

# **The Atlantic Monthly, Volume 03, No. 15, January, 1859 eBook**

## **The Atlantic Monthly, Volume 03, No. 15, January, 1859**

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*A Magazine of literature, art, and politics.*



*Vol. III.—January, 1859.—No. XV.*

## **OLYMPUS AND ASGARD.**

How remote from the nineteenth century of the Christian era lies the old Homeric world! By the magic of the Ionian minstrel's verse that world is still visible to the inner eye. Through the clouds and murk of twenty centuries and more, it is still possible to catch clear glimpses of it, as it lies there in the golden sunshine of the ancient days. A thousand objects nearer in the waste of past time are far more muffled, opaque, and impervious to vision. As you enter it through the gates of the "Ilias" and "Odusseia," you bid a glad adieu to the progress of the age, to railroads and telegraph-wires, to cotton-spinning, (there might have been some of that done, however, in some Nilotic Manchester or Lowell,) to the diffusion of knowledge and the rights of man and societies for the improvement of our race,



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to humanitarianism and philanthropy, to science and mechanics, to the printing-press and gunpowder, to industrialism, clipper-ships, power-looms, metaphysics, geology, observatories, light-houses, and a myriad other things too numerous for specification, —and you pass into a sunny region of glorious sensualism, where there are no obstinate questionings of outward things, where there are no blank misgivings of a creature moving about in worlds not realized, no morbid self-accusings of a morbid methodistic conscience. All there in that old world, lit “by the strong vertical light” of Homer’s genius, is healthful, sharply-defined, tangible, definite, and sensualistic. Even the divine powers, the gods themselves, are almost visible to the eyes of their worshippers, as they revel in their mountain-propped halls on the far summits of many-peaked Olympus, or lean voluptuously from their celestial balconies and belvederes, soothed by the Apollonian lyre, the Heban nectar, and the fragrant incense, which reeks up in purple clouds from the shrines of windy Ilion, hollow Lacedaemon, Argos, Mycenae, Athens, and the cities of the old Greek isles, with their shrine-capped headlands. The outlooks and watch-towers of the chief deities were all visible from the far streets and dwellings of their earthly worshippers, in that clear, shining, Grecian atmosphere. Uranography was then far better understood than geography, and the personages composing the heavenly synod were almost as definitely known to the Homeric men as their mortal acquaintances. The architect of the Olympian palaces was surnamed Amphigueueis, or the Halt. The Homeric gods were men divinized with imperishable frames, glorious and immortal sensualists, never visited by qualms of conscience, by headache, or remorse, or debility, or wrinkles, or dyspepsia, however deep their potations, however fiercely they indulged their appetites. Zeus, the Grand Seignior or Sultan of Olympus and father of gods and men, surpassed Turk and Mormon Elder in his uxoriousness and indiscriminate concubinage. With Olympian goddess and lone terrestrial nymph and deep-bosomed mortal lass of Hellas, the land of lovely women, as Homer calls it, did he pursue his countless intrigues, which he sometimes had the unblushing coolness and impudence to rehearse to his wedded wife, Here. His *list* would have thrown Don Giovanni’s entirely into the shade. Here, the queen of Olympus, called the Golden-Throned, the Venerable, the Ox-Eyed, was a sort of celestial Queen Bess, the undaunted she-Tudor, whose father, bluff Harry, was not a bad human copy of Zeus himself, the Rejoicer in Thunder.



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In that old Homeric heaven,—in those quiet seats of the gods of the heroic world, which were never shaken by storm-wind, nor lashed by the tempest that raved far below round the dwellings of wretched mortals,—in those quiet abodes above the thunder, there was for the most part nought but festal joy, music, choral dances, and emptying of nectar-cups, interrupted now and then by descents into the low-lying region of human life in quest of adventure, or on errands of divine intervention in the affairs of men, for whom, on the whole, Zeus and his court entertained sentiments of profound contempt. Once in a while Zeus and all his courtiers went on a festal excursion to the land of the blameless Ethiops, which lay somewhere over the ocean, where they banqueted twelve days. Why such a special honor as this was shown to these Ethiops is not explained. Within their borders were evidently the summer resorts, Newport and Baden-Baden, frequented by the Olympians. Only in great crises was the whole mythic host of the Grecian religion summoned to meet in full forum on the heights of the immemorial mountain. At such times, all the fountains, rivers, and groves of Hellas were emptied of their guardian daemons, male and female, who hastened to pay their homage to and receive their orders from the Cloud-Gatherer, sitting on his throne, in his great skyey Capitolium, and invested with all the pomp of mythic majesty, his ambrosial locks smoothly combed and brushed by some Olympian *friseur*, his eagle perched with ruffled plumes upon his fist, and everything else so arranged as most forcibly to impress the country visitors and rural incumbents with salutary awe for the occupant of their sky-Vatican. Whether these last were compelled to salute the Jovine great toe with a kiss is not recorded, there being no account extant of the ceremonial and etiquette of Olympus. Whatever it was, doubtless it was rigidly enforced; for the Thunderer, it would seem, had a Bastille, or lock-up, with iron doors and a brazen threshold specially provided for contumacious and disobedient gods.

Zeus, although he could claim supreme dominion under the law of primogeniture, was originally only a coequal ruler with his two brothers, Hades, king of the underworld, and Ennosigaeus, monarch of the salt sea-foam. They were alike the sons and coequal heirs of Kronos, or Time, and the Moerae, or Destinies, had parcelled out the universe in three equal parts between them. But the position of Zeus in his serene air-realm gave him the advantage over his two brothers,—as the metropolitan situation of the Roman see in the capital of the world gave its diocesan, who was originally nothing more than the peer of the Bishops of Antioch, Alexandria, Carthage, and Constantinople, an opportunity finally to assert and maintain a spiritual lordship. This is a case exactly in point. It is certainly proper to illustrate a theocratic usurpation by an hierarchic one. Zeus, with his eagle and thunder and that earthquaking nod, was too strong for him of the trident and him of the three-headed hound. The whole mythic host regarded Jove's court as a place of final resort, of ultimate appeal. He was recognized as the Supreme Father, Papa, or Pope, of the Greek mythic realm. The nod of his immortal head was decisive. His azure eyebrows and ambrosial hair were full of fate.



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The wars of mortals in Hellas and Dardanland were matters of more interest to the Olympian celestials than any other mere human transactions. These occasioned partisanships, heartburnings, and factions in the otherwise serene Olympian palaces. Even Father Zeus himself acknowledged a bias for sacred Ilium and its king and people over all the cities of terrestrial men beneath the sun and starry heaven. In the ten-years' war at Troy, the Olympians were active partisanships upon both sides at times, now screening their favorites from danger, and now even pitting themselves against combatants of more vulnerable flesh and blood. But in the matter of vulnerability they seem not to have enjoyed complete exemption, any more than did Milton's angels. Although they ate not bread nor drank wine, still there was in their veins a kind of ambrosial blood called *ichor*, which the prick of a javelin or spear would cause to flow freely. Even Ares, the genius of homicide and slaughter, was on one occasion at least wounded by a mortal antagonist, and sent out of the melee badly punished, so that he bellowed like a bull-calf, as he mounted on a dusty whirlwind to Olympus. Over his misadventures while playing his own favorite game certainly there were no tears to be shed; but when, prompted by motherly tenderness, Aphrodite, the soft power of love,—she of the Paphian boudoir, whose recesses were glowing with the breath of Sabaeian frankincense fumed by a hundred altars,—she at whose approach the winds became hushed, and the clouds fled, and the daedal earth poured forth sweet flowers,—when such a presence manifested herself on the field of human strife on an errand of motherly affection, and attempted to screen her bleeding son from the shafts of his foes with a fold of her shining *peplum*, surely the audacious Grecian king should have forborne, and, lowering his lance, should have turned his wrath elsewhere. But no,—he pierced her skin with his spear, so that, shrieking, she abandoned her child, and was driven, bleeding, to her immortal homestead. The rash earth-born warrior knew not that he who put his lance in rest against the immortals had but a short lease of life to live, and that his bairns would never run to lisp their sire's return, nor climb his knees the envied kiss to share.

Homer, in the first books of his "Ilias," permits us to glance into the banqueting-hall of Olympus. The two regular pourers of nectar, to wit, Hebe and Ganymede, are off duty. Hephaestus the Cripple has taken their place; and as he halts about from guest to guest, inextinguishable laughter arises among the gods at his awkward method of "passing the rosy." His lameness was owing to that sunset fall on the isle of Lemnos from the threshold of heaven. So, all day long, says the poet, they revelled, Apollo and the Muses performing the part of a ballet-troop. It is pleasing to learn that the Olympians kept early hours, conforming, in this respect, to the rule of Poor Richard. Duly at set of sun they betook themselves to their couches. Zeus himself slept, and by his side Here of the Golden Throne.



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Who would wish to have lived a pagan under that old Olympian dispensation, even though, like the dark-eyed Greek of the Atreidean age, his fancy could have “fetched from the blazing chariot of the Sun a beardless youth who touched a golden lyre and filled the illumined groves with ravishment”—even though, like him, he might in myrtle-grove and lonely mountain-glen have had favors granted him even by Idalian Aphrodite the Beautiful, and felt her warm breath glowing upon his forehead, or been counselled by the blue-eyed Athene, or been elevated to ample rule by Here herself, Heaven’s queen? That Greek heaven was heartless, libidinous, and cold. It had no mild divinities appointed to bind up the broken heart and assuage the grief of the mourner. The weary and the heavy-laden had no celestial resource amongst its immortal revellers and libertines, male and female. There was no sympathy for mortal suffering amongst those divine sensualists. They talked with contempt and unsympathizing ridicule of the woes of the earthborn, of the brevity of mortal life, and of its miseries. A boon, indeed, and a grateful exchange, was the Mother Mild of the Roman Catholic Pantheon, the patroness of the broken-hearted, who inclines her countenance graciously to the petitions of womanly anguish, for the voluptuous Aphrodite, the haughty Juno, the Di-Vernonish Artemis, and the lewd and wanton nymphs of forest, mountain, ocean, lake, and river. Ceres alone, of the old female classic daemons, seemed to be endowed with a truly womanly tenderness and regard for humankind. She, like the Mater Dolorosa, is represented in the myths to have known bereavement and sorrow, and she, therefore, could sympathize with the grief of mothers sprung from Pyrrha’s stem. Nay, she had envied them their mortality, which enabled them to join their lost ones, who could not come back to them, in the grave. Vainly she sought to descend into the dark underworld to see her “young Persephone, transcendent queen of shades.” Not for her weary, wandering feet was a single one of the thousand paths that lead downward to death. Her only consolation was in the vernal flowers, which, springing from the dark earthly mould, seemed to her to be

“heralds from the dreary deep,  
Soft voices from the solemn streams,”

by whose shores, veiled in eternal twilight, wandered her sad child, the queen of the realm of Dis, with its nine-fold river, gates of adamant, and minarets of fire. The heartlessness of all the ethnic deities, of whatever age or nation, is a noticeable feature, especially when contrasted with the unfathomable pity of their Exterminator, who wept over the chief city of his fatherland, and would have gathered it, as a hen gathereth her chickens, under the wings of his love, though its sons were seeking to compass his destruction. Those old ethnic deities were cruel, inexorable, and relentless. They knew nothing of mercy and forgiveness. They ministered no

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balm to human sorrow. The daemons who wandered in human shape over the classic lands of old were all fickle and malevolent. They oftentimes impelled their victims to suicide. The ghouls that haunt the tombs and waste places of the regions where they were once worshipped are their lineal descendants and modern representatives. The vampires and pest-hags of the Levant are their successors in malignity. The fair humanities of the old religion were fair only in shape and exterior. The old pagan gods were friendly only to kings, heroes, and grandees; they had no beatitude for the poor and lowly. Human despair, under their dispensation, knew no alleviation but a plunge from light and life into the underworld, —rather than be monarch of which, the shade of Achilles avers, in the “Odusseia,” that it would prefer to be the hireling and drudge of some poor earthly peasant. Elysium was only for a privileged few.

It has been said that the old ethnic creeds were the true religion “growing wild,”—that the human soil was prepared by such kind of spiritual crops and outgrowths, with their tares and weeds intermingled with wheat, for the seed that was finally to be sown by the Divine Sower,—that, erroneous as they were in a thousand respects, they were genuine emanations of the religious nature in man, and as such not to be stigmatized or harshly characterized,—that without them the human soil could not have been made ready for the crop of unmixed truth. This may be true of some of them, though surely not of the popular form of the old Greek ethnic faith. Its deities were nothing better than the passions of human nature projected upon ethereal heights, and incarnated and made personal in undecaying demonic shapes,—not conditioned and straitened like the bodies of man, but enjoying perpetual youth and immunity from death in most cases, with permission to take liberties with Space and Time greater even than are granted to us by steam and telegraph-wires.

The vulgar Grecian polytheism was all material. It had no martyrs and confessors. It was not worth dying for, as it was good for nothing to live by. The religion of Hellas was the religion of sensualistic beauty simply. It was just the worship for Pheidias and Praxiteles, for the bard of Teos and the soft Catullus, for sensual poet, painter, and sculptor. But “the blind old man of Scio’s rocky isle,” although we gather most of our knowledge of Olympus and the Olympians from his verse, was worthy of a loftier and purer heaven than the low one under which he wandered from city to city, singing the tale of Troy divine, and hymns and paeans to the gods. The good and the true were mere metaphysical abstractions to the old Greek. What must he have been when it would not have been safe for him to leave his wife alone with the best and highest of his gods? The ancient Hellenes were morally most vicious and depraved, even when compared with contemporary heathen nations. The old Greek was large in brain, but



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not in heart. He had created his gods in his own image, and they were—what they were. There was no goodness in his religion, and we can tolerate it only as it is developed in the Homeric rhapsodies, in the far-off fable-time of the old world, and amongst men who were but partially self-conscious. In that remote Homeric epoch it is tolerable, when cattle-stealing and war were the chief employments of the ruling caste, —and we may add, woman-stealing, into the bargain. “I did not come to fight against the Trojans,” says Achilles, “because I had suffered any grievance at their hands. They never drove off my oxen and horses or stole my harvests in rich-soiled Phthia, the nurse of heroes; for vale-darkening mountains and a tumultuous sea separate us.”

