

that phenomenon as it attracts the angler's eye, throwing out here a 'paradox' or a suggestion, there a quotation or an illustration, all tending to show how full of marrow common things usually are, justifying common proverbs, and setting 'cranky' people straight on certain fundamental principles of ethics and morality. Thus, he shows us how right it was that Bulwer should be shown up in his real character; how Thackeray, so much misunderstood, is becoming rightfully more of a hero because he was really and truly so much of a martyr; what monstrous mistakes the critics make, as in the cases of Byron, Shelley, Keats, Tennyson, Ruskin, Carlyle, all of whom were 'fools' to the 'Greeks' of *The Edinburgh* and *The Quarterly* (well named from its hanging and quartering proclivities); and the like. He even enters 'A Plea for Plagiarism' and defends the unhappy creature, equally endowed with powers of memory and forgetfulness, who 'milks other people's brains' and then sells the product by the pint. This is a very happy philosophical temper—a temper that is ever ready and willing to sit in the 'twilight of the poets,' provided that the sunset splendors of Tennyson and Browning are still aglow in the sky. In this spirit all true philosophy is born if not baptized.

"Paradoxes of a Philistine"*

IF, AS GOETHE SAID, 'to speak is to begin to err,' then the amiable inhabitants of Philistia have a deal of error to answer for—no less than those of Bohemia, Cockayne, and other regions not laid down on the geographical charts. 'Paradoxes' do not usually dwell in this happy land of mild conventionalism, narrow-mindedness and pedantry, where, according to Emerson, even the brilliant Macaulay had a summer villa, and where Swinburne splenetically 'locates' (*horribile dictu!*) even Matthew Arnold; yet Mr. Walsh very felicitously succeeds in making us believe that common life and common things—not to say common people—are full of them, and that each and every one of us is an abounding Philistine, a princely beggar, paradoxically speaking. His pleasant book is made up of his passing contributions to *The Atlantic Monthly*, *Notes and Queries*, and *Lippincott's* (of which he is editor), and evinces scholarship, ripe attainments, acute insight, and fortunate style. He is a 'by-stander,' like Mr. Goldwin Smith, watching the literary current as it sparkles by, commenting on this or

* Paradoxes of a Philistine. By W. S. Walsh. 81. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co.