The Ways of Men

The Ways of Men by Eliot Gregory is a novel that examines the complexities of human nature and relationships as a young man grapples with societal expectations, personal ambition, and moral dilemmas in his pursuit of self-discovery.

CHAPTER 1 - "UNCLE SAM"

At the dawn of the 19th century, a governor with a love for classical names gave pompous titles to many American towns. Cities like Utica, Syracuse, and Ithaca, once intended to evoke grandeur, now call to mind small, modern places filled with trolley cars and churches. However, the governor's decision to name a city Troy and a nearby hill Mount Ida unknowingly set the stage for a significant legacy. A young man named Samuel Wilson, living near this hill, would soon become synonymous with the proud nation he helped symbolize.

Before the century turned, two brothers, Ebenezer and Samuel Wilson, moved from New York and established a brickyard in Troy. Samuel, the younger and more playful of the two, earned the affection of the children in the area, often giving them small sweets or toys from his pockets. The children affectionately nicknamed him "Uncle Sam," a title that would later be embraced as a symbol of the United States itself. This name would go on to evoke deep national pride, much like the sight of the American flag.

As the Wilson brothers' wealth grew, they shifted from brickmaking to a large-scale slaughtering business, employing over a hundred men and processing thousands of cattle each week. During the War of 1812, they contracted to supply meat to the

troops in Greenbush. Samuel, known for his integrity, was appointed as Inspector of Provisions for the army. His commitment to fulfilling contracts and ensuring quality made the initials "U.S." synonymous with excellence. Soldiers, familiar with the nickname "Uncle Sam," believed the "U.S." marked provisions as trusted and of the best quality, leading them to demand only "Uncle Sam's" meat. Over time, this led to "Uncle Sam" being associated with the United States government itself.

In his later years, Samuel Wilson lived near Mount Ida, where he continued to be remembered for his warmth, humor, and patriotism.

CHAPTER 2 - Domestic Despots

In Chapter 2 titled "Domestic Despots" of "The Ways of Men," the author delves into the phenomenon of household pets, particularly dogs, ruling over their human owners with an iron paw, depicting them as tyrants in the comfort of what appear to be happy homes. These dogs, regardless of their breed or size, become the center of their owners’ lives, often to the detriment of the owners' freedoms and preferences. The narrative critically examines the unquestioned allegiance and resources humans provide to dogs, portraying them as manipulative and contributing little to the household's welfare or the broader society.

The critique extends to the historical and cultural valorization of dogs as loyal and selfless companions, challenging these perceptions as myths perpetuated by selective anecdotes and overlooking the reality of dogs' behavior and the dynamics of their relationships with humans. The author humorously yet pointedly questions the underlying reasons for dogs' esteemed place in human society, noting their lack of contribution to productive work and their expert manipulation of human emotions for their benefit.

Personal anecdotes and observations are used to illustrate the extent of the control and influence dogs wield over their owners, highlighting cases where humans' lives and decisions are significantly affected by the needs and whims of their pets. These accounts serve to underline the central thesis that dogs, far from being the selfless companions celebrated in popular narratives, are adept at exploiting human weaknesses for their comfort and survival, often at a considerable cost to their human caretakers.

This chapter serves as a satirical critique of the way society venerates dogs, urging a reconsideration of the standard narratives surrounding pet ownership and the implicit power dynamics involved. Through a blend of wit, skepticism, and vivid illustrations of

dogs' dominion over their households, the author challenges readers to question the cultural and personal investments in the dog as man’s best friend, suggesting a more critical appraisal of these relationships and the myths that sustain them.

CHAPTER 3 - Cyrano, Rostand, Coquelin

In Chapter 3 of "The Ways of Men," the narrative delves into the significance of Edmond Rostand's play, "Cyrano de Bergerac," painting a vivid picture of the drama's impact when translated into English. Despite a weak translation, the original's charm—its humor, emotion, and satirical sharpness—shines through, much like good wine unaffected by the quality of its container. Richard Mansfield's dedication to presenting the play in its unaltered form, adhering closely to Rostand's vision and the play's aesthetic details, earns him admiration for preserving the integrity of this masterpiece, thereby allowing the English-speaking audience to appreciate the extensive effort Rostand and the esteemed actor Coquelin invested in the original production.

The chapter recounts the author's visit to Paris, where the immediate priority becomes witnessing "Cyrano de Bergerac" at the Porte St. Martin. After the performance, a visit to Coquelin's dressing room provides a personal glimpse into the actor's vibrant energy and dedication, contrasting sharply with the exhaustive effort of performing. The narrative then transitions to a private setting, Coquelin's apartment, where the focus shifts to the genesis of Rostand's play, highlighting Coquelin's foundational role in its creation and production.

Coquelin narrates his initial encounter with Rostand, who was then recognized for his lesser-known works, elaborating on how Rostand's talent for storytelling and dramatic interpretation of lines captivated him from their first meeting. This admiration led Coquelin to commit unconditionally to any of Rostand’s future works, a rare gesture of faith in the playwright's potential. This promise culminated in the development of "Cyrano de Bergerac," spurred by Rostand's sudden inspiration from the historical figure's life and poetry, illustrating the unpredictable nature of creative inspiration.

Despite initial skepticism regarding the play's setting in a historically worn-out epoch and the challenging integration of a grotesquely oversized nose on the protagonist, Rostand’s blend of poignant and comic elements, complemented by his conviction in the play’s potential, ultimately sways Coquelin. The chapter vividly recounts Rostand’s relentless dedication, his withdrawal from Parisian society, and his exhaustive yet passionate approach to refining the play, demonstrating a pursuit of artistic perfection that borders on obsession.

The rehearsal process unveils another facet of Rostand’s character—his tireless energy, meticulous attention to detail, and his respectful, uplifting engagement with the cast, underlining his leadership and vision in bringing the play to life. The premiere of "Cyrano de Bergerac" emerges as a monumental event in Paris's cultural scene, marked by an overwhelming response from the audience, signaling not just a personal triumph for Rostand and Coquelin, but a landmark moment in theatrical history.

This deep dive encapsulates the confluence of talent, vision, and unwavering dedication that characterizes the journey of "Cyrano de Bergerac" from conception to stage, affirming the transformative power of authentic, passionate theater.

CHAPTER 4 - Machine-made Men

In Chapter 4 of "The Ways of Men," entitled "Machine-made Men," the narrator humorously laments the overcomplication of modern life due to an obsession with patents and inventions. The narrative begins with the narrator's anticipation being dashed upon opening what appeared to be a personal letter, only to discover it was an advertisement for patent suspenders and paper collars. This disappointment leads to a broader critique of how society is rapidly becoming a "paradise of the cheap and nasty," where every aspect of daily life, from the beds we sleep in to the clothes we wear, is dominated by patents and inventions designed for convenience but often resulting in the opposite.

The chapter vividly describes the narrator's astonishment at the complexity of men's attire, emphasizing the extent to which modern Americans are ensnared by gadgets and gizmos. From shirts with fake bosoms to undergarments that require an engineering degree to put on, the narrative paints a comical yet somewhat bleak picture of a society lost to the allure of novelty and convenience. The narrator observes fellow passengers on a train, each a walking testament to the era's infatuation with patents. These men carry about them an array of peculiar devices meant to save time and increase comfort but instead seem to complicate the simplest of tasks.

Among these inventions are hygienic suspenders that promise to cure organ diseases, shirts that can only be entered from the rear, and collar buttons that serve multiple purposes yet are impossibly complex. The narrator's encounters with salesmen peddling the latest in toiletry innovations only deepen his skepticism, as he is introduced to literary shirt fronts, collar buttons that serve as cravat holders, and even ready-made ties that avoid the intricacies of tying altogether.

The narrative concludes with a reflection on the irony of these innovations. The very tools intended to streamline life and save time have instead burdened Americans with a constant worry over their proper use and maintenance, suggesting a fear that forgetting how a patent works could lead to being trapped by one's own clothing. The chapter ends with a speculative glance into the future, imagining archaeologists marveling over these machine-made men and their bewildering array of personal gadgets, puzzling over their actual purposes as we do today with relics from the past.

CHAPTER 5 - Parnassus

In Chapter 5 titled "Parnassus" of "The Ways of Men," the narrator recounts an enlightening encounter with Sainte-Beuve, a paramount writer and critic of the century, in his Paris home on rue Montparnasse. This memorable visit captured through youthful eyes eventually matures into a cherished memory, reinforced by the narrator’s growing admiration for Sainte-Beuve’s work. The narrative weaves through the years, tracing the narrator's return to Paris, the transformations of the city, and his reverence for the literary circles once vibrant with discussions and critiques that shaped the literary landscape.