Into that old Homeric world we enter through the portals of the “Ilias” and “Odusseia,” and see the peaks of Olympus shining afar off in white splendor like silvery clouds, not looking for or expecting either a loftier or a purer heaven. Somewhere on the bounds of the dim ocean-world we know that there is an exiled court, a faded sort of St. Germain celestial dynasty, geologic gods, coevals of the old Silurian strata,—to wit, Kronos, Rhea, Nox, *et al.* Here these old, unscathed, discrowned, and sky-fallen potentates “cogitate in their watery ooze,” and in “the shady sadness of vales,”—sometimes visited by their successors for counsel or concealment, or for the purpose of establishing harmony amongst them. The Sleep and Death of the Homeric mythology were naturally gentle divinities,—sometimes lifting the slain warrior from the field of his fame, and bearing him softly through the air to his home and weeping kindred. This was a gracious office. The saintly legends of the Roman Church have borrowed a hint from this old Homeric fancy. One pleasant feature of the Homeric battles is, that, when some blameless, great-souled champion falls, the blind old bard interrupts the performances for a moment and takes his reader with him away from the din and shouting of the battle, following, as it were, the spirit of the fallen hero to his distant abode, where sit his old father, his spouse, and children,—thus throwing across the cloud of battle a sweet gleam of domestic, pastoral life, to relieve its gloom. Homer, both in the “Ilias” and “Odusseia,” gives his readers frequent glimpses into the halls of Olympus; for messengers are continually flashing to and fro, like meteors, between the throne of Zeus and the earth. Sometimes it is Hermes sandalled with down; sometimes it is wind-footed Iris, who is winged with the emerald plumes of the rainbow; and sometimes it is Oneiros, or a Dream, that glides down to earth, hooded and veiled, through the shadow of night, bearing the behests of Jove. But however often we are permitted to return to the ambrosial homestead of the ever-living gods in the wake of returning messengers, we always find it the same calm region, lifted far up above the turbulence, the perturbations, the clouds and storms of



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“That low spot which men call earth,”

—a glorious aerial Sans-Souci and house of pleasaunce.

It is curious that the atheistic Lucretius has given us a most glowing description of the Olympian mansions; but perhaps the Olympus of the Epicurean poet and philosopher is somewhat higher up and more sublimated and etherealized than the Olympus of Homer and of the popular faith. In a flash of poetic inspiration, he says, “The walls of the universe are cloven. I see through the void inane. The splendor (*numen*) of the gods appears, and the quiet seats which are not shaken by storm-winds nor aspersed by rain-clouds; nor does the whitely falling snow-flake, with its hoar rime, violate *their summery warmth*, but an ever-cloudless ether laughs above them with widespread radiance.” Lucretius had all these lineaments of his Epicurean heaven from old Homer. They are scattered up and down the “Ilias” and “Odusseia” in the shape of *disjecta membra*. For instance, the Olympus which he beholds through a chasm in the walls of the universe, towering into the pure empyrean, has some of the features of Homer’s island Elysiums, the blissful abodes of mortal heroes who have been divinized or translated. The Celtic island-valley of Avalon, the abode of King Arthur, “with its orchard-lawns and bowery hollows,” so exquisitely alluded to by Tennyson, is a kindred spot with the Homeric Elysian plain. Emerson says, “The race of gods, or those we erring own, are shadows floating up and down in the still abodes.” This is exactly the meaning of Lucretius also. They are all air-cities, these seats of the celestials, whatever be the creed,—summery, ethereal climes, fanned with spice-winds and zephyrs. Meru, Kaf, Olympus, Elboorz,—they are all alike. The ethnic superior daemons were well termed the powers of the air. Upward into the far blue gazes the weary and longing saint and devotee of every faith. Beyond the azure curtains of the sky, upward into the pure realm, over the rain-cloud and the thunder and the silver bars of the scirrhous, he places his quiet seats, his mansions of rest.

The German poet, Schiller, who was a worshipper of Art and sensualistic beauty, and who regarded the sciences as the mere handmaids of Art, exalting the aesthetic above the moral nature in man, quite naturally regretted that he had not lived in the palmy days of the anthropomorphic creed of Hellas, before the dirge of Pan was chanted in the Isle of Naxos. His “Gods of Greek Land” is as fine a piece of heathenish longing as could well be written at so late a day. His heart was evidently far away from the century in which he lived, and pulsated under that distant Grecian sky of which he somewhere speaks. For artistic purposes the myths of Greece formed a glorious faith. Grace and symmetry of form were theirs, and they satiated the eye with outward loveliness; but to the deep fountains of feeling and sentiment, such as a higher faith has unsealed in the heart, they

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never penetrated. What a poor, narrow little world was that myth-haunted one of the Grecian poet and sculptor, and even philosopher, compared with the actual world which modern science is revealing from year to year! What a puny affair was that Grecian sun, with its coachman's apparatus of reins, fire-breathing nags, and golden car, which Schiller looks back to, in the spirit of Mr. Weller, Senior, when compared with the vast empyreal sphere and light-fountain of modern science, with its retinue of planets, ships of space, freighted with souls! Science the handmaid of Art! Well might the mere artist and worshipper of anthropomorphic beauty shrink appalled, and sigh for a lodge under some low Grecian heaven and in the bosom of some old myth-peopled Nature, as he trembled before the apocalypses of modern sidereal science, which has dropped its plummet to unimaginable depths through the nebulous abysses of space, shoaled with systems of worlds as the sea is with its finny droves. The Nature and the Physical Universe of the old ethnic Greek formed only a little niche and recess, on the walls of which the puny human image was easily reflected in beautiful and picturesque and grotesque shadows, which were mistaken for gods. But the Nature and Universe revealed by modern Christian science are too vast and profound to mirror anything short of the image of the Omnipotent himself.

Still there is a period in the life of every imaginative youth, when he is a pagan and worships in the old Homeric pantheon,—where self-denial and penance were unknown, and where in grove and glen favored mortal lover might hear the tread of “Aphrodite's glowing sandal.” The youthful poet may exclaim with Schiller,—

“Art thou, fair world, no more?  
Return, thou virgin-bloom on Nature's face!  
Ah, only on the minstrel's magic shore  
Can we the footstep of sweet Fable trace!  
The meadows mourn for the old hallowing life;  
Vainly we search the earth of gods bereft;  
Where once the warm and living shapes were rife,  
Shadows alone are left!  
Cold, from the North, has gone  
Over the flowers the blast that chilled their May;  
And, to enrich the worship of the One,  
A universe of gods must pass away!  
Mourning, I search on yonder starry steeps,  
But thee, no more, Selene, there I see!  
And through the woods I call, and o'er the deeps,  
And—Echo answers me.” [Bulwer's Translation.]

The Elysian beauty and melancholy grace which Wordsworth throws over the shade of Alcestis were gleams borrowed from a better world than the mythic Elysium. Neither Olympus nor Erebus disdained the pleasures of sense.



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Shakspeare, in his "Midsummer-Night's Dream," has mingled the mythologies of Hellas and Scandinavia, of the North and the South, making of them a sort of mythic *olla podrida*. He represents the tiny elves and fays of the Gothic fairyland, span-long creatures of dew and moonshine, the lieges of King Oberon, and of Titania, his queen, as making an irruption from their haunted hillocks, woods, meres, meadows, and fountains, in the North, into the olive-groves of Ilissus, and dancing their ringlets in the ray of the Grecian Selene, the chaste, cold huntress, and running by the triple Hecate's team, following the shadow of Night round the earth. Strangely must have sounded the horns of the Northern Elfland, "faintly blowing" in the woods of Hellas, as Oberon and his grotesque court glanced along, "with bit and bridle ringing," to bless the nuptials of Theseus with the bouncing Amazon. Strangely must have looked the elfin footprints in the Attic green. Across this Shakspearean plank, laid between Olympus and Asgard, or more strictly Alfheim, we gladly pass from the sunny realm of Zeus into that of his Northern counterpart, Odin, who ought to be dearer and more familiar to his descendants than the Grecian Jove, though he is not. The forms which throng Asgard may not be so sculpturesquely beautiful, so definite, and fit to be copied in marble and bronze as those of Olympus. There may be more vagueness of outline in the Scandinavian abode of the gods, as of far-off blue skyey shapes, but it is more cheerful and homelike. Pleasantly wave the evergreen boughs of the Life-Tree, Yggdrasil, the mythic ash-tree of the old North, whose leaves are green with an unwithering bloom that shall defy even the fires of the final conflagration. Iduna, or Spring, sits in those boughs with her apples of rejuvenescence, restoring the wasted strength of the gods. In the shade of its topmost branches stands Asgard, the abode of the Asen, who are called the Rafters of the World,—to wit, Odin, Thor, Freir, and the other higher powers, male and female, of the old Teutonic religion. In Asgard is Valhalla, the hall of elect heroes. The roots of this mundane ash reach as far downwards as its branches do upwards. Its roots, trunk, and branches together thrid the universe, shooting Hela, the kingdom of death, Midgard, the abode of men, and Asgard, the dwelling of the gods, like so many concentric rings.

This ash was a psychological and ontological plant. All the lore of Plato and Kant and Fichte and Cousin was audible in the sigh of its branches. Three Norns, Urt, Urgand, and Skuld, dwelt beneath it, so that it comprehended time past, present, and future. The gods held their councils beneath it. By one of its stems murmured the Fountain of Mimir, in Niflheim or Mistland, from whose urn welled up the ocean and the rivers of the earth. Odin had his outlook in its top, where kept watch and ward the All-seeing Eye. In its boughs frisked and gambolled a squirrel



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called *Busyboddy*, which carried gossip from bough to root and back. The warm Urdar Fountain of the South, in which swam the sun and moon in the shape of two swans, flowed by its celestial stem in Asgard. A tree so much extended as this ash of course had its parasites and *rodentia* clinging to it and gnawing it; but the brave old ash defied them all, and is to wave its skywide umbrage even over the ruins of the universe, after the *dies irae* shall have passed. So sings the Voluspa. This tree is a worthy type of the Teutonic race, so green, so vigorous, so all-embracing. We should expect to find the chief object in the Northern myth-world a tree. The forest was ever dear to the sons of the North, and many ancient Northern tribes used to hold their councils and parliaments under the branches of some wide-spreading oak or ash. Like its type, Yggdrasil, the Teutonic race seems to be threading the earth with the roots of universal dominion, and, true to hereditary instincts, it is belting the globe with its colonies, planting it, as it were, with slips from the great Mundane Ash, and throwing Bifroest bridges across oceans, in the shape of telegraph-cables and steamships.

Asgard is a more homelike place than Olympus. Home and fireside, in their true sense, are Teutonic institutions. Valhalla, the hall of elect heroes, was appropriately shingled with golden shields. Guzzlers of ale and drinkers of *lagerbier* will be pleased to learn that this Northern Valhalla was a sort of celestial beer-saloon, thus showing that it was a genuine Teutonic paradise; for ale would surely be found in such a region. In the "Prose Edda," Hor replies to Gangler—who is asking him about the board and lodgings of the heroes who had gone to Odin in Valhalla, and whether they had anything but water to drink—in huge disdain, inquiring of Gangler whether he supposed that the Allfather would invite kings and jarls and other great men, and give them nothing to drink but water. How do things divine and supernatural, when conceived of by man and cast in an earthly, finite mould, necessarily assume human attributes and characteristics! Strong drinks, the passion of the Northern races in all ages, are of course found in their old mythic heaven, in their fabled Hereafter,—and even boar's flesh also. The ancient Teuton could not have endured a heaven with mere airy, unsubstantial joys. There must be celestial roasts of strong meat for him, and flagons of his ancestral ale. His descendants to this day never celebrate a great occasion without a huge feed and corporation dinners, thus establishing their legitimate descent from Teutonic stock. The Teutonic man ever led a life of vigorous action; hence his keen appetite, whetted by the cold blasts of his native North. What wonder, then, at the presence of sodden boar's flesh in his ancient Elysium, and of a celestial goat whose teats yielded a strong beverage? The Teuton liked not fasting and humiliation either in Midgard or Asgard.



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He was ever carnivorous and eupeptic. We New Englanders are perhaps the leanest of his descendants, because we have forsaken too much the old ways and habits of the race, and given ourselves too much to abstractions and transcendentalism. The old Teuton abhorred the abstract. He loved the concrete, the substantial. The races of Southern Europe, what are now called the Latin races, were more temperate than the Teutonic, but they were far less brave, honest, and manly. Their sensuality might not be so boisterous, but it was more bestial and foul. Strength and manliness, and a blithe, cheery spirit, were ever the badges of the Teuton. But though originally gross and rough, he was capable of a smoother polish, of a glossier enamel, than a more superficial, trivial nature. He was ever deeply thoughtful, and capable of profounder moods of meditation than the lightly-moved children of the South. Sighs, as from the boughs of Yggdrasil, ever breathed through his poetry from of old. He was a smith, an artificer, and a delver in mines from the beginning. The old Teutonic Pan was far more musical and awe-inspiring than his Grecian counterpart. The Noon-spirit of the North was more wild than that of the South. How all the ancient North was alive in its Troll-haunted hillocks, where clanged the anvil of the faery hill-smith, and danced and banqueted the Gnome and Troll,—and in its streams and springs, musical with the harps of moist-haired Elle-women and mermaids, who, ethnic daemons though they were, yet cherished a hope of salvation! The myth-spirits of the North were more homely and domestic than those of the South, and had a broader humor and livelier fancies. The Northern Elf-folk were true natives of the soil, grotesque in costume and shape.

