

HENRY JAMES ON RUPERT BROOKE

have had to come up considerably, to have held the place his too numerous personal admirers were wont to thrust upon him. Unless one be the veritable genius, sudden laurels wither on the stem with too much of morning.

This poet had no chance to prove what poetry of his would have endured the long day, and most of all he needed to be removed from too much love of everything. The best art cannot endure such promiscuity, not an art of specific individual worth. In the book which is called "Letters from America", the attraction lies in its preface, despite the so noticeable irrelevancy of style. It seems to me that James might for once have condescended to an equal footing with his theme, for the sake of the devoutness of his intention, and have come to us for the moment, the man talking of the youth. He might then have told us something really intimate of "Rupert", as he so frequently names him, for this would indicate some intimacy surely, unless perchance he was "Rupert" to the innumerable whom he met, and who were sure of his intimacy on the instant's introduction, which would indeed be "condemned to sociability".

This book is in two pieces, preface and content, and we are conscious chiefly of the high style and interest of the preface, first of all, and the discrepancy inherent in the rest of the book accentuating the wide divergence between praiser and praised. It is James with reference to Brooke, it is not Henry