The chapter artfully conveys Paris’s intellectual and historical ambiance through detailed recollections of the Luxembourg Garden and its status as a poetic sanctuary in the heart of Paris, hosting busts of celebrated writers like Henri Murger and Victor Hugo, now including Sainte-Beuve. This picturesque setting unfolds as a backdrop to deeper reflections on Sainte-Beuve’s influence, his unique practices of writing away from public interruptions under an assumed name, and his passionate yet tumultuous relationship with his contemporaries and literary critique.

Sainte-Beuve's complexities are explored further through anecdotes depicting his fervent work ethic, his resilience against public criticism, and his uncompromising stance on intellectual freedom during an era of poetic restraint. Despite his critical role in the literary world, Sainte-Beuve remained distanced from the political glory of his day, exemplified by a misunderstood compliment from Napoleon III.

The narrative also captures Sainte-Beuve's social persona, marked by his love for the theatre and engaging conversation, yet misunderstood by some, leading to humorous yet poignant misunderstandings on the true nature of his influence.

This chapter, rich with historical and literary references, paints a vivid portrait of Sainte-Beuve's enduring legacy, offering insight into the intellectual rigor and personal convictions that underpinned his contributions to French literature and critique. It invokes a sense of timelessness, bridging past and present, and celebrating the indelible mark of an intellectual giant within the ever-evolving landscape of Parisian society and culture.

CHAPTER 6 - Modern Architecture

In Chapter 6 of "The Ways of Men," titled "Modern Architecture," the narrative opens with a foreign tourist's hypothetical first encounter with New York's skyline, described as both chaotic and enchantingly wild at twilight yet dishearteningly graceless by daylight. This dichotomy underscores the broader critique of the city's contemporary architectural ethos, contrasting sharply with the classical beauty and proportionality revered by past critics and architects. The author employs vivid analogies, likening the architectural hodgepodge of downtown buildings to a disorganized, mismatched bookshelf where structures compete rather than cohere, betraying a lack of harmony and aesthetic principle in their design.

The narrative meticulously dissects various architectural elements and trends prevalent in New York, highlighting an obsession with competitive height and superficial adornment over functional beauty and structural integrity. The text critiques the tendency for modern buildings to abandon the artistic restraint and purpose of classical architecture, instead adopting an ad hoc approach to design that prioritizes ostentation. Examples of this include the inconsistent use of classical motifs, arbitrary decoration, and a propensity for adding incongruous elements to rooftops, which, while potentially impressive from a ballooning vantage, contribute to the city's architectural dissonance when viewed from the street level.

Specific buildings are critiqued for their unnecessary and often bizarre embellishments, such as misplaced porticos, gratuitously elaborate cornices, and the whimsical addition of classical figures and structures atop modern edifices, which serve more as a testament to the architects' and owners' vanity than to any coherent aesthetic vision. The chapter ultimately argues for a return to simplicity, functionality, and architectural honesty, where buildings are designed with a mindful consideration of their urban context and the collective visual harmony of the cityscape. It calls for

architects to resist the allure of superficial embellishment in favor of designs that respect the principles of classical beauty, proportionality, and the functional demands of modernity, suggesting that such an approach can indeed satisfy contemporary needs without sacrificing architectural integrity.

CHAPTER 7 - Worldly Color-Blindness

Chapter 7 of "The Ways of Men," entitled "Worldly Color-Blindness," draws a parallel between the literal inability to discern colors and tones and a metaphorical lack of discernment in social settings. The author presents a critical view of those who, despite good intentions, fail to understand the subtleties of social gatherings, resulting in uncomfortable and unenjoyable events.

The text opens with an analogy to physical color-blindness and tone-deafness, mentioning individuals who, despite these limitations, have made their marks in fields like painting and music. However, the primary concern is with "social color-blindness," a condition where individuals are oblivious to the nuances required to host enjoyable social events. This lack of awareness affects all strata of society, especially noticeable among the well-born and supposedly well-mannered, leading to dull and unsatisfactory gatherings.

A significant portion of the chapter critiques the motivations behind entertaining, portraying it as often driven by ostentation, social obligation, or clerical meticulousness rather than genuine enjoyment or connection. The author humorously describes the strategic maneuverings of hosts to fulfill social obligations with minimal effort, including throwing poorly timed parties to ensure a high rate of declinations.

The critique extends to various types of hosts, including those who, out of a misplaced sense of charity, invite disreputable or mismatched guests, making their events seem like gatherings of the "morally lame, halt, and blind." This misguided attempt at inclusivity only serves to dilute the quality of social interaction, making the events strenuous rather than enjoyable for the guests.

The author bemoans the lack of tact, discernment, and genuine sociability in hosting, pointing out the common pitfalls of hospitality, such as inappropriate guest pairings

and indiscriminate invitations. The critique culminates in a call for awareness and restraint, suggesting that those who are "socially color-blind" should abstain from hosting, to prevent the myriad social faux pas they inadvertently commit.

In summary, Chapter 7 humorously yet pointedly critiques the social ineptitude that pervades the realm of hospitality, where a lack of discretion and empathy leads to unfulfilling social interactions. The chapter serves as a satirical commentary on the superficiality and transactional nature of social gatherings, urging a more thoughtful and genuine approach to hospitality.

CHAPTER 8 - Idling in Mid-Ocean

In "Idling in Mid-Ocean," the author explores the tranquil and transformative experience of a transatlantic voyage, away from the hustle and bustle of everyday life. As the ship moves through the vast, jade-colored ocean, the author finds themselves relishing in the sheer novelty and peacefulness of their surroundings, where the typical concerns of life on land seem distant and irrelevant. This chapter paints a picture of serene detachment and introspection, underscored by the leisurely pace of life aboard the ship, where time seems to stretch and bend.

The narrative weaves in the charming detail of the "pigeon post" experiment conducted by the Compagnie Transatlantique, offering a glimpse into the inventive ways of maintaining communication with the mainland. This anecdote, highlighting the ambitious attempt to send messages via pigeons across hundreds of miles of open water, serves as a testament to human ingenuity and the enduring quest for connection, regardless of the physical barriers posed by nature.

The chapter also explores the social dynamics aboard the ship, where passengers quickly form distinct groups based on common interests or backgrounds, from the gambling aficionados in the smoking-room to the fashionable dressmakers seeking jovial company. This microcosm of society showcases the human tendency to seek out like-minded individuals, even in the most transient of communities.

Amid these observations, the author reflects on the broader implications of the journey—how it serves as a temporary escape from the "galling harness of routine," offering a fresh perspective and a renewed appreciation for the simple joys of existence. The voyage, with its blend of restful contemplation, social interaction, and playful experimentation, embodies a departure from the conventional constraints of daily life, providing a space for personal reflection and unexpected connections.

As the ship approaches Havre, the anticipation of return to the "harness of life" looms over the passengers, marking the end of this ephemeral retreat. The quaint separation between the voyage and the realities of land life dissolves, leaving behind memories of freedom and tranquility amidst the vast, unfathomable ocean.

CHAPTER 9 - "Climbers" in England

Chapter 9 of "The Ways of Men" delves into the peculiar social dynamics of English society vis-à-vis American adventurers and the titled English class, painting a vivid portrait of the aspirations, misconceptions, and cultural clashes that transpire when Americans attempt to integrate into the elite circles of England. The term "Little Englander" encapsulates the insular attitude of English society towards foreigners, including Americans, highlighting a sense of superiority and exclusivity based on one's birthplace. This theme of exclusivity is further explored through the author’s critique of certain Americans' desire to penetrate the upper echelons of English society despite the apparent dullness and rigidity of its social gatherings and lifestyle. The English gentry's predilection for assessing newcomers based on their wealth, connections, and utility underscores a transactional view of social relationships that both fascinates and repels.

The chapter offers a comparison between the ambitious American "climbers" and their English counterparts, suggesting that while the Americans are driven by a desire for social ascension and recognition, they often find the reality of English high society to be less glamorous and intellectually stimulating than imagined. Despite these challenges, the allure of English aristocracy persists for these climbers, driven by a deep-seated belief in the prestige associated with it. The narrative is imbued with references to cultural stereotypes and behaviors, such as the Englishmen’s reliance on professional entertainers to inject humor into social gatherings, and the American climbers' obsession with networking and social climbing, often to the point of forsaking their authentic cultural identity.

In sum, Chapter 9 explores the complex interplay of ambition, cultural identity, and the pursuit of social prestige, as American "climbers" navigate the nuanced and often challenging terrain of English society. The author weaves a cautionary tale about the

emptiness of material success and the inherent dissatisfaction found in the relentless pursuit of social approval and acceptance, suggesting that true fulfillment lies beyond the ephemeral allure of high society.