The Teuton of to-day is the lineal descendant of the old worshipper of Thor. Mioellnir, the hammer of Thor, still survives in the gigantic mechanisms of Watt, Fulton, and Stephenson. Thor embodied more Teutonic attributes than Odin. The feats which Thor performed in that strange city of Utgard, as they are related in the old “Prose Edda,” were prophetic of the future achievements of the race, of which he was a chief god. Thor once went on a journey to Joetunheim, or Giant-land,—a primitive outlying country, full of the enemies of the Asgard dynasty, or cosmical deities. In the course of the journey, he lodged one night with his two companions in what he supposed to be a huge hall, but which turned out to be the glove of a giant named Skrymir, who was asleep and snoring as loud as an earthquake, near by. When the giant awoke, he said to Thor, who stood near,—“My name is Skrymir, but I need not ask thy name, for I know that thou art the god Thor. But what hast thou done with my glove?” Sure enough, on looking, Thor found that he had put up that night in Skrymir’s handshoe, or glove. The giant and Thor breakfasted amicably together and went on their way till night, when Skrymir gave up his wallet of provisions to Thor



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and his two companions, and bade them supply themselves,—he meanwhile composing himself to sleep, snoring so loudly that the forest trembled. Thor could not undo the giant's wallet, and in his wrath he smote the somnolent lubber with his mallet, a crushing blow. Skrymir simply awoke, and inquired whether a leaf had not fallen upon his head from the oak-tree under which he was lying. Conceive the chagrin and shame of Thor at this question! A second time Thor let fly at the giant with his mallet. This time it sank into his skull up to the handle, but with no more satisfactory result. The giant merely inquired whether an acorn had not dropped on his head, and wanted to know how Thor found himself, whether he slept well or not; to which queries Thor muttered an answer, and went away, determined to make a third and final effort with his mallet, which had never failed him until then. About daybreak, as Skrymir was taking his last snooze, Thor uplifted his hammer, clutching it so fiercely that his knuckles became white. Down it came, with terrific emphasis, crushing through Skrymir's cheek, up to the handle. Skrymir sat up and inquired if there were not birds perched on the tree under which he had been lodging; he thought he felt something dropping on his head,—some moss belike. Alas for Thor and his weapon! For once he found himself worsted, and his mightiest efforts regarded as mere flea-bites; for Skrymir's talk about leaves and acorns and moss was merely a sly piece of humor, levelled at poor crestfallen Thor, as he afterwards acknowledged. After this incident, Thor and his two companions, the peasant's children, Thjalfi and Roeska, and Skrymir went their ways, and came to the high-gated city of Utgard, which stood in the middle of a plain, and was so lofty that Thor had to throw back his head to see its pinnacles and domes. Now Thor was by no means small; indeed, in Asgard, the city of the AEsir, he was regarded as a giant; but here in Utgard Skrymir told him he had better not give himself any airs, for the people of that city would not tolerate any assumption on the part of such a mannikin!

Utgard-Loki, the king of the city, received Thor with the utmost disdain, calling him a stripling, and asked him contemptuously what he could do. Thor professed himself ready for a drinking-match. Whereupon Utgard-Loki bade his cup-bearer bring the large horn which his courtiers had to drain at a single draught, when they had broken any of the established rules and regulations of his palace. Thor was thirsty, and thought he could manage the horn without difficulty, although it was somewhat of the largest. After a long, deep, and breathless pull which he designed as a finisher, he set the horn down and found that the liquor was not perceptibly lowered. Again he tried, with no better result; and a third time, full of wrath and chagrin, he guzzled at its contents, but found that the liquor still foamed near to the brim. He gave back the horn in disgust.



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Then Utgard-Loki proposed to him the childish exercise of lifting his cat. Thor put his hands under Tabby's belly, and, lifting with all his might, could only raise one foot from the floor. He was a very Gulliver in Brobdignag. As a last resort, he proposed to retrieve his tarnished reputation by wrestling with some Utgardian; whereupon the king turned into the ring his old nurse, Elli, a poor toothless crone, who brought Thor to his knees, and would have thrown him, had not the king interfered. Poor Thor! The next morning he took breakfast in a sad state of mind, and owned himself a shamefully used-up individual. The fact was, he had strayed unconsciously amongst the old brute powers of primitive Nature, as he ought to have perceived by the size of the kids they wore. He had done better than he was aware of, however. The three blows of his hammer had fallen on nothing less than a huge mountain, instead of a giant, and left three deep glens dented into its surface; the drinking-horn, which he had undertaken to empty, was the sea itself, or an outlet of the sea, which he had perceptibly lowered; while the cat was in reality the Midgard Serpent, which enringed the world in its coils, and the toothless she-wrestler was Old Age! What wonder that Thor was brought to his knees? On finding himself thus made game of, Thor grew wroth, but had to go his ways, as the city of Utgard had vanished into thin air, with its cloud-capped towers and enormous citizens. Thor afterwards undertook to catch the Midgard Serpent, using a bull's head for bait. The World-Snake took the delicious morsel greedily, and, finding itself hooked, writhed and struggled so that Thor thrust his feet through the bottom of his boat, in his endeavors to land his prey.

There is a certain grotesque humor in Thor's adventures, which is missed in his mythologic counterpart of the South, Hercules. It is the old rich "world-humor" of the North, genial and broad, which still lives in the creations of the later Teutonic Muse. The dints which Thor made on the mountain-skull of Skrymir were types and forerunners of the later feats of the Teutonic race, performed on the rough, shaggy, wilderness face of this Western hemisphere, channelling it with watery highways, tunnelling and levelling its mountains, and strewing its surface with cities. The old Eddas and Voluspas of the North are full of significant lore for the sons of the Northmen, wherever their lot is cast. There they will find, that, in colonizing and humanizing the face of the world, in zoning it with railroads and telegraph-wires, in bridging its oceans with clipper-ships, and steamboats, and in weaving, forging, and fabricating for it amid the clang of iron mechanisms, they are only following out the original bent of the race, and travelling in the wake of Thor the Hammerer.

While the Grecian and Roman myths are made familiar by our school-books, it is to be regretted that the wild and glorious mythic lore of our ancient kindred is neglected. To that you must go, if you would learn whence came

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“the German’s inward sight,  
And slow-sure Britain’s secular might,”

and it may be added, the Anglo-American’s unsurpassed practical energy, skill, and invincible love of freedom. From the fountains of the ash-tree Yggdrasil flowed these things. Some of the greatest of modern Teutonic writers have gone back to these fountains, flowing in these wild mythic wastes of the Past, and have drunk inspiration thence. Percy, Scott, and Carlyle, by so doing, have infused new sap from the old life-tree of their race into our modern English literature, which had grown effete and stale from having had its veins injected with too much cold, thin, watery Gallic fluid. Yes, Walter Scott heard the innumerable leafy sigh of Yggdrasil’s branches, and modulated his harp thereby. Carlyle, too, has bathed in the three mystic fountains which flow fast by its roots. In an especial manner has the German branch of the Teuton kindred turned back to those old musical well-springs bubbling up in the dim North, and they have been strengthened and inspired by the pilgrimage. “Under the root, which stretches out towards the Joetuns, there is Mimir’s Well, in which Wisdom and Wit lie hidden.” Longfellow, too, has drunk of Mimir’s Well, and hence the rare charm and witchery of his “Evangeline,” “Hiawatha,” and “Golden Legend.” This well in the North is better than Castalian fount for the children of the North.

How much more genial and lovable is Balder, the Northern Sun-god, than his Grecian counterpart, the lord of the unerring bow, the Southern genius of light, and poesy, and music! Balder dwelt in his palace of Breidablick, or Broadview; and in the magical spring-time of the North, when the fair maiden Iduna breathed into the blue air her genial breath, he set imprisoned Nature free, and filled the sky with silvery haze, and called home the stork and crane, summoning forth the tender buds, and clothing the bare branches with delicate green. “Balder is the mildest, the wisest, and the most eloquent of all the AESir,” says the “Edda.” A voice of wail went through the palaces of Asgard when Balder was slain by the mistletoe dart. Hermod rode down to the kingdom of Hela, or Death, to ransom the lost one. Meantime his body was set adrift on a floating funeral pyre. Hermod would have succeeded in his mission, had not Lok, the Spirit of Evil, interposed to thwart him. For this, Lok was bound in prison, with cords made of the twisted intestines of one of his own sons; and he will remain imprisoned until the Twilight of the Gods, the consummation of all things.

On the shoulders of Odin, the supreme Scandinavian deity, sat two ravens, whispering in his ears. These two ravens are called Hugin and Munin, or Thought and Memory. These “stately ravens of the saintly days of yore” flew, each day, all over the world, gathering “facts and figures,” doubtless for their August master. It is a beautiful fable, and reminds one of Milton’s “thoughts which wander through eternity.” The dove of the Ark, and the bird which perched on the shoulder of the old Plutarchan hero Sertorius, are recalled by this Scandinavian legend:—



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“Hugin and Munin  
Each down take their flight  
Earth’s fields over.”

Nobler birds, these dark ravens of the Northern Jove, than the bolt-bearing eagle of his Grecian brother. So much deeper, more significant, and musical are the myths of the stern, dark, and tender North than those of the bright and fickle South!

Notwithstanding that Valhalla was full of invincible heroes, and that the celestial city of Asgard was the abode of the chief gods, still it had a watchman who dwelt in a tower at the end of the Bridge Bifroest. Heimdall was his name, and he was endowed with the sharpest ear and eye that ever warder possessed. He could hear grass and wool grow with the utmost distinctness. The AEsir, notwithstanding their supreme position, had need of such a warder, with his Gjallar-horn, mightier than the Paladin Astolfo’s, that could make the universe reecho to its blast. The truth was, over even the high gods of Asgard hung a Doom which was mightier than they. It was necessary for them to keep watch and ward, therefore, for evil things were on their trail. There were vast, mysterious, outlying regions beyond their sway: Niflheim or Mistland, Muspellheim or Flameland, and Joetunheim, the abode of the old earth-powers, matched with whom, even Thor, the strongest of the Asen, was but a puny stripling. Over this old Scandinavian heaven, as over all ethnic celestial abodes, the dark Destinies lorded it with unquestioned sway. From the four corners of the world, at last, were to fly the snow-flakes of the dread Fimbul, Winter, blotting the sun, and moaning and drifting night and day. Three times was Winter to come and go, bringing to men and gods “a storm-age, a wolf-age.” Then cometh Ragnarok, the Twilight of the Gods! Odin mounts his war-steed. The vast ash Yggdrasil begins to shiver through all its height. The beatified heroes of Valhalla, who have ever been on the watch for this dread era, issue forth full of the old dauntless spirit of the North to meet the dread agents of darkness and doom. Garm, the Moonhound, breaks loose, and bays. “High bloweth Heimdall his horn aloft. Odin counselleth Mimir’s head.” The battle joins. In short, the fiery baptism prophesied in the dark scrolls of Stoic sage and Hebrew and Scandinavian scald alike wraps the universe. The dwarfs wail in their mountain-clefts. All is uproar and hissing conflagration.

“Dimmed’s now the sun;  
In ocean earth sinks;  
From the skies are cast  
The sparkling stars;  
Fire-reek rageth  
Around Time’s nurse,  
And flickering flames  
With heaven itself shall play.”



By "Time's nurse," in the foregoing lines from the "Voluspa," is meant the Mundane Tree Yggdrasil, which shall survive unscathed, and wave mournfully over the universal wreck. But in the "Edda" Hor tells Gangler that "another earth shall appear, most lovely and verdant, with pleasant fields, where the grain shall grow unsown. Vidar and Vali shall survive. They shall dwell on the Plain of Ida, where Asgard formerly stood. Thither shall come the sons of Thor, bringing with them their father's mallet. Baldur and Hoedur shall also repair thither from the abode of Death. There shall they sit and converse together, and call to mind their former knowledge and the perils they underwent."



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Perhaps we might give the Eddaic Twilight of the Gods a more human and strictly European interpretation. May it not also foreshadow the great Armageddon struggle which is evidently impending between the Teutonic races in Western Europe, with their Protestantism, free speech, individual liberty, right of private judgment, and scorn of all thralldom, both material and mental, on the one side, and the dark powers of absolutism, repression, and irresponsible authority in church and state, on the other? How Russia, the type of brute-force, presses with crushing weight on intellectual Germany! Soon she will absorb the old kingdoms of Scandinavia,—to wit, Sweden, Norway, and Denmark. On the shores of Norway the ruler of the Slavonic race will hang over Scotland and England, like a bird of prey about to swoop upon his victim. All despots and absolutists will array themselves under his banner or be his auxiliaries. The old hierarchies will be banded with him to crush out Protestantism, which is a plant of Teutonic growth. Old Asia, with her rancor and despotic traditions, recognizes in the Russian imperial rule a congenial rallying-point against the progressive and hated Anglo-Saxonism and Protestantism of the West. A decisive struggle is surely impending between freedom and absolutism, between the bigoted adherents of the old faiths and the nations that have cut loose from them. Perhaps this struggle may be prefigured in the old Northern myth of the Twilight of the Gods.

All the old mythic cosmogonies are strangely suggestive and full of mystic import,—that of Northern Odinism more than any other. In that dim Niflheim, for instance, with its well-springs of the waters of the upper world confusedly bubbling, and its metallic ore-veins, and dusk, vaporous atmosphere, whence issued the old Nibelungen heroes of the great Teutonic epos, there is much that is suggestive. May not one discover in this old cosmogonic myth a dim hint of the nebular hypothesis of creation, as it is called? Certainly, Niflheim, the Mistland, and Muspellheim, the Flameland, commingled together, would produce that hot, seething, nebulous fire-mist, out of which, the physicists say, was evolved, by agglomeration and centrifugal and centripetal attraction, our fair, harmonious system of worlds bounded by outermost Neptune, thus far the Ultima Thule of the solar system. Perhaps Asgard, translated from mythic into scientific language, means the Zodiacal Light, and the Bridge Bifroest, the Milky Way.

