labors of his principal, in feeling that he is necessary to him, and in meditating on the delight he receives in being made the chosen companion and confidant of him whom he so ardently admires. It was precisely in this spirit, that Fulke Greville, two hundred years ago, directed that it should be inscribed on his tomb, "Here lies the friend of Sir Philip Sidney." Tenderness on the one part, and a deep feeling of honor and respect on the other, give a completeness to the union which it must otherwise for ever want. "There is no limit, none," to the fervor with which the stronger goes forward to protect the weak; while in return the less powerful would encounter a thousand deaths rather than injury should befall the being to whom in generosity and affection he owes so much.

In the mean time, though inequality is necessary to give this completeness to friendship, the inequality must not be too great.

The inferior party must be able to understand and appreciate the sense and the merits of him to whom he is thus bound. There must be no impediment to hinder the communications of the principal from being fully comprehended, and his sentiments entirely participated. There must be a boundless confidence, without apprehension that the power of the stronger party can by the remotest possibility be put forth ungenerously. "Perfect love casteth out fear." The evangelist applies this aphorism even to the love of the creature to his creator. "The Lord spake unto Moses, face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend." In the union of which I am treating the demonstrative and ordinary appearance will be that of entire equality, which is heightened by the inner, and for the greater part unexplained and undeveloped, impression of a contrary nature. There is in either party a perfect reliance, an idea of inequality with the most entire assurance that it can never operate unworthily in the stronger party, or produce insincerity or servility in the weaker. There will in reality always be some reserve, some shadow of fear between equals, which in the friendship of unequals, if happily assorted, can find no place. There is a pouring out of the heart on the one side, and a cordial acceptance on the other, which words are inadequate to describe.
To proceed. If from friendship we go forward to that which in all languages is emphatically called love, we shall still find ourselves dogged and attended by inequality. Nothing can be more certain, however we may seek to modify and abate it, than the inequality of the sexes. Let us attend to it as it stands in Milton:

For contemplation he and velour formed
For softness she and sweet attractive grace;
He for God only, she for God in him.
Thus it is painted to us as having been in Paradise; and with similar inequality have the sexes subsisted in all ages and nations since. If it were possible to take from the fair sex its softness and attractive grace, and endow it instead with audacious, masculine and military qualities, there is scarcely any one that does not perceive, with whatever advantages it might be attended in other respects, that it would be far from tending to cherish and increase the passion of love.

It is in reality obvious, that man and woman, as they come from the hands of nature, are so much upon a par with each other, as not to afford the best subjects between whom to graft a habit of entire, unalterable affection. In the scenes of vulgar and ordinary society, a permanent connection between persons of opposite sexes is too apt to degenerate into a scene of warfare, where each party is for ever engaged in a struggle for superiority, and neither will give way. A penetrating observer, with whom in former days I used intimately to converse, was accustomed to say, that there was generally more jarring and ill blood between the two parties in the first year of their marriage, than during all the remainder of their lives. It is at length found necessary, as between equally matched belligerents on the theater of history, that they should come to terms, make a treaty of peace, or at least settle certain laws of warfare, that they may not waste their strength in idle hostilities.

The nations of antiquity had a way of settling this question in a very summary mode. As certain Oriental tribes have determined that women have no souls, and that nothing can be more proper than to shut them up, like singing birds in cages, so the Greeks and Romans for the most part excluded their females from the society of the more martial sex. Marriage with them was a convenience merely; and the husband and wife were in reality nothing more than the master and the slave. This point once settled as a matter of national law, there was certainly in most cases little danger of any vexatious rivalship and struggle for power.
But there is nothing in which the superiority of modern times over the ancient has been more conspicuous, than in our sentiments and practices on this subject. This superiority, as well as several other of our most valuable acquisitions, took its rise in what we call the dark ages. Chivalry was for the most part the invention of the eleventh century. Its principle was built upon a theory of the sexes, giving to each a relative importance, and assigning to both functions full of honor and grace. The knights (and every gentleman during that period in due time became a knight) were taught, as the main features of their vocation, the "love of God and the ladies." The ladies in return were regarded as the genuine censors of the deeds of knighthood. From these principles arose a thousand lessons of humanity. The ladies regarded it as their glory to assist their champions to arm and to disarm, to perform for them even menial services, to attend them in sickness, and to dress their wounds. They bestowed on them their colors, and sent them forth to the field hallowed with their benedictions. The knights on the other hand considered any slight towards the fair sex as an indelible stain to their order; they contemplated the graceful patronesses of their valor with a feeling that partook of religious homage and veneration, and esteemed it as perhaps the first duty of their profession, to relieve the wrongs, and avenge the injuries of the less powerful sex.