CHAPTER 10 - CALVE at Cabrieres

Upon visiting Madame Calve at her picturesque home in Cabrieres during a "cure" in the Cevennes Mountains, the narrator recounts the transformation of the once sensuous Carmen into a figure of serenity. Calve, delighted to return to her roots, has devoted her home and resources to the convalescence of Parisian hospital girls, offering them fresh air, simple food, and the healing powers of sunlight, a remedy that once saved her own life. The arrival at Calve’s chateau brings the narrator into a collective of warmth and charity, where Calve’s deep bond with her village and its people is palpable.

Calve’s integration into her community is highlighted by her dedication to the chateau’s restoration for the purpose of hosting convalescent girls, sharing with them the curative environment that had once nurtured her back to health. Her connection to the land and her origins is further exemplified through her interactions with local children and the residence she has shaped into a sanctuary for healing and happiness.

Throughout the day, the narrator witnesses the multi-faceted character of Madame Calve. From a tender caretaker attending to her guests and convalescents, sharing amusing anecdotes including one of a paid tribute by Venetian waiters mistaken for a spontaneous honor, to the spirited enchantress seamlessly transitioning to the grandeur of Parisian society, her essence captivates all. Whether reflecting on her humility in the face of hometown criticism or leading laughter-filled conversations at dinner, Calve’s versatility shines through.

As the day turns to night, Calve's talent for entertainment emerges once more, engaging her guests with songs, mimicries, and dances, embodying the lightness of her spirit. The enchanting atmosphere of a moonlit terrace serves as the perfect backdrop for Calve's impromptu performance, leaving an indelible impression on the narrator. The visit to Cabrieres unfurls as a journey through the many layers of Calve's

personhood - from celebrated artist to compassionate benefactor, bound by the authenticity of her peasant roots and the undying love for her home.

CHAPTER 11 - A Cry For Fresh Air

The story begins with a familiar fairy tale where a disgruntled old witch curses a princess’s life, turning blessings into burdens. This serves as a metaphor for the state of modern society, where the gifts of science and industry, intended to improve life, have instead caused harm. The discovery of central heating, once unimaginable to the courtiers of Louis XIV, has transformed from an extravagant luxury into an essential part of life. But this change begs the question: has it been beneficial, physically or mentally, for society?

In other lands, spring brings joy and vitality, but in our over-heated, artificially-controlled environments, such seasonal delights are lost. People who have been living in a constant, stifling warmth find it difficult to appreciate the nuances of a mild spring day. Even in public spaces, such as schools, children endure overheated rooms, a situation justified by a teacher’s reluctance to open windows due to her cold. This lack of ventilation results in pale, unhealthy children, a condition seen across schools in the city.

The widespread use of heating has led to a preference for stifling warmth in all environments, including public vehicles. The introduction of heating methods like Franklin’s stoves and steam heat, while initially promising, has reduced the natural ventilation that once kept people healthy. The consequences are visible: the rosy cheeks of children have disappeared, and social spaces lack vitality.

Despite complaints about summer heat, there seems to be an increasing acceptance of living in overheated conditions. Offices and homes are sealed off, with air never properly refreshed, leading to poor health among workers. One individual who spends his days near a radiator suffers from constant colds but recalls being healthier when exposed to freezing temperatures in a farmhouse. This situation highlights how our

obsession with warmth may be damaging our health.

Many inventions, like stationary washstands and revolving doors, are designed to exclude fresh air, further contributing to unhealthy, stagnant environments. Today, cool rooms are a luxury, and having an open fire has become a symbol of refinement and good taste. A room filled with invisible, excessive heat now represents bad taste, while a warm, crackling fire is a hallmark of culture and hospitality. The contrast between these two extremes underscores how our disregard for fresh air and natural temperature has led to a serious loss of balance in our living environments.

CHAPTER 12 - The Paris of our Grandparents

In "The Paris of our Grandparents," the chapter delves deeply into the profound transformations Paris has undergone since the mid-19th Century, illustrating these shifts through vivid personal anecdotes and historical insights. This narrative unfolds as the author explores Parisian life and landmarks with an elderly lady who reminisces about her youth, blending personal history with the broader evolution of the city's landscape. Paris, once confined to areas well within landmarks like the rue Royale and burgeoning past the Madeleine, is portrayed as a city in the midst of expansion, where fashionable societies thrived and landmarks like the Arc de Triomphe and Champs Elysees were in their nascent stages.

The chapter captures the quintessence of Parisian elegance and societal norms through the lens of the elderly lady, who narrates her experiences and observations. The afternoons spent driving along boulevards, the peculiarities of fashion including low-necked dresses and high-swung carriages, and social practices like dining at renowned spots such as Maison Doree and attending fashionable gatherings in the Palais-Royal vividly bring to life a bygone era of Parisian chic. Her tales evoke imagery of a Paris where the aristocracy and burgeoning bourgeoisie coexisted within a rapidly modernizing cityscape, emphasizing the transformation from personal conveyances like the diligence from Calais to the beginning of urban sprawl and the emergence of bustling boulevards.

Moreover, the chapter reflects on political changes, capturing moments of upheaval like the revolution of '48, offering a personal perspective on the abdication of the "Citizen King" Louis Philippe and the social unrest that pervaded Paris, transforming it not only architecturally but also politically. Through her eyes, readers witness the sack of the palace, the fervor of revolutionaries, and the personal risks undertaken by those who participated in or were caught up in the events, including her own husband.

This chapter is saturated with nostalgia for a Paris that has since evolved, encapsulating the intricacies of societal shifts, fashion, and political landscapes of the era. The portrayal relies heavily on personal anecdotes and historical context, presenting a rich tapestry of Parisian life that invites readers to ponder the rapid change of cities and the timeless allure of Paris. Through the juxtaposition of the past with the author's present, it reminds us of the continuous thread of history that runs through the heart of every city, shaping its identity and the memories of those who walk its streets.

CHAPTER 13 - Some American Husbands

Chapter 13 titled "Some American Husbands" from "The Ways of Men" contrasts the historical roles of men and women with the changing dynamics in modern American households. Traditionally, men were the dominant, colorful figures, providers, and protectors, while women were confined to caretaking roles. However, the last century has seen a substantial shift in these dynamics, especially in America, where the husband often finds himself in what the chapter describes as a state of "bondage" due to the increasing control and expectations placed upon him by his wife.

The chapter humorously describes this shift using the metaphor of Samson's loss of power to Delilah, suggesting American wives have gradually usurped roles and responsibilities traditionally held by their husbands. It frames the modern American husband as a new "model" human, notably dutiful and obedient once married, contrasting with his less commendable characteristics as a youth. The text comically depicts the husband as domesticated and well-managed under the expert "horse-womanship" of American wives, implying a loss of autonomy and freedom once married.

Moreover, it comments on the social expectation for the husband to be the breadwinner, contributing financially to the household without expecting anything in return, highlighting a sort of matrimonial market where the American wife’s financial contribution is minimal, yet her demands and pretensions are inversely high. The chapter recounts tales of husbands planned to spend quiet lives with their spouses, only to find themselves sidelined in their own homes, relegated to the role of financier of their wives' social ambitions.

The narrative details the allocation of domestic spaces to illustrate the husband's diminished presence in the household, suggesting that his role is more of an unseen

provider than an active participant in home life. This diminishing of the husband's authority and place within the American household is contrasted with other cultures where the husband retains a more central, authoritative role.

Throughout, "Some American Husbands" humorously critiques the shifting marital dynamics, showcasing the American husband as a figure of patience and unacknowledged sacrifice. It uses examples of social events, home arrangements, and personal anecdotes to exemplify the ways in which American husbands have adapted to, or are subjugated by, their roles in modern matrimony, ending on a note that admires their resilience and generosity in the face of these challenges.

CHAPTER 14 - "CAROLUS"

In Chapter 14 of "The Ways of Men," titled "Carolus," the narrative recounts the impactful and inspirational mentorship of Carolus-Duran, a distinguished French artist from Lille, whose expertise and artistry in the early seventies drew a group of mainly American students to his studio in Paris. This influx of students, which included notable names like Sargent and Dannat, necessitated a move to a larger space on rue Notre-Dame des Champs, establishing an atelier where each student contributed to the costs, and Carolus-Duran, in a gesture of generosity and dedication, provided his guidance without charge and occasionally assisted students financially.

This chapter vividly captures the transformative influence of Carolus-Duran on his students, setting a stark contrast between the stagnant atmosphere of other art schools and the energetic, innovative environment of his studio. It illustrates how his success, including the prestigious honors like the MEDAILLE D'HONNEUR and the admiration for his works such as the portrait of Madame de Portalais and "La Femme au Gant," instilled an infectious zeal among his pupils. The narrative highlights how the camaraderie, mutual support, and shared experiences, like the collaborative work on a ceiling for the Luxembourg Palace, cemented a deep bond between Carolus and his students, fostering not only their artistic growth but also their personal development.