How curious, to trace in the grotesque mythic cosmogonies of India, Greece, and Scandinavia, modern geology, botany, chemistry, *etc.*,—the vast and brutal giants of the Eddas and other old mythic scriptures being recognized as impersonations of the forces of Nature! The old mythic cosmogonists and the modern geologists and astronomers do not differ amongst themselves so much, after all. The mythic physicists had personal agents at work, in place of

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our simple elemental ones; the result is the same. Take the mythic cosmogonies of ancient Greece, Scandinavia, and India, and the geologies and astronomies of the present day, and compare their pages, changing things personal into things impersonal. The expulsion and banishment of the old shapeless mundane deities by a new and more beautiful race of gods, the cosmical divinities, the powers and rulers of an ordered world, are intelligible enough when translated into our modern geological nomenclature. The leaves of the Stone Book, as the rocky layers of the earth have been called, and the blue hieroglyphic page of heaven, also, are more intelligibly read by the aid of the mythic glosses of old religion, of Saga, Rune, and Voluspa. They spell the telluric records aright in their own peculiar language. The assaults of the Typhons and Joetuns upon the celestial dynasty, and their attempts to scale the fiery citadels of the gods by making ladders of mountains, indicate clearly enough the different revolutions read by geology in the various strata and rocky layers piled upon the primitive granite of the globe, the bursting through of eruptions from the central fire, extruding and uplifting mountains, and the subsidence of the ocean from one ripple-marked sea-beach to another lower down. In those dim geologic epochs, where annals are written on Mica Slate, Clay Slate, and Silurian Systems, on Old Red Sandstones and New, on Primary and Secondary Rocks and Tertiary Chalk-beds, there were topsyturvyings amongst the hills and gambollings and skipplings of mountains, to which the piling of Pelion upon Ossa was a mere cobblestone feat. Alps and Apennines then played at leap-frog. Vast basaltic masses were oftentimes extruded into the astonished air from the very heart and core of the world. In truth, the old mythic cosmogonies of the ancient East, South, and North are not a whit too grotesque in their descriptions of the embryo earth, when it lay weltering in a sort of uterine film, assuming form and regular lineaments.

There is nothing more drear, monstrous, wild, dark, and lonely in the descriptions of the mythologic than of the scientific page. What more wild and drear is there, even in Indian cosmogonic fable, than that strange carbonigenous era of the globe, whose deposits, in the shape of petrified forests, now keep us warm and cook our food, and whose relics and souvenirs are pressed between the stone leaves of the secondary rock for preservation by the Omnipotent Herbalist? Land and water were then distinguishable,—but as yet there was no terrestrial animal, nothing organic but radiata and molluscs, holly-footed and head-footed, and other aquatic monstrosities, mailed, plated, and buckler-headed, casting the shovel-nosed shark of the present Cosmos entirely into the shade, in point of horned, toothed, and serrated horrors. These amorphous creatures glided about in the seas, and vast sea-worms, or centipedal asps, the parents of modern

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krakens and sea-serpents, doubtless, accompanied them. There stood that unfinished world reeking with charcoal fumes, its soft, fungous, cryptogamic vegetation efflorescing with fierce luxuriance in that ghastly carbonic atmosphere. Rudimental palms and pines of mushroom growth stood there motionless, sending forth no soft and soul-like murmurs into the lurid reek; for as yet leaves and flowers and blue skies and pure breezes were not,—nothing but whiffs of mephitic and lethal vapor ascending, as from a vast charcoal brazier. No lark or linnet or redbreast or mocking-bird could live, much less warble, in those carbonic times. The world, like a Mississippi steamer, was coaling, with an eye to the needs of its future biped passengers. The embryotic earth was then truly a Niflheim, or Mistland,—a dun, fuming region. Those were the days, perhaps, when Nox reigned, and the great mundane egg was hatching in the oven-like heat, from which the winged boy Eros leaped forth, “his back glittering with golden plumes, and swift as eddying air.” We have it on good authority, that the Adirondack Mountains of New York, and the Grampian Hills of Scotland, where Norval was to feed his flocks, had already upheaved their bare backs from the boiling caldrons of the sea, thus stealing a march on the Alps and many other more famous mountains.

How opposite and remote from each other are the mythologic ages and the nineteenth century! The critical and scientific spirit of the one is in strange contrast with the credulous, blindly reverent spirit of the other. Mythology delegated the government of the world to inferior deities, the subjects of an omnipotent Fate or Necessity; while, to show how extremes meet, mere science delegates it to chemical and physiological agencies, and ends, like the mythic cosmogonies, in some irrepressible spontaneous impulse of matter to develop itself in the ever-changing forms of the visible universe. Myriads of gods were the actors in “the rushing metamorphosis” of the old myth-haunted Nature; while chemic and elemental forces perform the same parts in the masquerade of the modern *Phasis*. Both mythology and science, therefore, stick fast in secondary causes.

Myths are the religion of youth, and of primitive, unsophisticated nations; while science may be called the religion of the mature man, full of experience and immersed in the actual. The Positivism of Comte, like the old myth-worship, sets up for its deity human nature idealized, adorned with genius and virtue. The Positivist worships virtuous human nature, conditioned and limited as it is; while the Mythist worshipped it reflected on the outer world and endowed with supernatural attributes, clothed with mist-caps and wishing-caps that gave it dominion over space and time. The restless, glittering, whimsical sprites of fairy mythology, that were believed of old to have so large a share in shaping the course of Nature and of human life, have vanished from the

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precincts of the schoolmaster at least. They could not endure the clear eyebeam of Science, which has searched their subterranean abodes, withering them up and metamorphosing them into mere physiological forces. Reason and scientific investigation have no patience with the things of faith and imagination. Our poets now have to go back to the Past, to the standpoints of the old pagan bards. Tennyson lives in the land of the Lotophagi, in the Arabian Nights of the Bagdad of Caliph Haroun, and in the orchard lawns of King Arthur's Avalon. So, too, Longfellow must inhale the golden legendary air of the Past. The mere humanitarian bards, who try to make modern life trip to the music of trochees, dactyles, and spondees, fail miserably. Industrialism is not poetical. Our modern life expresses itself in machines, in mathematical formulas, in statistics and with scientific precision generally. Art and poetry are pursued in the spirit of past ages, and concern themselves with the symbols, faiths, and ideal creations of the Past.

It is true, however, that all past ages of the world are contemporaneous in this age. For example, we have in this nineteenth century the patriarchal age of the world still surviving in the desert tents of the Arab,—while the mythic, anthropomorphic period is still extant in Persia, China, and India, and even among the nations of the West, in the rustic nooks and corners of the Roman Catholic countries of Europe. But the existing nations, which still preserve that old ethnic worship and the mediaeval superstitions, are mere lingerers and camp-followers in the march of humankind. Under the ample skirts of the Roman Church still cower and lurk the superstitions of the old ethnic world, baptized to be sure, and called by new names. The Roman see has ever had a lingering kindness for the fair humanities of old religion, which live no longer in the faith of Protestant reason and free inquiry. She compromised with them of old, and they have clung about her waist ever since. She has put her uniform upon them, and made them do service in her cause, and keep alive with their breath the fast expiring embers of faith and imaginative credulity, which she so much loves and commends. Like an equivocal and ambiguous nature, the old Mother Church, as she is called, is upward fair and Christian, but downward foul and ethnic. She attacks human nature on the side of the heart, the senses, and those old instincts which Coleridge says bring back the old names. Reason and intellection, sharpened by science, she abhors; but so large a part of mankind still linger in the rear of the vanguard nations, that she has yet a long lease of life to run, with myriads of adherents to cling to her with fanatical tenacity,—nay, with proselytes from amongst the poetical, the artistic, and imaginative, who voluntarily prefer to the broad sunshine of science the twilight gloom of her sanctuaries, in order there the better to woo the old inspiration of art, superstitious faith,



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and poesy. The old ethnic instincts of human nature are formidable auxiliaries of the Mother Church. Puseyism would rehallow the saintly wells even of Protestant, practical England, and send John Bull again on a pilgrimage to the shrines of Canterbury and Walsingham. Compare a Yankee, common-school-bred, and an Austrian peasant, if you would learn how the twelfth and nineteenth centuries live together in the current year. The one is self-reliant, helpful, and versatile, not freighted with any old-world rubbish; while the other is abject, and blindly reverent, and full of the old mythic imagination that is in strong contrast with the keen common-sense of the Protestant, who dispels all twilight fantasies with a laugh of utter incredulity. The one sees projected on the outer world his own imaginings, now fair, now gloomy; while the other sees in the world, land to be cut up into corner-lots for speculation, and water for sawmills and cotton-mills, and to float clipper-ships and steamers. The one is this-worldly; the other is other-worldly. The one is armed and equipped at all points to deal with the Actual, to subdue it and make the most of it; he aims for success and wealth, for elegance, plenty, and comfort in his home;—while the other is negligent, a frequenter of shrines, in all things too superstitious, overlooking and slighting mere physical comfort, and content with misery and dirt. The Romish peasant lives begirt by supernatural beings, who demand a large share of his time and thoughts for their service; while the thrifty Protestant artisan or agriculturist is a practical naturalist, keeping his eye fixed on the main chance. Brownson would have us believe that he is morally and spiritually the inferior of the former. For this light of common day, which now shines upon the world, the multiplication-table, and reading and writing, are far better than amulet, rosary, and crucifix.

After all, this light of common day, which the bards and saints so much condemn and disdain, when subjected to the microscopic and telescopic ken of modern science, opens as large a field for wonder and for the imagination to revel in as did the old marvels, fables, and fictions of the Past. The True is beginning to be found as strange, nay, stranger than the purely Imaginative and Mythic. The Beautiful and the Good will yet be found to be as consistent with the strictly True and Actual, with the plain Matter-of-Fact as it is called, as they have been, in the heroic ages of human-achievement and endurance, with the glorious cheats and delusions that nerved man to high emprise. The modern scientific discoverer and inventor oftentimes finds himself engaged in quests as strange as that of the Holy Grail of Round-Table fiction. To the Past, with its mythic delusions, simplicity, and dense ignorance of Nature, we can never return, any more than the mature man can shrink into the fresh boy again. Nor is it to be regretted. The distant in time, like the distant



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in space, wears a halo, a vague, blue loveliness, which is all unreal. The tired wayfarer, who is weary with the dust, the din, and stony footing of the Actual and the Present, may sometimes fondly imagine, that, if he could return to the far Past, he would find all smooth and golden there; but it is a pleasant delusion of that glorious arch-cheat, the Imagination. Yet if we cannot go back to the Past, we can march forward to a Future, which opens a deeper and more wondrous and airier vista, with its magicians of the Actual casting into shade the puny achievements of old necromancy and mythic agencies.

\* \* \* \* \*

JUANITA.

Yes! I had, indeed, a glorious revenge! Other people have had home, love, happiness; they have had fond caresses, tender cares, the bright faces of children shining round the board. I had none of these; my revenge has stood to me in place of them all. And it has stood well.

Love may change; loved ones may die; the fair-faced children may grow up hard-hearted and ungrateful. But my revenge will not deceive or disappoint me; it cannot change or pass away; it will last through Time into Eternity.

I was left an orphan in early childhood. My father was an officer in the American Navy; my mother a Spaniard. She was very beautiful, I always heard; and her miniature, which my father's dying hand placed about my neck, proclaimed her so. A pale, clear, olive tint, eyes of thrilling blackness, long, lustrous hair, and a look of mingled tenderness and melancholy made it, in my thought, the loveliest face that mortal eyes could see.

My parents left me no fortune, and I fell to the care of my father's only brother, a man of wealth and standing. I have no story to tell of the bitterness of dependence,—of slights, and insult, and privation. My uncle had married, somewhat late in life, a young and gentle woman; when I was twelve years old she became the mother of twins,—two lovely little girls. No one, unacquainted with the family history, could have supposed that I was other than the elder sister of Florence and Leonora. Every indulgence was granted me, every advantage of dress and education bestowed upon me. So far as even I could see, my uncle and aunt regarded me as their own child. Nor was I ungrateful, but repaid them with a filial reverence and affection.

I did not inherit the fulness of my mother's beauty, but had yet some traits of her,—the pale, clear skin, the large, black eyes, the glossy and abundant hair. Here the resemblance ceased. I have heard my uncle say,—how often!—"Your mother, Juanita,



had the most perfect form I ever saw, except in marble"; all Spanish women, indeed, he told me, had a full, elastic roundness of shape and limb, rarely seen among our spare and loose-built nation. I was American in form, at least,—slight and stooping, with a certain awkwardness, partly to be imputed to my rapid growth, partly to my shyness



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and reserve. I was insatiably fond of reading, little attracted toward society. When my uncle's house, as often happened, was full of gay company, I withdrew to my own room, and read my favorite authors in its pleasant solitude. I was ill at ease with lively, fashionable people,—very much at home with books. Thanks to my uncle's care, I was well educated, even scholarly, for my age and sex. My studious habits, far from being discouraged, were praised by all the household, and I was looked upon as a prodigy of cleverness and industry.

A widow lady, of the name of Haughton, came to live in the little cottage near us when I was fifteen years old. She was well-born, but poor, and had known many sorrows. My aunt, Mrs. Heywood, soon became interested in her, and took pleasure in offering her those numerous attentions which a wealthy neighbor can so easily bestow, and which are so grateful to the recipient. Mrs. Haughton and her sons were frequent guests at our house; and we, too, spent many pleasant hours in the vine-covered porch of the cottage. I had few companions, and John and William Haughton were very welcome to me. They were somewhat older than I,—John twenty-two, and William two years younger; and I was thus just able to escape regarding them with that profound contempt which the girl of fifteen usually feels for "boys." After knowing them awhile I felt how baseless such contempt would be; for they possessed a depth and maturity of character rarely seen except in men of much experience. John was grave and thoughtful; his livelier brother often said he had come into the world some centuries too late,—that he was meant for an Augustine or a Pascal, so studious was he, and so saintly. Do not fancy that he was one of those stiff, bespectacled, pedantic youths who cannot open their lips without a classic allusion or a Greek quotation; nothing could be farther from the truth. He was quiet and retiring; very few guessed how beneath that exterior, so unassuming, lay hid the noblest aspirations, the most exalted thought. It was John I should have loved.

But it was William who won my heart, even without an effort. I, the pale, serious girl, loved with a wild idolatry the gay and careless youth. Never, from that day till now, have I seen a man so perfect in all manly beauty. Strength and symmetry were united in his tall, athletic figure; his features were large, but nobly formed; his hair, of a sunny hue, fell in rich masses over a broad, white brow. So might Apollo have looked in the flush of his immortal youth.