This simple outline as to the relative position of the one sex and the other, gave a new face to the whole scheme and arrangements of civil society. It is like those admirable principles in the order of the material universe, or those grand discoveries brought to light from time to time by superior genius, so obvious and simple, that we wonder the most common understanding could have missed them, yet so pregnant with results, that they seem at once to put a new life and inspire a new character into every part of a mighty and all-comprehensive mass.

The passion between the sexes, in its grosser sense, is a momentary impulse merely; and there was danger that, when the fit and violence of the passion was over, the whole would subside into inconstancy and a roving disposition, or at least into indifference and almost brutal neglect. But the institutions of chivalry immediately gave a new face to this. Either sex conceived a deep and permanent interest in the other. In the unsettled state of society which characterized the period when these institutions arose, the defenseless were liable to assaults of multiplied kinds, and the fair perpetually stood in need of a protector and a
champion. The knights on the other hand were taught to derive their fame and their honor from the suffrages of the ladies. Each sex stood in need of the other; and the basis of their union was mutual esteem.

The effect of this was to give a hue of imagination to all their intercourse. A man was no longer merely a man, nor a woman merely a woman. They were taught mutual deference. The woman regarded her protector as something illustrious and admirable; and the man considered the smiles and approbation of beauty as the adequate reward of his toils and his dangers. These modes of thinking introduced a nameless grace into all the commerce of society. It was the poetry of life. Hence originated the delightful narratives and fictions of romance; and human existence was no longer the bare, naked train of vulgar incidents, which for so many ages of the world it had been accustomed to be. It was clothed in resplendent hues, and wore all the tints of the rainbow. Equality fled and was no more; and love, almighty, perdurable love, came to supply its place.

By means of this state of things the vulgar impulse of the sexes towards each other, which alone was known to the former ages of the world, was transformed into somewhat of a totally different nature. It became a kind of worship. The fair sex looked upon their protectors, their fathers, their husbands, and the whole train of their chivalry, as something more than human. There was a grace in their motions, a gallantry in their bearing, and a generosity in their spirit of enterprise, that the softness of the female heart found irresistible. Nor less on the other hand did the knights regard the sex to whose service and defense they were sworn, as the objects of their perpetual deference. They approached them with a sort of gallant timidity, listened to their behests with submission, and thought the longest courtship and devotion nobly recompensed by the final acceptance of the fair.

The romance and exaggeration characteristic of these modes of thinking have gradually worn away in modern times; but much of what was most valuable in them has remained. Love has in later ages never been divested of the tenderness and consideration, which were thus rendered some of its most estimable features. A certain desire in each party to exalt the other, and regard it as worthy of admiration, became inextricably interwoven with the simple passion. A sense of the honor that was borne by the one to the other, had the happiest effect in qualifying the familiarity and unreserve in the communion of feelings and
sentiments, without which the attachment of the sexes cannot subsist. It is something like what the mystic divines describe of the beatific vision, where entire wonder and adoration are not judged to be incompatible with the most ardent affection, and all meaner and selfish regards are annihilated.

From what has been thus drawn together and recapitulated it seems clearly to follow, as was stated in the beginning, that love cannot exist in its purest form and with a genuine ardor, where the parties are, and are felt by each other to be, on an equality; but that in all cases it is requisite there should be a mutual deference and submission, agreeably to the apostolic precept, "Likewise all of you be subject one to the other." There must be room for the imagination to exercise its powers; we must conceive and apprehend a thousand things which we do not actually witness; each party must feel that it stands in need of the other, and without the other cannot be complete; each party must be alike conscious of the power of receiving and conferring benefit; and there must be the anticipation of a distant future, that may every day enhance the good to be imparted and enjoyed, and cause the individuals thus united perpetually to become more sensible of the fortunate event which gave them to each other, and has thus entailed upon each a thousand advantages in which they could otherwise never have shared.

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