In rituals like the critique Tuesdays, visits to the Louvre, and neighborhood strolls, Carolus's teachings extended beyond the studio, emphasizing the importance of constant study and the revered traditions of Renaissance art. The chapter also delves into the personal attributes that made Carolus a revered figure: his enthusiastic nature, his approach to teaching that was devoid of envy or calculation, and his profound impact on the artistic trajectory of his students. The recounting of these shared experiences, alongside significant moments of recognition and achievement for Carolus, like painting the king and queen of Portugal and his elevation to presidency of

the new school’s exhibition, underscores his role as both a guiding influence and a central figure in the lives of these burgeoning artists.

The chapter concludes with reflections on Carolus's enduring legacy, his retreat from public life into a stately existence reminiscent of historical artistic greats, and the undiminishable spirit of his teachings, captured in the maxim, "Tout ce qui n'est pas indispensable est nuisible," underscoring the essence of his artistic philosophy: simplicity, clarity, and the intuitive grace of directness in art.

CHAPTER 15 - The Grand Opera Fad

Chapter 15 of "The Ways of Men" titled "The Grand Opera" delves into the diverse reasons people attend the opera, with a particular focus on Wagner's lengthy operas. The author is curious about the different classes of opera-goers, highlighting three main categories: the wealthy socialites who treat the opera as a social gathering rather than an art form, those who attend for the prestige and to be seen in high society, and the genuine music lovers who are often found in the less prestigious seats.

The chapter criticizes the first group for using the opera as a pretext for socializing, describing how the arrival timing and the engagement with the performance are more about being seen and less about the music. It humorously sketches the superficiality of their engagement, where the actual performances and the artists are secondary to the social interactions happening in the boxes and the audience's attire. The second group is similarly critiqued for their lack of genuine interest in the music, attending merely because it's considered a fashionable and elite activity. Despite their lack of musical understanding or appreciation, their presence is part of the opera's social fabric.

The real affection for opera is found among the third group, who are portrayed as sincere music lovers. Despite their higher placement in the theatre, their engagement and appreciation for the performances are highlighted as more authentic than that of those in the more expensive seats. The author compares this genuine enjoyment of music to a scene in Tangiers, where the local population is mesmerized by a musician, drawing a parallel between the heightened emotional states induced by music across different cultures.

Throughout the chapter, the author uses vivid analogies and critical observations to point out the superficiality and genuine appreciation found among opera-goers. The critiques of social superficiality versus genuine musical engagement offer a humorous

yet pointed commentary on societal behaviors and priorities, ultimately questioning the varied motivations behind attending the grand opera.

CHAPTER 16 - The Poetic CABARETS of Paris

In "The Ways of Men," the chapter explores the birth and flourishment of a unique artistic community centered around Montmartre, Paris, through the pioneering efforts of young Salis and the establishment of the iconic cabaret, "Chat Noir." Salis, distinguished by his exceptional taste, critical acumen, and business acumen, transformed an obscure café on Boulevard Rochechouart into a celebrated hub of artistic expression. By decorating the new locale in the rue Victor Masse with a blend of medieval aesthetics and offering an environment where beer flowed freely and waiters donned period costumes, Salis not only invigorated the spirit of the Louis XIII era but also fostered a renaissance of literary and artistic creativity.

The "Chat Noir" became a magnet for aspiring poets, musicians, and raconteurs, providing them an intimate space to share their works with the warmth and camaraderie of a close-knit circle. The charm of these gatherings lay in their informality and the mutual encouragement among the budding artists. Despite facing fierce opposition from established entertainment venues, which viewed the cabaret as a threat and launched a legal onslaught, Salis secured the support of President Grevy, ensuring the survival and prosperity of his venture.

This chapter also narrates the proliferation of cabarets in Montmartre, each with its unique contributions to the cultural landscape. Establishments like "4 z'Arts" and "Trombert" blossomed, extending the tradition of artistic camaraderie and innovation. For example, the invention of "shadow pictures" by Caran d'Ache introduced a novel form of storytelling that captivated audiences. Furthermore, the chapter sheds light on individual talents such as Jules Jouy, whose poignant songs received acclaim, and Aristide Bruant, whose "Mirliton" cabaret echoed his deep empathy for society's outcasts.

The narrative underscores how these cabarets, from the "Chat Noir" to "Le Mirliton" and beyond, not only supplanted the Latin Quarter as the heart of Paris's Bohemian life but also revolutionized artistic expression and public entertainment. The blend of satire, song, and the dramatic arts within these venues carved out a new cultural identity for Montmartre, making it a bastion of creativity and a sanctuary for the avant-garde. Through their resilience, innovation, and mutual support, the artists and poets of Montmartre challenged conventional norms, creating a legacy of artistic freedom and expression that resonated far beyond the confines of their intimate gatherings.

CHAPTER 17 - Etiquette At Home and Abroad

In "Etiquette At Home and Abroad," the author reflects on the consequences of neglecting etiquette in both personal and public spheres, inspired by an incident involving the Grand Duchess Olga in St. Petersburg. This contemplation reveals a broader critique of the American and, to some extent, the English disregard for the nuances of social customs, especially when compared to the ceremonious behavior appreciated in other cultures. The author argues for the incorporation of more formal politeness into daily interactions, not just with strangers but within the home and towards those considered inferiors, suggesting that politeness stems from kindness and is essential for smooth social functioning.

Highlighting the conflict between Americans' "free and easy-going" demeanor and the detailed etiquette of European and other cultures, the chapter includes anecdotes that illustrate misunderstandings and conflicts arising from cultural differences in manners. These stories range from a young American girl unknowingly offending a French concierge to a British butler uncomfortable with friendly interactions, underscoring the author's point that a lack of politeness and understanding of local customs can lead to discomfort and even alienation.

The text also discusses the shock and disillusionment Americans feel upon discovering they are not as welcomed abroad as they might have thought, largely due to their ignorance of or indifference to local etiquette. It argues for a more gracious approach toward service workers and others we might consider our social inferiors, suggesting that such behaviors not only foster goodwill but also facilitate smoother interpersonal relations.

Finally, the author criticizes the harsh and impolite manner in which children and young people are often treated within families. They advocate for the same level of respect and consideration to be extended to the young and dependent as is expected

in formal society, implying that such changes in attitude could enhance harmony and understanding in personal relations. By drawing parallels between these domestic interactions and the ceremonial respect shown to the infant princess in St. Petersburg, the chapter advocates for a universal application of respect and politeness as essential components of both public and private life.

CHAPTER 18 - What is "Art"?

In Chapter 18 of "The Ways of Men," titled "What is 'Art'?", the narrator delves into the perplexing question of defining art. This exploration begins with the author's memories of being a young, aspiring artist in foreign studios, where the comment "it's not Art" often served as a damning final judgment on artistic endeavors. Such remarks left the author and peers in a state of confusion and doubt about their works and the very nature of art.

The narrative proceeds to criticize the arbitrary standards set by different "masters" and the shifting sands of public and critical opinion that seem to govern the art world. The author points to the fleeting nature of artistic reputation by recounting the rise and fall of Bastien-Lepage, a painter whose work was once celebrated and then neglected. This story serves as a microcosm of the broader volatility and subjectivity in art appreciation, illustrating how yesterday's idols can become today's jokes. The conversation extends to the fluctuating market values of artworks and the inconsistent critical reception of both contemporary and old masters over time, arguing against the notion of a stable or absolute definition of art.

Central to the chapter is a recounting of the struggle to find a durable footing in the art world amidst these shifting perceptions and the search for a meaningful definition of art. This quest finds some resolution in the reflections of Leo Tolstoy, who proposes that art is simply any expression through which one person communicates an experienced emotion to another. This inclusive and accessible definition is embraced as a revelation, challenging the elitist constraints placed on art by those who claim to be its gatekeepers.

The author criticizes the aesthetic elitism and obscurantism that often dominate discussions about art, suggesting that such attitudes distance art from the wider

audience and obscure its true essence. Emphasizing Tolstoy's perspective, the chapter advocates for a democratization of art, asserting that everyone has the potential to be an artist in their own right by sharing their emotions and experiences with others. This view dismantles the hierarchical structure of artistic validation, proposing instead that art's true value lies in its capacity to connect humans on a fundamental emotional level.

In conclusion, "What is 'Art'?" argues against constraining art within narrow, exclusive definitions and celebrates the universal potential for artistic expression. It champions a broad, inclusive understanding of art as a vital mode of human communication, accessible to and achievable by all.

CHAPTER 19 - The Genealogical Craze

Chapter 19 of "The Ways of Men" titled "The Genealogical Craze" explores America's extreme fascination with genealogy and social orders. The chapter opens with an observation on the American penchant for not doing things in moderation, attributing it to the lack of established social standards. This has led to a surge in genealogical interests, with people vying for membership in exclusive societies based on ancestral connections to historical events or figures.