At first I gazed at him only with the enthusiasm which his extreme beauty might well awaken in the heart of a romantic maiden; then I grew to see in the princely type of that beauty a reflection of his mind. Did ever any fond fool so dote upon her Ideal as I on mine? All generous thoughts, all noble deeds, seemed only the fit expression of his nature. Then I came to mingle a reverence with my admiration. We were friends; he talked to me much of his plans in life,—of the future that lay before him. What an ambitious spirit burned within him!—a godlike ambition I thought it then. And how my

weak, womanish heart thrilled with sympathy to his! With what pride I listened to his words! with what fervor I joined in his longings!



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There came a time when I trembled before him. I could no longer walk calmly arm-in-arm with him under the linden-trees, hearkening joyfully. I dared not lift my eyes to his face; I turned pale with suppressed feeling, if he but spoke my name—Juanita—or took my hand in his for friendly greeting. What a hand it was!—so white, and soft, and shapely, yet so powerful! It was the right hand for him,—a fair and delicate seeming, a cruel, hidden strength. When he spoke of the future my heart cried out against it; it was intolerable to me. In its bright triumphs I could have no part; thereto I could follow him only with my love and tears. The present alone was mine, and to that I passionately clung. For I never dreamed, you see, that he could love me.

My manner toward him changed; I was fitful and capricious. I dreaded, above all things, that he should suspect my feelings. Sometimes I met him coldly; sometimes I received his confidences with an indifferent and weary air. This could not last.

One night—it was a little time before he left us—he begged me to walk with him once more under the lindens. I made many excuses, but he overruled them all. We left the brilliantly-lighted rooms and stood beneath the solemn shadow of the trees. It was a warm, soft night; the harvest moon shone down upon us; a south wind moaned among the branches. We walked silently on till we reached a rustic seat, formed of gnarled boughs fantastically bound together; here he made me sit down and placed himself beside me.

“Juanita,” he said, in a tone so soft, so thrillingly musical, that I shall never forget it, “what has come between us? Are you no longer my friend?”

I tried to answer him, and could not; love and grief choked my utterance.

“Look at me,” he said.

I looked. The moon shone full on his face; his eyes were bent on mine. What a serpent-charm lurked in their treacherous blue depths! If, looking at me thus, he had bidden me kill myself at his feet, I must have done it.

“Juanita,” he said, with a smile of conscious power, “you love me! But why should that destroy our happiness?”

He held out his arms; I threw myself on his bosom in an agony of shame and joy. Oh, Heaven! could it be possible that he loved me at last?

Long, long, we sat there in the moonlight, his arms around me, my hand clasped in his. Poor hand! even by that faint radiance how dark and thin it looked beside his, so white and rounded! How gloriously beautiful was he! what a poor, pale shadow! And yet he loved me! He did not talk much of it; he spoke more of the future,—*our* future. It all lay

before him, a bright, enchanted land, wherein we two should walk together. We had not quite reached it, but we surely should, and that ere long.



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The steps toward it were prosaic enough, save as his imagination brightened them. An early friend of his dead father, a distinguished lawyer, wishing to further William's advancement in life, gave him the opportunity of studying his profession with him,—offering him, at the same time, a home in his own family. From these slender materials William's fancy built air-castles the most magnificent. He would study assiduously; with such a prize in view, he fondly said, his patience would never weary. He felt within himself the consciousness of talent; and talent and industry *must* succeed. A bright career was before him,—fame, fortune; and all were to be laid at my feet; all would be valueless, if not shared with me.

“Ah, William,” I asked, with a moment's sorrowful doubt, “are you sure of that? Are you certain that it is not fame you look forward so eagerly to possess, instead of me?”

“How *dare* you say such a thing?” he answered, sternly. I did not mind the sternness; there was love behind it.

“And what am I to do while you are thus winning gold and glory?” I asked, at length.

“I will tell you, Juanita. In the first place, you are *not* to waste your time and spirits in long, romantic reveries, and vain pining because we cannot be together.”

“Indeed, I will not!” was my quick reply, though I colored deeply. I was ashamed that he thought me in danger of loving him too well. “I know you think me foolish and sentimental; but I assure you I will try to be different, since you wish it.”

“That is my own dear girl! You must go out,—you must see people,—you must enjoy yourself. You must study, too; don't let your mind rust because you are engaged. It will be quite time enough for that when we are married.”

“You need not be afraid; I shall always wish to please you, William, and so I shall always endeavor to improve.”

“Good child!” he said, laughing. “But you will not always be such an obedient infant, Juanita. You will find out your power over me, and then you will want to exercise it, just for the pleasure of seeing me submit. You will be despotic about the veriest trifles, only to show me that my will must bow to yours.”

“That will never be! I have no will of my own, where you are concerned, William. I only ask to know your wishes, that I may perform them.”

“Is that indeed so?” he said, with a new tenderness of manner. “I am very glad; for, to tell the truth, my love, I fear I should have little patience with womanish caprices. I have reasons always for what I do and for what I require, and I could not long love any one who opposed them.”



Again I assured him that he need feel no such dread. How happy we were!—yes, I believe he loved me enough then to be happy, even as I was.

It was so late before we thought of going in, that a messenger was sent to seek us, and many a fine jest we had to encounter when we reached the drawing-room.



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The next day, William spoke to my uncle, who seemed to regard the matter in a light very different from ours. He said, we were a mere boy and girl, that years must elapse before we could marry, and by that time we should very probably have outgrown our liking for each other; still, if we chose, we might consider ourselves engaged; he did not know that he had any objection to make. This manner of treating the subject was not a flattering one; however, we had his consent,—and that was the main point, after all.

So we were troth-plight; and William went forth on his career of labor and success, and I remained at home, loving him, living for him, striving to make my every act what he would have it. I went into company as he had bidden me; I studied and improved myself; I grew handsomer, too. All who saw me noticed and approved the alteration in my appearance. I was no longer awkward and stooping; my manner had acquired something of ease and gracefulness; a faint bloom tinged my cheek and made my dark eyes brighter. I was truly happy in the change; it seemed to render me a little more suited to him, who was so proudly, so splendidly handsome.

I remembered what he had said too well to spend much time in love-dreams; but my happiest moments were when I was alone, and could think of him, read his letters, look at his picture, and fancy the joyfulness of his return.

His letters!—there the change first showed itself. At first they were all, and more than all, I could wish. I blushed to read the ardent words, as I did when he had spoken them. But by-and-by there was a different tone: I could not describe it; there was nothing to complain of; and yet I felt—so surely!—that something was wrong. I never thought of blaming him; I dreaded lest I had in some way wounded his affection or his pride. I asked no explanation; I thought to do so might annoy or vex him, for his was a peculiar nature. I only wrote to him the more fondly,—strove more and more to show him how my whole heart was his. But the change grew plainer as months passed on; and some weeks before the time appointed for his return, the letters ceased altogether.

This conduct grieved me, certainly, yet I was more perplexed than unhappy. It never occurred to me to doubt his love; I thought there must be some mistake, some offence unwittingly given, and I looked to his coming to clear away all doubt and trouble. But I longed so for that coming!—it seemed as if the weeks would never end. I knew he loved me; but I needed to hear him say it once more,—to have every shadow dispelled, and nothing between us but the warmest affection and fullest confidence.

In such a mood I met him. The house was full of guests, and I could not bear to see him for the first time before so many eyes. I had watched, as may well be believed, for his arrival, and a little before dark had seen him enter his mother's house. He would surely come over soon; I ran down the long walk, and paced up and down beneath the trees, awaiting him. As soon as he came in sight I hastened toward him; he met me kindly, but the change that had been in his letters was plainer yet in his manner. It struck a chill to my heart.



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"I suppose you have a house full of company, as usual," he remarked presently, glancing at the brilliant windows.

"Yes, we have a number of friends staying with us. Will you go in and see them? There are several whom you know."

"Thank you,—not to-night; I am not in the mood. And I have a good deal to say to you, Juanita, that deeply concerns us both."

"Very well," I replied; "you had better tell me at once."

We walked on to the old garden-chair, and sat down as we had done that memorable night. We were both silent,—I from disappointment and apprehension. He, I suppose, was collecting himself for what he had to say.

"Juanita," he spoke at last, taking my hand in his, "I do not know how you will receive what I am about to tell you. But this I wish you to promise me: that you will believe I speak for our best happiness, —yours as well as mine."

"Go on," was all my reply.

"A year ago," he continued, "we sat here as we do now, and, spite of doubts and misgivings and a broken resolution, I was happier than I shall ever be again. I had loved you from the first moment I saw you, with a passion such as I shall never feel for any other woman. But I knew that we were both poor; I knew that marriage in our circumstances could only be disastrous. It would wear out your youth in servile cares; it would cripple my energies; it might even, after a time, change our love to disgust and aversion. And so, though I believed myself not indifferent to you, I resolved never to speak of my love, but to struggle against it, and root it out of my heart. You know how differently it happened. Your changed manner, your averted looks, gave me much pain. I feared to have offended you, or in some way forfeited your esteem. I brought you here to ask an explanation. I said, 'Juanita, are you no longer my friend?' You know what followed; the violence of your emotion showed me all. You remember?"

Did I not?—and was it not generous of him to remind me then?

"I saw you loved me, and the great joy of that knowledge made me forget prudence, reason, everything. Afterwards, when alone, I tried to justify to myself what I had done, and partially succeeded. I argued that we were young and could wait; I dreamed, too, that my ardor could outrun time, and grasp in youth the rewards of mature life. In that hope I left you.

"Since then my views have greatly changed. I have seen something—not much, it is true—of men and of life, and have found that it is an easy thing to dream of success, but a long and difficult task to achieve it. That I have talent it would be affectation to deny;



but many a poor and struggling lawyer is my equal. The best I can hope for, Juanita, is a youth of severe toil and griping penury, with, perhaps, late in life,—almost too late to enjoy it,—competence and an honorable name. And even that is by no means secure; the labor and the poverty may last my life long.



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“You have been reared in the enjoyment of every luxury which wealth can command. How could you bear to suffer privations, to perform menial labors, to be stinted in dress, deprived of congenial society, obliged to refrain from every amusement, because you were unable to afford the expense? How should you like to have a grinding economy continually pressing upon you, in every arrangement of your household, every detail of your daily life? to have your best days pass in petty cares and sayings, all your intellect expended in the effort to make your paltry means do the greatest possible service?”

It was not a pleasant picture, but, harshly drawn as it was, I felt in the fulness of my love that I could do all that, and more, for him. Oh, yes! for him and with him I would have accepted any servitude, any suffering. Yet a secret something withheld me from saying so; and how glad I soon was that I had kept silence!

“You make no reply, Juanita,” he said. “Well, I might put on a pretence of disinterestedness, and say that I was unwilling to bind you to such a fate, and therefore released you from your engagement. It would not be altogether a pretence, for nothing could be more painful to me than to see the brightness of your youth fading away in the life I have described. But I think of myself, too; comforts, luxuries, indulgences, I value highly. Since my father’s death I have tasted enough of poverty to know something of its bitterness; and to be doomed to it for life is appalling to me. The sordid cares of narrow means are so distasteful, that I cannot contemplate them with any degree of patience. After a day of exhausting mental effort, to return to a dingy, ill-furnished home,—to relieve professional labors by calculations about the gas-bill or the butcher’s account,—I shrink from such a miserable prospect! I love the elegant, the high-bred, the tasteful, in women; I am afraid even my love for you would alter, Juanita, to see you day by day in coarse or shabby clothing, performing such offices as are only suited to servants,—whom we could not afford to keep.

“I have thought of it a great deal, and it seems to me that it is useless and hopeless, that it would be the wildest folly, to continue our engagement. With our tastes and habits, we must seek in marriage the means of comfort, the appliances of luxury. Others may find in it the bewildering bliss we might have known, had fortune been favorable to us; but, as it is, I think the best, the wisest, the happiest thing we can do is—to part!”

Oh, Heaven! this from him!

“Still, Juanita, if you think otherwise,” he went on after a moment’s pause,—“if you prefer to hold me to our engagement, I am ready to fulfil it when you wish.”

It was like a man to say this, and then to feel that he had acted uprightly and honorably!

I said nothing for a time; I could not speak. All hell woke in my heart. I knew then what lost spirits might feel,—grief, and wounded pride, and rage, hatred, despair! In the midst of all I made a vow; and I kept it well!



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How I had loved this man!—with what a self-forgetting, adoring love! He had been my thought, day and night. I would have done anything,—sacrificed, suffered anything,—yes, sinned even,—to please his lightest fancy. And he cast me coldly off because I had no fortune!—trampled my heart into the dust because I was poor!

“You make no answer, Juanita,” he said, at length.

“I am thinking,” I replied, looking up and laughing slightly, “how to say that I quite agree with you, and have been planning all day how I should manage to tell you the very same thing.”

Miserable falsehood! But I spoke it so coolly, that he was thoroughly deceived. He never suspected the truth,—my deep love, my outraged pride.

“It is just as you have said, William. We have elegant tastes, and no means of gratifying them. What should we do together? Only make each other miserable. You need a rich wife, I a rich husband, who can supply us with the indulgences we demand. To secure these we can well make the sacrifice of a few romantic fancies.”

“I am glad you think so,” he replied, yet somewhat absently.

“You must wait awhile for Florence,” I continued; “she is four years old, and twelve years hence you will yet be quite a personable individual. And Florence will have a fortune worth waiting for, I assure you. Or perhaps you have somebody more eligible already in view. Come, William, be frank,—tell me all about it.”

“I did not expect this levity, Juanita,” he answered, severely. “You must know that I have never thought of such a thing. And believe me,” he said, in a tenderer tone, “that, among all the beautiful women I have seen,—and some have not disdained to show me favor,—none ever touched my heart for a moment. Had we any reasonable prospect of happiness, I could never give you up; I love you better a thousand times than anything in the world.”

“Except yourself,” I said, mockingly; and I looked at him with a mischievous smile, while a storm of passion raged in my heart and my brain seemed on fire. “Be it so! I do not complain of such a splendid rival. But really, William, I cannot boast of constancy like yours, even; though I suppose most people would consider that rather a poor, flawed specimen. It hurt my dignity very much when Uncle Heywood called our attachment a boy-and-girl affair; but I soon found that he knew best about it. For a time I kept my love very warm and glowing; but it was not long ere the distractions you bade me seek in society proved more potent than I wished. I found there were other things to be enjoyed than dreams of you, and even—shall I confess it? I can now, I suppose—other people to be admired as well as you!”

