

good to sit in (as a matter of fact), a table to write on, a fire to warm one's self by—No one disputes it; but at the same time I want something else to amuse and occupy my mind, something that stirs the breath of fancy, something that but to think of is to feel an interest in. Besides my automatic existence, I have another, a sentimental one, which must be nourished and supplied with proper food. This end the mere circumstance of practical or real Utility does not answer, and therefore is so far good for nothing.

R. But is it not to be feared that this preference should be carried to excess, and that the essential should be neglected for the frivolous?

S. I see no disposition in mankind to neglect the essential. Necessity has no choice. They pursue the mechanical mechanically, as *puss* places herself by the fireside, and snuffs up the warmth:—they dream over the romantic; and when their dreams are golden ones, it is pity to disturb them. There is as little danger as possible of excess here; for the interest in things merely *ideal* can be only in proportion to the pleasure, that is, the real benefit which attends them. A calculation of consequences may deceive, the impulses of passion may hurry us away: sentiment alone is infallible, since it centres and reposes on itself. Like mercy, 'its quality is not strained: it droppeth as the gentle dew from heaven upon the place beneath!'—

R. You have asked me what Reason is: may I ask you what it is that constitutes Sentiment?