The narrative then moves to discuss how this craze began with the formation of the "Daughters of the Revolution," for descendants of officers in Washington's army, and expanded rapidly as other similar societies emerged. These include the "Colonial Dames," the "Aztec" society for descendants of Mexican War officers, the "Social Order of Foreign Wars," and the "Children of 1812." This escalation in creating exclusive societies is seen as a manifestation of Americans' desire to not feel left out and to assert a social standing based on ancestry.

Men joined in with the "Sons of the Revolution," and women responded by creating the "Granddaughters of the Revolution" and "The Mayflower Order," signaling a descent from passengers of the Mayflower. The chapter portrays these developments as part of the American obsession with genealogy, leading to the formation of even more exclusive societies like the "Royal Order of the Crown," requiring proof of descent from royalty, and the "Circle of Holland Dames of the New Netherlands," focused on Dutch sovereign descent.

The author humorously compares this societal phenomenon to his school days when he and his classmates formed a society to feel important, underscoring the absurdity and vanity underlying these genealogical societies. The chapter concludes by criticising how these societies exploit individuals' desires for social recognition, with many exploiting the craze for personal gain. It suggests that this genealogical frenzy

reflects a broader societal issue of prioritizing superficial distinctions over genuine connections and contributions.

CHAPTER 20 - As the Twig is Bent

You are being provided with a book chapter by chapter. I will request you to read the book for me after each chapter. After reading the chapter, 1. shorten the chapter to no less than 300 words and no more than 400 words. 2. Do not change the name, address, or any important nouns in the chapter. 3. Do not translate the original language. 4. Keep the same style as the original chapter, keep it consistent throughout the chapter. Your reply must comply with all four requirements, or it’s invalid.
I will provide the chapter now.

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CHAPTER 20 - As the Twig is Bent
I KNEW, in my youth, a French village far up among the Cevennes Mountains, where the one cultivated man of the place, saddened by the unlovely lives of the peasants around him and by the bare walls of the village school, organized evening classes for the boys. During these informal hours, he talked to them of literature and art and showed them his prints and paintings. When the youths' interest was aroused he lent them books, that they might read about the statues and buildings that had attracted their attention. At first it appeared a hopeless task to arouse any interest among these peasants in subjects not bearing on their abject lives. To talk with boys of the ideal, when their poor bodies were in need of food and raiment, seemed superfluous; but in time the charm worked, as it always will. The beautiful appealed to their simple natures, elevating and refining them, and opening before their eager eyes perspectives of undreamed-of interest. The self- imposed task became a delight as his pupils' minds responded to his efforts. Although death soon ended his

useful life, the seed planted grew and bore fruit in many humble homes. At this moment I know men in several walks of life who revere with touching devotion the memory of the one human being who had brought to them, at the moment when they were most impressionable, the gracious message that existence was not merely a struggle for bread. The boys he had gathered around him realize now that the encouragement and incentive received from those evening glimpses of noble works existing in the world was the mainspring of their subsequent development and a source of infinite pleasure through all succeeding years.

This reference to an individual effort toward cultivating the poor has been made because other delicate spirits are attempting some such task in our city, where quite as much as in the French village schoolchildren stand in need of some message of beauty in addition to the instruction they receive, - some window opened for them, as it were, upon the fields of art, that their eyes when raised from study or play may rest on objects more inspiring than blank walls and the graceless surroundings of street or schoolroom.

We are far too quick in assuming that love of the beautiful is confined to the highly educated; that the poor have no desire to surround themselves with graceful forms and harmonious colors. We wonder at and deplore their crude standards, bewailing the general lack of taste and the gradual reducing of everything to a commonplace money basis. We smile at the efforts toward adornment attempted by the poor, taking it too readily for granted that on this point they are beyond redemption. This error is the less excusable as so little has been done by way of experiment before forming an opinion, - whole classes being put down as inferior beings, incapable of appreciation, before they have been allowed even a glimpse of the works of art that form the daily mental food of their judges.

The portly charlady who rules despotically in my chambers is an example. It has been a curious study to watch her growing interest in the objects that have here for the first time come under her notice; the delight she has come to take in dusting and arranging my belongings, and her enthusiasm at any new acquisition. Knowing how bare her own home was, I felt at first only astonishment at her vivid interest in what seemed beyond her comprehension, but now realize that in some blind way she appreciates the rare and the delicate quite as much as my more cultivated visitors. At the end of one laborious morning, when everything was arranged to her satisfaction, she turned to me her poor, plain face, lighted up with an expression of delight, and exclaimed, "Oh, sir, I do love to work in these rooms! I'm never so happy as when I'm arranging them elegant things!" And, although my pleasure in her pleasure was modified by the discovery that she had taken an eighteenth-century comb to disentangle the fringes of a rug, and broken several of its teeth in her ardor, that she invariably placed a certain Whister etching upside down, and then stood in rapt admiration before it, still, in watching her enthusiasm, I felt a thrill of satisfaction at seeing how her untaught taste responded to a contact with good things.

Here in America, and especially in our city, which we have been at such pains to make as hideous as possible, the schoolrooms, where hundreds of thousands of children pass many hours daily, are one degree more graceless than the town itself; the most artistically inclined child can

hardly receive any but unfortunate impressions. The other day a friend took me severely to task for rating our American women on their love of the big shops, and gave me, I confess, an entirely new idea on the subject. "Can't you see," she said, "that the shops here are what the museums abroad are to the poor? It is in them only that certain people may catch

glimpses of the dainty and exquisite manufactures of other countries. The little education their eyes receive is obtained during visits to these emporiums."

If this proves so, and it seems probable, it only proves how the humble long for something more graceful than their meagre homes afford.

In the hope of training the younger generations to better standards and less vulgar ideals, a group of ladies are making an attempt to surround our schoolchildren during their impressionable youth with reproductions of historic masterpieces, and have already decorated many schoolrooms in this way. For a modest sum it is possible to tint the bare walls an attractive color - a delight in itself - and adorn them with plaster casts of statues and solar prints of pictures and buildings. The transformation that fifty or sixty dollars judiciously expended in this way produces in a school-room is beyond belief, and, as the advertisements say, "must be seen to be appreciated," giving an air of cheerfulness and refinement to the dreariest apartment.

It is hard to make people understand the enthusiasm these decorations have excited in both teachers and pupils. The directress of one of our large schools was telling me of the help and pleasure the prints and casts had been to her; she had given them as subjects for the class compositions, and used them in a hundred different ways as object-lessons. As the children are graduated from room to room, a great variety of high-class subjects can be brought to their notice by varying the decorations.

It is by the eye principally that taste is educated. "We speak with admiration of the eighth sense common among Parisians, and envy them their magic power of combining simple materials into an artistic whole. The reason is that for generations the eyes of those people have been unconsciously educated by the harmonious lines of well-proportioned buildings, finely finished detail of stately colonnade, and shady

perspective of quay and boulevard. After years of this subtle training the eye instinctively revolts from the vulgar and the crude. There is little in the poorer quarters of our city to rejoice or refine the senses; squalor and all-pervading ugliness are not least among the curses that poverty entails.

If you have a subject of interest in your mind, it often happens that every book you open, every person you speak with, refers to that topic. I never remember having seen an explanation offered of this phenomenon. The other morning, while this article was lying half finished on my desk, I opened the last number of a Paris paper and began reading an account of the drama, LES MAUVAIS BERGERS (treating of that perilous subject, the "strikes"), which Sarah Bernhardt had just had the courage to produce before the Paris public. In the third act, when the owner of the factory receives the disaffected hands, and listens to their complaints, the leader of the strike (an intelligent young workman), besides shorter hours and increased pay, demands that recreation rooms be built where the toilers, their wives, and their children may pass unoccupied hours in the enjoyment of attractive surroundings, and cries in conclusion: "We, the poor, need some poetry and some art in our lives, man does not live by bread alone. He has a right, like the rich, to things of beauty!"

In commending the use of decoration as a means of bringing pleasure into dull, cramped lives, one is too often met by the curious argument that taste is innate. "Either people have it or they haven't," like a long nose or a short one, and it is useless to waste good money in trying to improve either. "It would be much more to the point to spend your money in giving the poor children a good roast-beef dinner at Christmas than in placing the bust of Clytie before them." That argument has crushed more attempts to elevate the poor than any other ever advanced. If it were listened to, there

would never be any progress made, because there are always thousands of people who are hungry.