“Indeed!” he said, with ill-concealed annoyance. “You had a great talent for concealment, then; your letters showed no trace of the change.”



## Page 30

"I know they didn't," I answered, laughing. "I hated very much to admit even to myself that I had altered; it seemed, you know, so capricious and childish,—in short, so far from romantic. I kept up the illusion as long as I could; used to go off alone to read your letters, look at your picture, and fancy I felt just as at first. Then when I sat down to write, and remembered how handsome you were, and all that had happened, the old feelings would come back, and for the time you were all I cared for. But I am very glad we have had this explanation, and understand each other. We shall both be happier for it."

I had a little taste of vengeance, even then, when I saw how his vanity was wounded. He tried to look relieved,—I dare say he tried to feel so,—but I question very much whether he was pleased with himself that he had been so cool and philosophical. He did not wish to make me wretched; but he had expected I would be so, as a matter of course. To find me so comfortable under the infliction perplexed and disconcerted him.

"This will not make any coldness between us, I hope?" he said, at last. "We will be friends still, dear Juanita?"

"Yes," I replied, "we will be friends, dear William. We are a great deal more in our true relations thus than as lovers."

"And your uncle's family," he inquired,—“shall we explain all to them?"

"There is no need of that," I answered, carelessly. "Let things pass. After a time they will perhaps notice that there is a change, and I can tell them that we are both tired of the engagement. They will ask no further questions."

"Thank you," he said. "It will save me some embarrassment."

"Yes," I replied, looking at him steadily, "I think it would have been a rather awkward topic for you to broach."

His eye fell before mine; through all the sophistry he had used, I think some slight sense of the baseness of his conduct forced itself upon his mind.

"Now I must return to the house," I said, rising; "will you not come with me? My uncle and aunt will expect to see you, and Anna Gray is here. You can make your first essay toward the rich match this evening."

"Nonsense!" he said, impatiently, yet he accompanied me. I knew he did not like to lose sight of me.

Never had I exerted myself so much to please any one, as I did that night to charm and attract him;—not, indeed, by any marked attention; that would have failed of its object. But I talked and danced; I displayed for his benefit all that I had acquired of ease and



manner since he left. I saw his astonishment, that the pale, quiet girl who was wont to sit in some corner, almost unnoticed, should now be the life of that gay circle. I made him admire me most at the very moment he had lost me forever,—and so far, all was well.



## Page 31

I went to my room that night a different creature. That place had been a kind of sanctuary to me. By its vine-draped window I had loved to sit and think of him, to read the books he liked, and fashion my mind to what he could approve. But the spot which I had left, a hopeful and loving girl, I returned to, a forsaken and revengeful woman. My whole nature was wrought up to one purpose,—to repay him, to the last iota, all he had made me suffer, all the humiliation, the despair. It was strange how this purpose upbore and consoled me; for I needed consolation. I hated him, yet I loved him fiercely, too; I despised him, yet I knew no other man would ever touch my heart. He had been, he always must be, everything to me,—the one object to which all my thoughts tended, to which my every action was referred.

I took from a drawer his letters and his few love-gifts. The paper I tore to fragments and threw into the empty fireplace. I lighted the heap, and tossed the gifts, one after another, into the flame. Last of all, I drew his portrait from my bosom. I gazed at it an instant, pressed it to my lips. No,—I would not destroy this,—I would keep it to remind me.

I remember thinking, as I watched the flickering flame, that this was something like a witch's incantation. I smiled at the idea.

The next morning there was only a heap of light ashes left in the grate. I pursued my purpose determinedly and with unflagging zeal. I did not know exactly how it would be realized, but I felt sure I should achieve it. My first care was to cultivate to the utmost every faculty I possessed. My education had been hitherto of rather a substantial order; I had few accomplishments. To these I turned my care. "What has a woman," I thought, "to do with solid learning? It never tells in society." I had observed the rapt attention with which William listened to music. Hitherto I had been only a passable performer, such as any girl of sixteen might be. But under the influence of this new motive I studied diligently; the best masters were supplied me; and soon my progress both astonished and delighted myself and all who heard me.

I have before said that a change for the better had taken place in my person; this I strove by every means in my power to increase. I rode, I walked, I plied the oars vigorously upon our little lake. My health grew firm, my cheeks more blooming, my form fuller and majestic. I took the greatest pains with my toilet. It was wonderful to see, day by day, as I looked into the mirror, the alteration that care and taste could effect in personal appearance. Could this erect, stately figure, with its air of grace and distinction, be one with the thin, stooping form, clad in careless, loose-fitting garb, which I so well remembered as myself? Could that brilliant face, with its bands of shining hair, that smile of easy self-confidence, belong to me? What, had become of the pale, spiritless girl? My uncle sometimes asked the question, and, looking at me with a fond, admiring glance, would say,—"You were made for an empress, Juanita!" I knew then that I was beautiful, and rejoiced in the knowledge; but no tinge of vanity mingled with

the joy. I cultivated my beauty, as I did my talents, for a purpose of which I never lost sight.



## Page 32

It was now I learned for the first time that John Haughton loved me. When it became generally understood that William and I were no longer engaged, John came forward. I do not know what he, so good, so high-minded, saw in me; but certainly he loved me with a true affection. When he avowed it, a strange joy seized me; I felt that now I held in my hand the key of William's destiny. Now I should not lose my hold on him; we could not drift apart in the tide of life. As John's bride, John's wife, there must always be an intimate connection between us. So I yielded with well-feigned tenderness to my lover's suit,—only stipulating, that, as some time must elapse before our marriage, no one should know of our attachment,—not even William, or his mother,—nor, on my part, any of my uncle's family. He made no objection; I believe he even took a romantic pleasure in the concealment. He liked to see me moving about in society, and to feel that there was a tie between us that none dreamed of but ourselves. Poor John! he deserved better of Fate than to be the tool of my revenge!

William came home, soon after our engagement, for his annual visit. He was succeeding rather better than his dismal fancies had once prognosticated. He was very often at our house,—very much my friend. I saw through all that clearly enough; I knew he loved me a hundred-fold more passionately than in our earlier days; and the knowledge was to me as a cool draught to one who is perishing of thirst. I did all in my power to enhance his love; I sang bewildering melodies to him; I talked to him of the things he liked, and that roused his fine intellect to the exercise of its powers. I rode with him, danced with him; nor did I omit to let him see the admiration with which others of his sex regarded me. I was well aware that a man values no jewel so highly as that which in a brilliant setting calls forth the plaudits of the crowd. I talked to him often of his prospects and hopes; his ambition, all selfish as it was, fascinated me by its pride and daring. "Ah, William!" I sometimes thought, "you made a deadly mistake when you cast me off! You will never find another who can so enter, heart and soul, into all your brilliant projects!"

He came to me, one morning, rather earlier than his wont. I was reading, but laid aside my book to greet him.

"What have you there, Juanita? Some young-ladyish romance, I suppose."

"Not at all,—it is a very rational work; though I presume you will laugh at it, because it contains a little sentiment,—you are grown so hard and cold, of late."

"Do you think so?" he asked, with a look that belied the charge.

He took up the volume, and, glancing through it, read now and then a sentence.

"What say you to this, Juanita? 'If we are still able to love one who has made us suffer, we love him more than ever.' Is that true to your experience?"



“No,” I answered, for I liked at times to approach the topic which was always uppermost in my mind, and to see his perfect unconsciousness of it. “If any one had made me suffer, I should not stop to inquire whether I were able to love him still or not; I should have but one thought left,—revenge!”



## Page 33

“How very fierce!” he said, laughing. “And your idea of revenge is—what? To stab him with your own white hand?”

“No!” I said, scornfully. “To kill a person you hate is, to my mind, the most pitiful idea of vengeance. What! put him out of the world at once? Not so! He should live,” I said, fixing my eyes upon him,—“and live to suffer,—and to remember, in his anguish, why he suffered, and to whose hand he owed it!”

It was a hateful speech, and would have repelled most men; for my life I dared not have made it before John. But I knew to whom I was talking, and that he had no objection to a slight spice of *diablerie*.

“What curious glimpses of character you open to me now and then,” he said, thoughtfully. “Not very womanly, however.”

“Womanly!” I cried. “I wonder what a man’s notion of woman is! Some soft, pulpy thing that thrives all the better for abuse? a spaniel that loves you more, the more you beat it? a worm that grows and grows in new rings as often as you cut it asunder? I wonder history has never taught you better. Look at Judith with Holofernes,—Jael with Sisera, —or if you want profane examples, Catherine de Medicis, Mademoiselle de Brinvilliers, Charlotte Corday. There are women who have formed a purpose, and gone on steadily toward its accomplishment, even though, like that Roman girl,—Tullia was her name? —they had to drive over a father’s corpse to do it.”

“You have known such, perhaps,” said Richard.

“Yes,” I answered, with a gentle smile, “I have. They wished no harm, it might be, to any one, but people stood in their way. It is as if you were going to the arbor after grapes, and there were a swarm of ants in the path. You have no malice against the ants, but you want the grapes,—so you walk on, and they are crushed.”

I was thinking of John and of his love, but William did not know that. “You are a strange being!” he said, looking at me with a mixture of admiration and distrust.

“Ah! Well, you see my race is somewhat anomalous,—a blending of the Spaniard and the Yankee. Come, I will be all Spanish for a time; bring me the guitar. Now let me sing you a *romance*.”

I struck the tinkling chords, and began a sweet love-ditty. Fixing my eyes on his, I made every word speak to his heart from mine. I saw his color change, his eyes melt;—when the song ended, he was at my feet.

I know not what he said; I only know it was passion, burning and intense. Oh, but it was balm both to my love and hate to hear him! I let him go on as long as he would,—then I said, gently caressing his bright hair,—



“You forget, dear William, all those lessons of prudence you taught me not so very long ago.”

He poured forth the most ardent protestations; he begged me to forget all that cold and selfish reasoning. Long since he had wished to offer me his hand, but feared lest I should repel him with scorn. Would I not pardon his former ingratitude, and return his love?



## Page 34

“But you forget, my friend,” I said, “that circumstances have not altered, but only your way of viewing them; we must still be poor and humble. Don’t you remember all your eloquent picturings of the life we should be obliged to lead? Don’t you recollect the dull, dingy house, the tired, worn-out wife in shabby clothing”——

“Oh, hush, Juanita! Do not recall those wretched follies! Besides, circumstances have somewhat changed; I am not so very poor. My income, though small, will be sufficient, if well-managed, to maintain us in comfort and respectability.”

“Comfort and respectability!” I exclaimed, with a shudder. “Oh, William, can you imagine that such words apply to me? The indulgences of wealth are necessary to me as the air I breathe. I suppose you would be able to shield me from absolute suffering; but that is not enough. Do not speak of this again, for both our sakes. And now, good friend,” I added, in a lighter tone, “I advise you to get up as soon as may be; we are liable to interruption at any time; and your position, though admirable for a *tableau*, would be a trifle embarrassing for ordinary life.”

He started to his feet, and would have left me in anger, but I recalled him with a word. It was good to feel my power over this man who had slighted and rejected me. Before we parted that day he had quite forgiven me for refusing him and making him ridiculous; I thought a little of the spaniel was transferred to him. I saw, too, he had a hope, which I carefully forbore to contradict, that I preferred him to any other, and would accept him, could he but win a fortune for me. And so I sent him out into the world again, full of vain, feverish desires after the impossible. I gave him all the pains of love without its consolations. It was good, as far as it went.

John and I, meanwhile, got on very peacefully together. He was not demonstrative, nor did he exact demonstration from me. I had promised to marry him, and he trusted implicitly to my faith; while his love was so reverent, his ideal of maiden delicacy so exalted, that I should have suffered in his esteem, I verily believe, had my regard been shown other than by a quiet tenderness of manner.

About this time my uncle’s family went abroad. They wished me to accompany them, but I steadily declined. When they pressed me for a reason, I told them of my engagement to John, and that I was unwilling to leave him for so long a time. The excuse was natural enough, and they believed me; and it was arranged that during the period of their absence I should remain with a sister of Mrs. Heywood.

The time passed on. I saw William frequently. Often he spoke to me of his love, and I scarcely checked him; I liked to feed him with false hopes, as once he had done to me. He did not speak again of marriage; I knew his pride forbade it. I also knew that he believed I loved him, and would wait for him.



## Page 35

I heard often from our travellers, and always in terms of kindness and affection. At last their speedy return was announced; they were to sail in the “Arctic,” and we looked joyfully forward to the hour of their arrival. Too soon came the news of the terrible disaster; a little while of suspense, and the awful certainty became apparent. My kind, indulgent uncle and all his family, whom I loved as I would my own parents and sisters, were buried in the depths of the Atlantic.

I will not attempt to describe my grief; it has nothing to do with the story that is written here. When, after a time, I came back to life and its interests, a startling intelligence awaited me. My uncle had died intestate; his wife and children had perished with him; as next of kin, I was sole heir to his immense estate. When my mind fully took in the meaning of all this I felt that a crisis was at hand. Day by day I looked for William.

I had not long to wait. I was sitting by my window on a bright October day, reading a book I loved well,—“Shirley,” one of the three immortal works of a genius fled too soon. As I read, I traced a likeness to my own experience; Caroline was a curious study to me. I marvelled at her meek, forgiving spirit; if I would not imitate, I did not condemn her.

Then I heard the gate-latch click; I looked out through the vine-leaves, all scarlet with the glory of the season, and saw William coming up the walk. I knew why he was there, and, still retaining the volume in my hand, went down to meet him.

We walked out in the grounds; it was a perfect afternoon; all the splendor of autumn, without a trace of its swift-coming decay. Gold, crimson, and purple shone the forests through their softening haze; and the royal hues were repeated on the mountain, reflected in the river. The sky was cloudless and intensely blue; the sunlight fell, with red glow, on the fading grass. A few late flowers of gorgeous hues yet lingered in the beds and borders; and a sweet wind, that might have come direct from paradise, sighed over all. William and I walked on, conversing.

