

unmitigated form. The only real change for him, the only travelling which is travelling for his spirit as well as for his body, he must find in countries which have an historical past behind them—amongst valleys and mountains which retain the echoes of chivalry, in cities where the painted ceilings have looked down on powder and periwigs, in scenes where the past fills the air with a sense of it, like the smell of pine-forests ; or where it actually survives, as it does in the tents of the immemorial East.

Here, however, I confess that if we try to be seriously logical, we find ourselves in a certain difficulty. The charm, the fascination, of the past—of the plunge into the deep waters ! How well some of us know it ! But not only is it impossible to describe it to others : it cannot logically be even justified to ourselves. Let us fix our sentimental preference on whatever period we will, letting the imagination escape to it as a happy refuge ; and we cannot avoid thinking, if only we think too closely, that all the littleness, all the vulgarity, all the rawness of life, had we really lived then, would have been plain to us then as now. The Pyramids, as they rose under the hands of the Egyptian bricklayers, smelt from top to bottom of chewed garlic and onions. The Athens of Pericles was as modern as South Kensington. The farther a man, with an imposing pedigree, dives into what he fancies to have been the statelier times of his ancestors, the nearer he gets to the time when those ancestors were parvenus.