When we reflect how painfully ill-arranged rooms or ugly colors affect our senses, and remember that less fortunate neighbors suffer as much as we do from hideous environments, it seems like keeping sunlight from a plant, or fresh air out of a sick-room, to refuse glimpses of the beautiful to

CHAPTER 21 - Seven Small Duchesses

Chapter 21 of "The Ways of Men" discusses the transformation of the French aristocracy's social interactions from historical prestige to contemporary significance, as seen through the lives of the "Seven Small Duchesses." The chapter delves into the decline of the French nobility's influence on society, especially during the 19th century, attributing it to their aloofness and refusal to engage with the changing political landscape. Conversely, it highlights a shift towards re-engagement led by the younger generation, particularly a group of ducal women who invigorate the traditional aristocracy with their modern and lively approach to fulfilling their roles.

These duchesses, each holding a significant title and residing in historically rich châteaux, have become the trendsetters of French society. They exhibit a blend of respect for tradition and a spirited engagement with contemporary life, leading social events from Paris to the Riviera. Despite foreign and bourgeois influences on French society over the years, these women maintain a strict exclusivity, reflecting an enduring adherence to traditional values of heritage and pedigree.

Their choice of companionship remains firmly within their caste, highlighting a unique French perspective on social status and interaction that starkly contrasts with perceptions in countries like England and America. This exclusivity further extends to their cultural pursuits, with each duchess notable for particular skills in the arts, thereby enriching their social circle not only with status but with substantive cultural contributions.

The chapter closes by reflecting on the irony of modernity's touch on the aristocracy — where titles once synonymous with battlefield and courtly grandeur now belong to spirited young women leading their lives with a mix of tradition and contemporary flair. Yet, despite a more visible engagement with society, they keep a firm boundary against outsiders, preserving their exclusivity and continuing the legacy of the French

aristocracy's distinct social structure.

CHAPTER 22 - Growing Old Ungracefully

In the chapter "Growing Old Ungracefully" from "The Ways of Men," the narrative delves into the universal, albeit often resisted, process of aging and the societal reactions to it. The text introspectively examines the human condition's inevitable encounter with the marks of aging, such as graying hair and the appearance of wrinkles, posing a philosophic question: Should one accept the natural progression into middle age with grace, or rather, resist it, embarking on a futile struggle against the inexorable march of time?

Historically, the obsession with maintaining a youthful appearance was more pronounced among men, as illustrated by figures such as Caesar and the Grand Monarque, who employed various artifices to conceal their aging. However, the contemporary battleground of this age-old war against aging has shifted, with women now at the forefront, striving more than ever to preserve their youthfulness. This phenomenon is critiqued as being not only widespread but also somewhat nonsensical, given the natural limitations of such endeavors to halt the visible signs of aging.

The text articulates a nuanced observation: efforts aimed at preserving youth often backfire, as exemplified by the anecdote of a French beauty who, in striving to look significantly younger than her fifty years, was rumored to be over sixty. This ironic outcome highlights the futility and, sometimes, the counterproductiveness of attempting to defy aging.

The chapter then transitions to critique the means by which contemporary society, particularly women, attempt to cling to youth. It laments the lack of recognition that each stage of life possesses its own inherent beauty, which is often overshadowed by incongruous attempts to mimic youthfulness. Such efforts, the narrative suggests, not only fail to deceive but also forsake the unique appeal and dignity that come with

aging.

Reminiscing about the Ancien Régime in France, where matters of taste were paramount, the narrative contrasts the elegance with which aging was accepted and embellished with flattering attire. It posits that true attractiveness and charm in later years stem not from futile attempts at rejuvenation but from embracing one’s age with grace, embodying it with appropriate styles that highlight the undimmed elegance of maturity.

In summation, the chapter offers a poignant critique of society's vain pursuit of eternal youth, advocating instead for a celebration of each phase of life’s natural progression. It calls for a return to recognizing and valuing the authentic beauty inherent in aging, suggesting that true grace lies not in fighting the inevitable but in embracing it with dignity and self-respect.

CHAPTER 23 - Around a Spring

In Chapter 23 of "The Ways of Men," titled "Around a Spring," the author illustrates how the discovery of a malodorous spring in a Continental village can transform it into a flourishing tourist destination. The presence of such a spring is considered a stroke of luck for the village, enabling it to capitalize on the newfound source of thermal water by attracting visitors seeking its medicinal qualities. The process begins with having the water analyzed and endorsed by a notable figure, then securing government approval to build a bathhouse. This initial phase sets the stage for the village to evolve into a bustling resort.

The locals, from officials to citizens, unite in their efforts to entice tourists, creating appealing pamphlets and embellishing advertisements with images of traditional local costumes, though such attire had not been worn for decades. The first wave of visitors often includes English tourists, known for their penchant for exploring new and affordable destines. Following the influx of British guests, other nationalities and even possibly high-profile individuals arrive, prompting further development including casinos and theaters to entertain the visitors.

The narrative contrasts the industrious and welcoming approach of these European villages with the skepticism often observed in rural populations towards tourists elsewhere. It emphasizes the importance of both physical and mental rejuvenation offered by such resorts, detailing the array of entertainments and amusements designed to appeal to every visitor. The municipal control over pricing for various services ensures a fair experience, free from the risk of extortion.

Moreover, the chapter touches upon the subtle commercialism underlying the hospitable façade, suggesting that while the primary aim is to draw profit from the visitors, the mutual enjoyment and benefits shouldn't be overlooked. The narrative concludes with a reflective commentary on the authenticity of such tourist

destinations, pondering whether the meticulously crafted beauty and attractions might sometimes feel overly contrived or insincere, reminiscent of staged spectacles designed exclusively for guests' enjoyment, yet still retains the charm and appeal that continues to draw people back.

CHAPTER 24 - The Better Part

Chapter 24 of "The Ways of Men," titled "The Better Part," presents a reflective and critical look at the upper-class society's restrictive nature on women's lives, juxtaposed against the freer, more engaging experiences of women outside these narrow confines. The chapter opens with an allegory comparing aristocratic women to hothouse flowers, sheltered and limited in their growth, drawing a stark contrast with wild flowers that bloom freely in nature. This sets the stage for a deeper exploration of the social constraints and monotony faced by women in "exclusive" circles, where their lives are predetermined and suffocated by societal expectations and lack of genuine choices.

In this milieu, young women of the aristocracy are introduced to society in a manner that quickly becomes monotonous and predictable, with their roles and social interactions strictly circumscribed by their social standing. Their exposure to potential partners is limited to a narrow set of wealthy, eligible men, leading to a situation where their worth and choices are measured more by the material benefits they can secure than by personal affection or compatibility. This societal setup leads to an unfulfilling cycle of social events that rarely offer new experiences or opportunities for genuine connections.

Contrastingly, the narrative shifts to explore the lives of "summer girls" who, unbound by the restrictions of high society, engage with the world more freely and form connections based on personal interest and attraction rather than social standing. These young women enjoy a variety of experiences and interactions, leading to a more dynamic and fulfilling social life. They value personal happiness and genuine relationships over the pursuit of status or wealth.

The chapter criticizes the shallow value system of high society and highlights the richer, more varied lives of those outside its grip. It suggests that true contentment

and success in life come not from conforming to rigid social norms but from pursuing genuine connections and experiences. The closing sentiment elevates the notion that, away from the stifling constraints of aristocracy, there lies a path to true happiness through authentic living and loving.

CHAPTER 25 - La Comedie Francaise a Orange

Idle through the sun-kissed landscapes of southern France, we embarked on an unforeseen adventure upon learning that the Comedie Francaise actors were heading to Orange for a series of performances organized by Les Felibres, a society dedicated to classical arts and the preservation of Orange's Roman theatre. Envisioning to revive the grandeur of classical drama, similar to Beyreuth's ode to Wagner, the festival aimed to fund the restoration of this ancient marvel.

Our journey commenced in Lyon, transitioning from train to a flotilla along the Rhone, amidst a vibrant spectacle of boats and cheering crowds. The path was a picturesque journey through historical landmarks and towns, each contributing to the anticipation of the theatrical wonders that awaited at Orange.

The arrival in Orange was a culmination of excitement and cultural fervor, the town abuzz with the languages and songs of Provence, paying homage to Mistral and the classics. The ambition was lofty; to nurture a renaissance of classical drama in the valley where art once flourished.

As the sun dipped below the horizon, we ascended the ancient steps of the theatre, its acoustics tested against the backdrop of a setting sun and the silhouettes of historical ruins. The anticipation was palpable, heightened by a brief threat of rain that, fortunately, passed, leaving behind a charged atmosphere for the night’s performances.

The events of the evening commenced with a tribute to Apollo, transitioning seamlessly into the spellbinding drama of "The Erynnyes," an adaptation by Leconte de Lisle. The towering stage, alive with the shades of trees and ruins, set a dramatic scene. The audience was enraptured, the ancient walls echoing the powerful voices and emotions of the actors, who brought to life the timeless tragedies penned by

Aeschylus.