At first we spoke of the terrible disaster and my loss; he could be gentle when he chose, and now his tenderness and sympathy were like a woman’s. I almost forgot, in listening, what he was and had been to me. I was reminded when he began to speak of ourselves; I recalled it fully, when again, with all the power that passion and eloquence could impart, he declared his love, and begged me to be his.

I looked at him; to my eye he seemed happy, hopeful, triumphant; handsomer he could not be, and to me there was a strange fascination in his lofty, masculine beauty. I felt then, what I had always known, that I loved him even while I hated him, and for an instant I wavered. Life with him! It looked above all things dear, desirable! But what! Show such a weak, such a *womanish* spirit? Give up my revenge at the very moment that it was within my grasp,—the revenge I had lived for through so many years? Never!—I recalled the night under the lindens, and was myself again.



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“Dear William,” I said, gently, “you amaze and distress me. Such love as a sister may give to an only brother you have long had from me. Why ask for any other?”

“A sister’s love!” he cried, impatiently. “I thought, Juanita, you were above such paltry subterfuges! Is it as a brother I have loved you all these long and weary years?”

“Perhaps not,—I cannot say. At any rate,” I continued, gravely, “a sisterly affection is all I can give you now.”

“You are trifling with me, Juanita! Cease! It is unworthy of you.”

He seized my hand, and clasped it to his breast. How wildly his heart beat under my touch! I trembled from head to foot,—but I said, in a cold voice, “You are a good actor, William!”

“You cannot look in my eyes and say you believe that charge,” he answered.

I essayed to do it,—but my glance fell before his, so ardent, so tender. Spite of myself, my cheeks burned with blushes. Quietly I withdrew my hand and said, “I am to be married to John in December.”

Ah, but there was a change then! The flush and the triumph died out of his face, as when a lamp is suddenly extinguished. Yet there was as much indignation as grief in his voice when he said,—

“Heaven forgive you, Juanita! You have wilfully, cruelly deceived me!”

“Deceived you!” I replied, rising with dignity. “Make no accusation. If deceived you were, you have simply your own vanity, your own folly, to blame for whatever you may suffer.”

“You have listened to my love, and encouraged me to hope”——

“Silence! I did love you once,—your cold heart can never guess how well, how warmly. I would have loved on through trial and suffering forever; no one could have made me believe anything against you; nothing could have shaken my fidelity, or my faith in yours. It was reserved for yourself to work my cure,—for your own lips to pronounce the words that changed my love to cool contempt.”

“Oh, Juanita,” he cried, passionately, “will you always be so vindictive? Will you forever remind me of that piece of insane folly? Let it go,—it was a boy’s whim, too silly to remember.”



“You were no boy then,” I answered. “You had a mature prudence,—a careful thoughtfulness for self. Or if otherwise, in your case the child was indeed father to the man.”

“Your love is dead, then, I suppose?” he questioned, with a bitter smile.

I handed him the book I had been reading. It was marked at these words: “Love can excuse anything except meanness; but meanness kills love, cripples even natural affection; without esteem, true love cannot exist.”

William raised his head with an air of proud defiance. “And in what sense,” he asked, “do such words apply to me?”

“You are strangely obtuse,” I said. “You see no trace of yourself in that passage—no trace of meanness in the man who cast off the penniless orphan, with her whole heart full of love for him, yet pleads so warmly with the rich heiress, when he knows she is pledged to another?”



## Page 37

“You have said enough, Juanita,” he replied, with concentrated passion. “This is too much to bear, even from you, from whom I have already endured so much. You *know* you do not believe it.”

“I *do* believe it,” was my firm reply. It was false, but what did I care? It served my purpose.

“I might bid you remember,” he said, “how I urged you to be mine when my prospects had grown brighter, and you were poor as before. I might appeal to the manner in which my suit has been urged for years, as a proof of my innocence of this charge that you have brought against me. But I disdain to plead my cause with so unwomanly a heart,—that measures the baseness of others by what it knows of its own.”

He went, and for a time I was left in doubt whether my victory had been really achieved. Then I thought it all over, and was reassured. He could not simulate those looks and tones,—no, nor that tumult of feeling which had made his heart throb so wildly beneath my hand. He loved me,—that was certain; and no matter how great his anger or his indignation, my refusal must have cut him to the soul. And the charge I had made would rankle, too. These thoughts were my comfort when John told me, with grief and surprise, that his brother had joined the Arctic expedition under Dr. Kane. I knew it was for no light cause he would forsake the career just opening so brightly before him.

John and I were married in December, as had been our intention. We led a quiet, but to him a happy, life. He often wondered at my content with home and its seclusion, and owned what fears he had felt, before our marriage, lest I, accustomed to gayety and excitement, should weary of him, the thoughtful, book-loving man. It seemed he had made up his mind to all manner of self-sacrifice in the way of accompanying me to parties, and having guests at our own house. I did not exact much from him; I cared little for the gay world in which William no longer moved. I read with John his favorite books; I interested myself in the sciences which he pursued with such enthusiasm. It was no part of my plan to inflict unnecessary misery on any one, and I strove with all my power to make happy the man whom I had chosen. I succeeded fully; and when we sat on the piazza in the moonlight, my head resting on his shoulder, my hand clasped in his, he would tell me how infinitely dearer the wife had grown to be than even the lover’s fancy had portrayed her.

And my thoughts were far away from the bland airs and brightening moon amid the frozen solitudes of the North. Where was William? what was he doing? did he think of me? and how? What if he should perish there, and we should never meet again? Life grew blank at the thought; I put it resolutely away.



## Page 38

I had drunk of the cup of vengeance; it was sweet, but did not satisfy. I longed for a fuller draught; but might it not be denied to my fevered lips? Perhaps, amid the noble and disinterested toils of the expedition, his heart would outgrow all love for me, and when we met again I should see my power was gone. I pondered much on this; I believed at last that the solitude, the isolation, would be not unpropitious to me. From the little world of the ice-locked vessel his thoughts would turn to the greater world he had left, and I should be remembered. When he returned we should be much together. His mother was dead; our house was the only place he could call his home. Not even for me, I felt assured, would he cast off the love of his only brother. I had not done with him yet. So quietly and composedly I awaited his return.

He came at last, and his manner when we met smote me with a strange uneasiness. It was not the estrangement of a friend whom I had injured, but the distant politeness of a stranger. Was my influence gone? I determined to know, once for all. When we chanced to be alone a moment I went to his side. "William," I asked, laying my hand on his arm, and speaking in a tender, reproachful tone, "why do you treat me so?"

With a quick, decided motion, he removed my hand,—then looked down on me with a smile. "You are strangely obtuse," he said, quoting my own words of two years before. "What can Mrs. Haughton desire from a base fortune-hunter with whom she is unhappily connected by marriage, but a humility that does not presume on the relationship?"

I saw a bold stroke was needed, and that I must stoop to conquer. "Oh, William," I said, sorrowfully, "you called me vindictive once, but it is you who are really so. I was unhappy, harassed, distracted between"——

"Between what?"

"I do not know—I mean I cannot tell you," I stammered, with well-feigned confusion. "Can you not forgive me, William? Often and often, since you left me that day, I have wished to see you, and to tell you how I repented my hasty and ungenerous words. Will you not pardon me? Shall we not be friends again?"

"I am not vindictive," he said, more kindly,— "least of all toward you. But I cannot see how you should desire the friendship of one whom you regard as a mercenary hypocrite. When you can truthfully assure me that you disbelieve that charge, then, and not till then, will I forgive you and be your friend."

"Let it be now, then," I said, joyfully, holding out my hand. He did not reject it;—we were reconciled.

William had come home ill; the hardships of the expedition and the fearful cold of the Arctic Zone had been too much for him. The very night of his return I noticed in his countenance a frequent flush succeeded by a deadly pallor; my quick ear had caught,



too, the sound of a cough,—not frequent or prolonged, but deep and hollow. And now, for the first time in my long and dreary toil, I saw the path clear and the end in view.



## Page 39

Every one knows with what enthusiasm the returned travellers were hailed. Amid the felicitations, the praises, the banquets, the varied excitements of the time, William forgot his ill-health. When these were over, he reopened his office, and prepared to enter once more on the active duties of his profession. But he was unfit for it; John and I both saw this, and urged him to abandon the attempt for the present,—to stay with us, to enjoy rest, books, society, and not till his health was fully reestablished undertake the prosecution of business.

“You forget, my good sister,” he laughingly said to me one day,—(he could jest on the subject now,)—“that I have not the fortune of our John,—I did not marry an heiress, and I have my own way to make. I had got up a few rounds of the ladder when an adverse fate dragged me down. Being a free man once more, I must struggle up again as quickly as may be.”

“Oh, for that matter,” I returned, in the same tone, “I had some part, perhaps, in the adverse fate you speak of; so it is but fair that I should make you what recompense I can. I am an admirable nurse; and you will gain time, if you will deliver yourself up to my care, and not go back to Coke and Chitty till I give you leave. Seriously, William, I fear you do not know how ill you are, and how unsafe it is for you to go on with business.”

He yielded without much persuasion, and came home to us. Those were happy days. William and I were constantly together. I read to him, I sung to him, and played chess with him; on mild days I drove him out in my own little pony-carriage. Did he love me all this time? I could not tell. Never by look or tone did he intimate that the old affection yet lived in his heart. I fancied he felt as I with him,—perfect content in my companionship, without a thought or wish beyond. We were made for each other; our tastes, our habits of mind and feeling, fully harmonized; had we been born brother and sister, we should have preferred each other to all the world, and, remaining single for each other’s sakes, have passed our lives together.

So the time wore on, sweetly and placidly, and only I seemed to notice the failure in our invalid; but I watched for it too keenly, too closely, to be blinded. The occasional rallies of strength that gave John such hope, and cheered William himself so greatly, did not deceive me; I knew they were but the fluctuations of his malady. Changes in the weather, or a damp east wind, did not account to me for his relapses; I knew he was in the grasp of a fell, a fatal disease; it might let him go awhile, give him a little respite, as a cat does the mouse she has caught,—but he never could escape,—his doom was fixed.

But you may be sure I gave him no hint of it, and he never seemed to suspect it for himself. One could not believe such blindness possible, did we not see it verified in so many instances, year after year.



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Often, now, I thought of a passage in an old book I used to read with many a heart-quake in my girlish days. It ran thus:—"Perhaps we may see you flattering yourself, through a long, lingering illness, that you shall still recover, and putting off any serious reflection and conversation for fear it should upset your spirits. And the cruel kindness of friends and physicians, as if they were in league with Satan to make the destruction of your soul as sure as possible, may, perhaps, abet this fatal deceit." We had all the needed accessories: the kind physician, anxious to amuse and fearful to alarm his patient,—telling me always to keep up his spirits, to make him as cheerful and happy as I could; and the cruel friends—I had not far to seek for them.

For a time William came down-stairs every morning, and sat up during the greater part of the day. Then he took to lying on the sofa for hours together. At last, he did not rise till afternoon, and even then was too much fatigued to sit up long. I prepared for his use a large room on the south side of the house, with a smaller apartment within it; to this we carried his favorite books and pictures, his easy-chair and lounge. My piano stood in a recess; a guitar hung near it. When all was finished, it looked homelike, pleasant; and we removed William to it, one mild February day.

"This is a delightful room," he said, gazing about him. "How pleasant the view from these windows will be as spring comes on!"

"You will not need it," I said, "by that time."

"I should be glad, if it were so," he replied; "but I am not quite so sanguine as you are, Juanita."

He did not guess my meaning; how should he, amused, flattered, kept along as he had been? To him, life, with all its activities, its prizes, its pleasures, seemed but a little way removed; a few weeks or months and he should be among them again. But I knew, when he entered that room, that he never would go forth again till he was borne where narrower walls and a lowlier roof should shut him in.

I had an alarm one day. "Juanita," said the invalid, when I had arranged his pillows comfortably, and was about to begin the morning's reading, "do not take the book we had yesterday. I wish you would read to me in the Bible."

What did this mean? Was this proud, worldly-minded man going to humble himself, and repent, and be forgiven? And was I to be defrauded thus of my just revenge? Should he pass away to an eternal life of holiness and joy,—while I, stained through him and for his sake with sins innumerable, sank ever lower and lower in unending misery and despair? Oh, I must stop this, if it were not yet too late.

"What!" I said, pretending to repress a smile, "are you getting alarmed about yourself, William? Or is Saul really going to be found among the prophets, after all?"

He colored, but made no reply. I opened the Bible and read two or three of the shorter Psalms,—then, from the New Testament, a portion of the Sermon on the Mount.



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“It must have been very sweet,” I observed, “for those who were able to receive Jesus as the true Messiah, and his teachings as infallible, to hear these words from his lips.”

“And do you not so receive them?” William asked.

“We will not speak of that; my opinion is of no weight.”

“But you must have thought much of these things,” he persisted; “tell me what result you have arrived at.”

“Candidly, then,” I said, “I have read and pondered much on what this book contains. It seems to me, that, if it teaches anything, it clearly teaches, that, no matter how we flatter ourselves that we are doing as we choose, and carrying out our own designs and wishes, we are all the time only fulfilling purposes that have been fixed from all eternity. Since, then, we are the subjects of an Inexorable Will, which no entreaties or acts of ours can alter or propitiate, what is there for us to do but simply to bear as best we can what comes upon us? It is a short creed.”

“And a gloomy one,” he said.

“You are right; a very gloomy one. If you can rationally adopt a cheerfuller, pray, do it. I do not wish for any companion in mine.”

There was silence for a time, and then I said, with affectionate earnestness, “Dear William, why trouble yourself with these things in your weak and exhausted state? Surely, the care of your health is enough for you, now. By-and-by, when you have in some measure regained your strength, look seriously into this subject, if you wish. It is an important one for all. I am afraid I gave you an overdose of anodyne last night, and am to blame for your low spirits of this morning. Own, William,” I said, smilingly, “that you were terribly hypped, and fancied you never could recover.”

He looked relieved as I spoke thus lightly. “I should find it sad to die,” he said. “Life looks bright to me even yet.”