As Clytemnestra, Madame Lerou, and Mounet-Sully, in the role of the king, delivered performances of such clarity and emotion, they affirmed the theatre's unparalleled ability to amplify and enrich the spoken word. The night was a journey through heightened sensations, the tragedy of bloodlines and fates unwinding under the cloak of night, against the hauntingly beautiful backdrop of the Roman theatre.

Leaving the theatre, the impression of the evening was indelible, a testament to the power of classical drama to transcend time, invoking a collective awe in its witness. The experience was a poignant reminder of the timeless allure and profound impact of the arts, an immortal thread weaving through the heart of civilization.

CHAPTER 26 - Pre-palatial Newport

In Chapter 26 of "The Ways of Men," titled "Pre-palatial Newport," the Ocean House, once a prestigious hotel in Newport, is nostalgically recounted following its destruction by fire. The narrative explores the significance of the Ocean House not just as a building, but as a symbol of an era in Newport's history that has since vanished. This bygone period was characterized by its social customs, leisurely activities, and the genteel lifestyle of its inhabitants, marking the pre-palatial phase of Newport from 1845 to 1885.

The chapter vividly describes the changing social scenes of Newport, depicting a time when life was simpler, dinners were earlier, and the newly introduced concept of six o'clock dinners was seen as a modern innovation. The text nostalgically recalls "high-teas," "sally lunns," and the leisurely pace of life punctuated by "rockaways" and picnics that were common social activities of the era.

Sports and cultural interests were modest, with afternoons often spent in sedate activities like driving up Bellevue Avenue. This was contrasted with gatherings at historic sites or clubs where intellectual pursuits were entertained, reflecting the cultured but understated lifestyle of Newport's residents during this time.

The narrative also touches on the influence of foreign-born residents who introduced more lavish and sophisticated standards of living, thus beginning a transformation in American social customs and aspirations. The Ocean House, through its "Saturday evening hops," played a central role in the social fabric of Newport, offering scenes of genteel entertainment and community gatherings.

The decline of the Ocean House and similar establishments is seen not just as a loss of buildings, but as the end of an era marked by simplicity, cultural aspirations, and a sense of community that once defined Newport. The chapter reflects on the evolution

of Newport's society, from its pre-palatial days to the more opulent and extravagant lifestyles that would follow, signifying a transition in American social history that hinged significantly on changes in taste, leisure, and social gatherings, as epitomized by the story of the Ocean House.

CHAPTER 27 - SARDOU at Marly-le-Roy

In Chapter 27 of "The Ways of Men," we travel to the quaint village of Marly-le-Roy, nestled within the verdant triangle of Saint Cloud, Versailles, and Saint Germain. This location, once favored by French royalty and notably by the "Sun King" Louis XIV, holds the memory of grandeur despite the erasure of its royal villas and treasures through time. Among its enduring features are the marble horses by Coustou, now in the Champs Elysees, symbolizing the remnants of its splendid past.

The narrative shifts to focus on the residence of Victorien Sardou, a towering figure in modern drama, sharing this esteemed heritage with Alexandre Dumas FILS. Sardou’s abode, adorned with artifacts and relics of a bygone era, lies within the village's outskirts, accessible through a majestic gateway. Upon entering, one is greeted by an avenue flanked by sphinxes, a gift from the late Khedive, leading to Sardou’s residence – a testament to his artistic tastes and historical reverence.

Within Sardou's home, every room breathes the essence of the 18th century, with Gobelin tapestries and Louis XIV’s relics, reflecting a deep engagement with French history and art. Sardou, a collector at heart, revels in the joy of acquiring, preserving, and showcasing his treasures, each with a story that bridges the past to the present. His acquisition stories, especially the Beauvais tapestry set and a singular piece found in a peasant's stable, reveal not just a collector's pride but a historian's zeal.

The narrative explores Sardou’s lineage, tracing back to Sardinian fishermen, hinting at the blend of history and personal legacy that defines the playwright. The scenic descriptions of Marly-le-Roy and the panoramic views from Sardou’s estate paint a picture of tranquil beauty intertwined with historical grandeur.

Transitioning to the outdoors, Sardou shares his vision for his estate's gardens, inspired by historical maps and prints. His passion extends to the restoration of 18th-

century garden designs, statues, and fountains, indicating his dedication to preserving heritage beyond his theatrical endeavors.

Sardou's assortment of artifacts, including pieces from Versailles and Saint Cloud, showcases his deep engagement with French history. The column from the Tuileries, with its royal emblems, stands as a symbol of resilience and historic memory, cherished and showcased by Sardou with pride.

The chapter concludes with insights into Sardou's workspace, a library arranged methodically by historical periods, facilitating his research and writing. This personal space reflects Sardou's scholarly approach to his work, embodying his passion for history and its influence on his plays, notably mentioned is "Robespierre," which enjoyed successful staging in London, despite Sardou's personal absence due to travel apprehensions.

This exploration not only honors Sardou's contributions to drama and historical preservation but also casts a light on the personal convictions and passions that drive his artistic and collectible endeavors, showcasing a life devoted to the celebration and preservation of French history and art.

CHAPTER 28 - Inconsistencies

The chapter "Inconsistencies" narrates an insightful conversation between the protagonist, who finds himself engaging with a young Turk during a summer evening ball. As the evening unfolds, the cultural contrasts between Eastern and Western social etiquettes and norms become the focal point of their exchange.

The setting begins with the protagonist escaping the mundane chatter of other men about golf and racing by retreating to a quiet corner of the piazza to enjoy his cigar. The tranquility is soon interrupted by the presence of a solemn young Turk, puzzled by the late commencement of the ball compared to the time mentioned in the invitation. The protagonist explains the casual approach of American social gatherings, where the timing on the invitation is often disregarded.

The conversation takes a deeper dive into the social fabric of American society as they observe the guests transitioning from casual groupings to engaging in dances. The Turk, with his conservative background, is perplexed by the apparent contradictions in American social norms—where on one hand, strict societal codes seem to govern interactions, while on the other, intimate forms of dancing are openly accepted.

The protagonist elaborates on American social conventions, distinguishing them from European standards. He highlights the paradox of American societal norms where the external display of wealth and success overrides the conventional prerequisites of social acceptance. He points out the inconsistency in judging women based on their attire, revealing the prejudice towards modesty based on context and setting.

An interesting aspect of their discussion revolves around the American concept of flirtation, and the role of women in society which, according to the protagonist, often leaves husbands in a neglected state. They delve into the peculiar practice of women dressing provocatively for public events like the opera, which seems to contradict their

otherwise conservative societal values regarding modesty.

The chapter closes on a note of confusion and wonder from the Turk, as he tries to reconcile the conflicting norms of modesty and social etiquette between daylight and evening events, between private and public settings. The protagonist struggles to offer sufficient explanations that bridge the cultural gap, leaving the reader to ponder the complexities and contradictions within American societal norms.

Through this dialogue-driven narrative, the chapter provides a reflective critique of the societal constructs and the often arbitrary nature of social acceptability, challenging the reader to question what constitutes propriety and the influence of cultural context on our perception of it.

CHAPTER 29 - Modern "Cadets de Gascogne"

In Chapter 29 of "The Ways of Men," titled "Modern 'Cadets de Gascogne'," the narrator and their companion, inspired by a prior enchanting performance by the Comedie Francaise in the antique theatre at Orange, eagerly seize another chance to immerse themselves in French cultural and literary heritage. This opportunity presents itself in the form of an adventurous journey with the "Cadets de Gascogne," a group of passionate, southern-born young men whose lives revolve around the stage and the arts, reminiscent of the spirited band portrayed in Rostand's "Cyrano de Bergerac."

The Cadets, modern-day devotees of Melpomene and aficionados of Gascony’s literary contribution, blend the merriment of historic camaraderie with the serious pursuit of literary excellence. Their excursions are depicted as lay pilgrimages to sites of literary and historic significance, embodying a mix of earnest artistic homage and lighthearted revelry, including performances, recitations, and the enjoyment of regional delicacies.

This particular journey leads the narrator, their companion, and the Cadets through the scenic Cevennes Mountains towards Languedoc, with a grand finale planned in the arena at Beziers for a performance of "DEJANIRE" by Louis Gallet and Saint-Saens. Along the way, from Carcassonne's revived medieval splendor to the simple beauty of Ispanhac and the fervent artistry witnessed at St. Enimie, the travelers indulge in both the pleasures of nature and the camaraderie of shared literary and artistic endeavor.

Their passage is marked by a series of vibrant, communal experiences: lunches atop ancient keeps, impromptu recitations stirring local inhabitants, and riverside soirées under the moonlight, culminating in the artistic solidarity and revelry of a performance in Beziers. This performance, set against a backdrop of more than 10,000 spectators, melds the ancient drama of Dejanira and Hercules with the living landscape, reinforcing the Cadets’ commitment to reviving and celebrating French artistic and

cultural traditions.

The chapter closes with a reflection on the Cadets' mission to foster a deeper appreciation for France's regional diversity and cultural heritage, aiming to decentralize art, revitalize the stage, and promote laughter and youthful spirit amidst life's trials. Through their journey, the Cadets de Gascogne symbolize a bridge between France's illustrious past and its living artistry, advocating for a vibrant, enduring cultural identity.

CHAPTER 30 - The Dinner and the Drama

In "The Dinner and the Drama," the chapter discusses a cultural shift in America that is diminishing the quality and appreciation of theatre, comparing it unfavorably with the past. Claude Frollo, in Hugo's narrative, symbolizes a prophetic vision where one societal change eclipses another; here, the elaboration and timing of dinners are seen as encroaching upon the traditional appeal and cultural position of drama. Highlighting New York's paradox of numerous and richly funded theaters yet a declining stage for classic and quality performances, the text laments the absence of significant contemporary contributions to drama from American authors.

The chapter delves into several reasons for this decline, attributing a significant part to changes in social habits, particularly the "star" system, difficulties maintaining stock companies, and a shortage of American acting talent. However, a critical yet overlooked factor is identified as the changing dinner habits—moving from early, simple family meals to late, elaborate social events—thus competing with theater attendance. This shift has not only altered the practicality of attending performances but also transformed the meal into a substantial, luxurious social function that rivals the appeal of the theatre.

The changing landscape of New York's dining scene from the 1870s, including the rise of dining establishments that cater to leisure and luxury, has contributed to this phenomenon. The variety and appeal of such dining experiences offer a compelling alternative to theatre-going. Consequently, this has led to a mismatch between audience expectations and the offerings of the theatre, with preference increasingly given to light entertainment over intellectually or artistically stimulating performances.

Comparison with European dining and theatre-going habits underscores a distinct cultural difference, suggesting that the American shift towards late, luxurious dining is

not universally paralleled and that in other cultures, theatre still holds a central place in social life. The chapter concludes on a hopeful note, suggesting that the current low in American drama may eventually give way to a resurgence of interest and quality in the theatre, driven by a desire for intellectually and emotionally fulfilling experiences that go beyond mere amusement.

The chapter critically explores the complex interrelation between societal trends and cultural consumption, arguing that the evolution of dining practices has inadvertently contributed to a devaluation of drama in America. It calls for a reflection on the social priorities that guide entertainment choices and their long-term implications for cultural enrichment.

CHAPTER 31 - The Modern ASPASIA

Chapter 31 of "The Ways of Men" entitled "The Modern Aspasia" gives a reflective and contrasting view of Paris compared to other historic European cities. It paints Paris as a unique entity that possesses an alluring charm capable of captivating a diverse audience ranging from the frivolous to the profoundly intellectual. Unlike the austere Bruges or Ghent, the sensual Naples, or the cultured Florence and Venice, Paris is depicted as a city that seduces all manner of people with its dynamic personality. From its ability to ensnare the hearts of art lovers and scholars with its historical and cultural depth, to its command over fashion that dictates the trends followed by women worldwide, Paris's influence is unparalleled.

The narrative describes Paris as engaging various types of individuals: those seeking pleasure, students aiming for high standards, dreamers fond of the past, and even those indifferent to the arts or study, all find themselves under Paris’s spell. This enchantment is likened to a religious pilgrimage, with Paris catering to each visitor or resident’s deepest yearnings, embodying not just a city but a living, breathing muse that inspires and demands tribute.

However, beneath the romantic imagery and adoration for the city's bewitching nature, there is a critical examination of Paris's fickleness and insincerity, particularly towards its international admirers. The chapter delves into the city’s historical promiscuity in allegiances, shifting passions, and loyalties based on whim rather than principle, comparing it to the classical figure Aspasia. Paris is shown to be a city that drains its devotees of their vitality and wealth, only to discard them once they have served their purpose, encapsulating this nature with the phrase "AIME A BRISER SES IDOLES!"

A significant portion of the chapter also reflects on the disillusionment of Americans with Paris during a particular crisis that revealed the city's superficial affection towards its foreign lovers, favoring Spain over the U.S., despite the latter's longstanding enchantment and generosity towards the French capital. This reevaluation prompts a reassessment of the nature of Paris's allure and the depth of its commitment to those it ensnares, suggesting a complex love-hate relationship between the city and its global devotees.

Ultimately, the chapter conveys a layered portrait of Paris, acknowledging its unmatched beauty and cultural richness while also critiquing its capriciousness and the transient nature of its affections. It presents Paris as a city that embodies the heights of human artistic and cultural achievements, yet also cautions against the intoxication of its allure, warning of the potential for disillusionment and heartache amidst its ephemeral embrace.

CHAPTER 32 - A Nation in a Hurry

Chapter 32 of "The Ways of Men" titled "A Nation in a Hurry" reveals the author's observations on the frenetic pace of American life, contrasting it with the more leisurely rhythms observed in Europe and historical America. The anecdote of steamboat captains seating someone on the safety valve to increase speed epitomizes the relentless American rush. This urgency is immediately noticed upon returning to the U.S. from abroad, where the tendency to speed through life manifests in every aspect, from customs at the dock to dining habits and business transactions.

The author criticizes the societal pressure for quickness which prevails over quality and tranquility, seen in business practices that favor speed over accuracy, and in personal habits like the rapid consumption of meals. This obsession with saving time has infiltrated all layers of society, including the leisure class which, paradoxically, suffers from a perpetual lack of time. The American drive for efficiency and rapidity also extends to social engagements and entertainment, with dinner parties and theater outings rushed through as if endurance tests.

Ironically, despite this compulsive rush, the text suggests that Americans do not necessarily accomplish more but are trapped in a cycle of haste that negatively impacts societal aesthetics, health, and calmness. This societal hurry is seen as a curse or an "influence" that Americans both bemoan and perpetuate. The closing analogy recalls the steam navigation story, musing that Americans are determined to "run under full head of steam," risking explosion rather than slowing down.

In conclusion, this chapter critiques the American penchant for haste at the expense of depth and enjoyment, highlighting a cultural shift that values speed over quality, resulting in a frenetic lifestyle that contrasts sharply with the more measured pace of life advocated in historical and some contemporary foreign contexts.

CHAPTER 33 - The Spirit of History

In "The Spirit of History," we explore the profound contributions of a great historian, Michelet, who dedicated four decades to reviving the soul of French history. This chapter opens with a vivid metaphor, comparing buildings and libraries to the tombs and catacombs of vanished civilizations, before delving into Michelet's monumental quest to breathe life into France’s past. It portrays Michelet as a historian of remarkable depth, capable of resurrecting the long-gone spirits of history and depicting the evolution of France with unparalleled passion and insight.

Michelet's widow, diligently preserving his memories and work, exemplifies a life of devotion to both the person and the principles he stood for. This intimate look into their lives offers a striking contrast to the fickle nature of modern remembrance and serves as a testament to the enduring power of legacy and memory. Through his widow’s vigilant preservation of his legacy, Michelet’s spirit continues to inspire beyond the bounds of mortality.

Michelet's historical vision, as detailed in the chapter, transcends simple chronology or factual recounting. He viewed France itself as the vibrant, dynamic protagonist of its own dramatic narrative, a country shaped by the cumulative trial and triumphs of its people rather than the whims of "predestined" figures or destiny. This perspective allowed him to create a history that is more epic than a mere record, imbuing his works with the poetic truth Aristotle deemed paramount.

Drawing from the essence of Virgil and Vico, Michelet believed in the intrinsic power every culture holds to sculpt its fate, thus negating the notion of history as an arbitrary sequence of events guided by few extraordinary individuals. His radical approach in seeking the soul of the nation through its collective actions and reactions elucidates his belief in the people as the true authors of their story.

Through Michelet's eyes, we glimpse the revolutionary spirit of France, from the mystical ages of cathedral building to the stirring calls-to-arms of Joan of Arc, and onward to the tumultuous era of the Revolution. This journey through France's heart and soul, as told by Michelet, conveys not just the development of a nation but the passionate evolution of humanity itself.

The chapter builds to a crescendo, illustrating Michelet's intense immersion in the epic story of France, his physical and emotional investment in his work rendered almost as vividly as the historical scenes he painted. His widow's reminiscences highlight how Michelet's engagement with history was so profound that it took a toll on his health, mirroring the upheavals and conflicts of the eras he chronicled. This portrayal cements Michelet's role not just as a historian, but as a custodian of national identity, whose legacy is a mirror reflecting the soul of France through its storied past.