This man was a coward. He dreaded that struggle, that humiliation of spirit, through which all must pass ere peace with Heaven is achieved. Yet more, perhaps, he dreaded that deeper struggle which ensues when we essay to tear Self from its throne in the heart, and place God thereon. As he said, life looked bright to him; and all his plans and purposes in life were for himself, his own advancement, his own well-being. It would have been hard to make the change; and he thought it was not necessary now, at least.

No more was said upon the subject. Our days went on as before. There was a little music, some light reading, an occasional call from a friend,—and long pauses of rest between all these. And slowly, but surely, life failed, and the soul drew near its doom.



I knew now that he loved me still; he talked of it sometimes when he woke suddenly, and did not at once remember where he was; I saw it, too, in his look, his manner; but we never breathed it to each other, and he did not think I knew.

One night there was a great change; physicians were summoned in haste; there were hours of anxious watching. Toward morning he seemed a little better, and I was left alone with him. He slumbered quietly, but when he awoke there was a strange and solemn look in his face, such as I had never seen before. I knew what it must mean.



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“When Dr. Hammond comes, let me see him alone,” he whispered.

I made no objection; nothing could frustrate my purpose now.

The physician came,—a kind old man, who had known us all from infancy. He was closeted awhile with William; then he came out, looking deeply moved.

“Go to him,—comfort him, if you can,” he said.

“You have told him?” I asked.

“Yes,—he insisted upon hearing the truth, and I knew he had got where it could make no difference. Poor fellow! it was a terrible blow.”

I wanted a few moments for reflection; I sent John in my stead. I locked myself in my own room, and tried to get the full weight of what I was going to do. I was about to meet him who had rejected my heart’s best love, no longer in the flush and insolence of health and strength, but doomed, dying,—with a dark, hopeless eternity stretching out before his shuddering gaze. And when he turned to me in those last awful moments for solace and affection, I was to tell him that the girl he loved, the woman he adored, had since that one night kept the purpose of vengeance hot in her heart,—that for years her sole study had been to baffle and to wound him,—and that now, through all those months that she had been beside him, that he had looked to her as friend, helper, comforter, she had kept her deadly aim in view. *She* had deceived him with false hopes of recovery; *she* had turned again to the world the thoughts which he would fain have fixed on heaven; while he was loving her, she had hated him. She had darkened his life; she had ruined his soul.

Oh, was not this a revenge worthy of the name?

I went to him. He was sitting in the great easy-chair, propped with pillows; John had left the room, overcome by his feelings. Never shall I forget that face,—the despair of those eyes.

I sat down by him and took his hand.

“The Doctor has told you?” I murmured.

“Yes,—and what is this world which I so soon must enter? I believe too much to have one moment’s peace in view of what is coming. Oh, why did I not believe more before it was too late?”

I kept silence a few minutes; then I said,—

“Listen, William,—I have something to tell you.”



He looked eagerly toward me;—perhaps he thought even then, poor dupe, that it was some word of hope, that there was some chance for his recovery.

Then I told him all,—all,—my lifelong hatred, my cherished purpose. Blank amazement was in the gaze that he turned upon me. I feared that impending death had blunted his senses, and that he did not fully comprehend.

“You will remember now what I once told you,” I cried, with savage joy; “for so surely as there is another world, in that world shall you live, and live to suffer, and to remember in your anguish why you suffer, and to whose hand you owe it.”

He understood well enough now. “Fiend!” he exclaimed, with a look of horror, and started to his feet. The effort, the emotion, were too much. Blood gushed from his lips; a frightful spasm convulsed his features; he fell back; he was gone!



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Yes,—he was gone! And my life's work was complete!

I cannot tell what happened after that. I suppose they must have found him, and laid him out, and buried him; but I remember nothing of it. Since then I have lived in this great, gloomy house, with its barred doors and windows. Never since I came here have I seen a face that I knew. Maniacs are all about me; I meet them in the halls, the gardens; sometimes I hear the fiercer sort raving and dashing about their cells. But I do not feel afraid of them.

It is strange how they all fancy that the rest are mad, and they the only sane ones. Some of them even go so far as to think that *I* have lost my reason. I heard one woman say, not long ago,—“Why, she has been mad these twenty years! She never was married in her life; but she believes all these things as if they were really so, and tells them over to anybody who will listen to her.”

Mad these twenty years! So young as I am, too! And I never married, and all my wrongs a maniac's raving! I was angry at first, and would have struck her; then I thought, “Poor thing! Why should I care? She does not know what she is saying.”

And I go about, seeing always before me that pallid, horror-stricken face; and wishing sometimes—oh, how vainly!—that I had listened to him that bright October day,—that I had been a happy wife, perchance a happy mother. But no, no! I must not think thus. Once I look at it in that way, my whole life becomes a terror, a remorse. I will not, must not, have it so.

Then let me rejoice again, for I have had my revenge,—a great, a glorious revenge!

\* \* \* \* \*

### LEFT BEHIND.

It was the autumn of the year;  
The strawberry-leaves were red and sere;  
October's airs were fresh and chill,  
When, pausing on the windy hill,  
The hill that overlooks the sea,  
You talked confidingly to me,  
Me, whom your keen artistic sight  
Has not yet learned to read aright,  
Since I have veiled my heart from you,  
And loved you better than you knew.

You told me of your toilsome past,  
The tardy honors won at last,



The trials borne, the conquests gained,  
The longed-for boon of Fame attained:  
I knew that every victory  
But lifted you away from me,—  
That every step of high emprise  
But left me lowlier in your eyes;  
I watched the distance as it grew,  
And loved you better than you knew.

You did not see the bitter trace  
Of anguish sweep across my face;  
You did not hear my proud heart beat  
Heavy and slow beneath your feet;  
You thought of triumphs still unwon,  
Of glorious deeds as yet undone;—  
And I, the while you talked to me,  
I watched the gulls float lonesomely  
Till lost amid the hungry blue,  
And loved you better than you knew.



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You walk the sunny side of Fate;  
The wise world smiles, and calls you great;  
The golden fruitage of success  
Drops at your feet in plenteousness;  
And you have blessings manifold,—  
Renown, and power, and friends, and gold;  
They build a wall between us twain  
Which may not be thrown down again;—  
Alas! for I, the long years through,  
Have loved you better than you knew.

Your life's proud aim, your art's high truth  
Have kept the promise of your youth;  
And while you won the crown which now  
Breaks into bloom upon your brow,  
My soul cried strongly out to you  
Across the ocean's yearning blue,  
While, unremembered and afar,  
I watched you, as I watch a star  
Through darkness struggling into view,  
And loved you better than you knew.

I used to dream, in all these years,  
Of patient faith and silent tears,—  
That Love's strong hand would put aside  
The barriers of place and pride,—  
Would reach the pathless darkness through,  
And draw me softly up to you.  
But that is past. If you should stray  
Beside my grave, some future day,  
Perchance the violets o'er my dust  
Will half betray their buried trust,  
And say, their blue eyes full of dew,  
"She loved you better than you knew."

\* \* \* \* \*

### COFFEE AND TEA.

Facts, and figures representing facts, are recognized as stubborn adversaries when arrayed singly in an argument; in aggregate, and in generalizations drawn from aggregates, they are often unanswerable.



To the nervous reader it may seem a startling, and to the reformatory one a melancholy fact, that every soul in these United States has provided for him annually, and actually consumes, personally or by proxy, between six and seven pounds of coffee, and a pound of tea; while in Great Britain enough of these two luxuries is imported and drunk to furnish every inhabitant, patrician or pauper, with over a pound of the former, and two of the latter.

Coffee was brought to Western Europe, by way of Marseilles, in 1644, and made its first appearance in London about 1652. In 1853, the estimated consumption of coffee in Great Britain, according to official returns, was thirty-five million pounds, and in the United States, one hundred and seventy-five million pounds, a year.

Tea, in like manner, from its first importation into England by the Dutch East India Company, early in the seventeenth century, and from a consumption indicated by its price, being sixty shillings a pound, has proportionately increased in national use, until, in 1854, the United States imported and retained for home consumption twenty-five million pounds, and England fifty-eight million pounds.

Two centuries have witnessed this almost incredible advance. The consumption of coffee alone has increased, in the past twenty-five years, at the rate of four *per cent. per annum*, throughout the world.



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We pay annually for coffee fifteen millions of dollars, and for tea seven millions. Twenty-two millions of dollars for articles which are popularly accounted neither fuel, nor clothing, nor food!

“What a waste!” cries the reformer; “nearly a dollar apiece, from every man, woman, and child throughout the country, spent on two useless luxuries!”

Is it a waste? Is it possible that we throw all this away, year after year, in idle stimulation or sedation?

It is but too true, that the instinct, leading to the use of some form of stimulant, appears to be universal in the human race. We call it an instinct, since all men naturally search for stimulants, separately, independently, and unceasingly,—because use renders their demands as imperious as are those for food.

Next to alcohol and tobacco, coffee and tea have supplied more of the needed excitement to mankind than any other stimulants; and, taking the female sex into the account, they stand far above the two former substances in the ratio of the numbers who use them.

In Turkey coffee is regarded as the essence of hospitality and the balm of life. In China not only is tea the national beverage, but a large part of the agricultural and laboring interest of the country is engaged in its cultivation. Russia follows next in the almost universal use of tea, as would naturally result from its proximity and the common origin of a large part of its population. Western Europe employs both coffee and tea largely, while France almost confines itself to the former. The *cafes* are more numerous, and have a more important social bearing, than any other establishments in the cities of France. Great Britain uses more tea than coffee. The former beverage is there thought indispensable by all classes. The poor dine on half a loaf rather than lose their cup of tea; just as the French peasant regards his *demi-bouteille* of Vin Bleu as the most important part of his meal.

Tea first roused the rebellion of these American Colonies; and tea made many a half Tory among the elderly ladies of the Revolution. It has, indeed, been regarded, and humorously described by the senior Weller, as the indispensable comforter and friend of advanced female life. Dr. Johnson was as noted for his fondness for tea as for his other excesses at the table. Many sober minds make coffee and tea the *pis a tergo* of their daily intellectual labor; just as a few of greater imagination or genius seek in opium the spur of their ephemeral efforts. In the United States, the young imbibe them from their youth up; and it is quite as possible that a part of the nation’s nervousness may arise from this cause, as it is probable that our wide-spread dyspepsia begins in the use of badly-cooked solid food, immediately on the completion of the first dentition.



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All over this country we drink coffee and tea, morning and night; at least, the majority of us do. They are expensive; their palpable results to the senses are fleeting; they are reported innutritious; nay, far worse, they are decried as positively unwholesome. Yet we still use them, and no one has succeeded in leading a crusade against them at all comparable with the onslaughts on other stimulants, made in these temperance days. The fair sex raises its voice against tobacco and other masculine sedatives, but clings pertinaciously to this delusion.

It becomes, then, an important question to decide whether the choice of civilization is justified by experience or science,—and whether some effect on the animal economy, ulterior to a merely soothing or stimulant action, can be found to sanction the use of coffee and tea. And this is a question in so far differing from that of other stimulants, that it is not to be discussed with the moralist, but solely with the economist and the sanitarian.

More even than us, economically, does it concern the overcrowded and limited states of Europe, where labor is cheap, and the necessaries of life absorb all the efforts, to decide whether so much of the earnings of the poor is annually thrown away in idle stimulation.

It concerns us in a sanitary point of view, more than in any other way, and more than any other people. We are rich, spare in habit, and of untiring industry. We can afford luxurious indulgences, we are very susceptible to nervous stimuli, and we overwork.

Our national habit is feeble. Debility is recognized as the prevailing type of our diseases. Nervous exhaustion is met by recourse to all kinds of stimulation. We are apt to think coffee and tea as harmless, or rather as slow in their deleterious action, as any. Are they nothing more?

As debility marks the degeneration of our physical constitution, so does a morbid sensitiveness at all earthly indulgence, a tendency to reform things innocent, although useless, betray the weakness of the moral health of our day. An ascetic spirit is abroad; our amateur physiologists look rather to a mortification than an honest building-up of the flesh. They prefer naked muscle to rounded outline, and seek rather to test than to enjoy their bodies. Fearing to be Epicureans, they become Spartans, as far as their feebler organizations will allow them, and very successful Stoics, by the aid of Saxon will. By a faulty logic, things which in excess are hurtful are denied a moderate use. Habits innocent in themselves are to be cast aside, lest they induce others which are injurious.

There is but little danger that Puritan antecedents and a New England climate should tend to idle indulgence or Epicurean sloth. We think there is a tendency to reform too far. We confess our preference for the physique of Apollo to that of Hercules. We acknowledge an amiable weakness for those bounties of Nature which soothe or

comfort us or renew our nervous energy, and which, we think, injure us no more than our daily bread, if not immoderately used.

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Science almost always finds some foundation in fact for popular prejudices. For years, men have continued wasting their substance on coffee and tea, insisting that they strengthened as well as comforted them, in spite of the warnings of the sanitarian, who looked on them solely as stimulants or sedatives, and of the economist, who bewailed their extravagant cost.

Physiology, relying on organic chemistry, has at least justified by experiment the choice of the civilized world. Coffee and tea had been regarded by the physiologist and the physician as stimulants of the nervous system, and to a less extent and secondarily of the circulation, and that was all. To fulfil this object, and to answer the endless craving for habitual excitants of the cerebral functions, they had been admitted reluctantly to the diet of their patients, rather as necessary evils than as positive goods. It was reserved for the all-searching German mind to discover their better qualities; and it is only within the last five years, that the self-sacrificing experiments of Dr. Boecker of Bonn, and of Dr. Julius Lehmann, have raised them to their proper place in dietetics, as "Accessory Foods." This term, which we borrow from the remarkable work on "Digestion and its Derangements," by Dr. Thomas K. Chambers, of London, is only the slightest of the many obligations which we hasten to acknowledge ourselves under to this author, as will appear from citations in the course of this article.

The labors of earlier physiologists and chemists, as Carpenter, Liebig, and Paget, had resulted in the classification of nutritive substances under different heads, according to the purposes they served in the physical economy. Perhaps the most convenient, though not an unexceptionable division, is into the Saccharine, Oleaginous, Albuminous, and Gelatinous groups. The first includes those substances analogous in composition to sugar, being chemically composed of hydrogen, carbon, and oxygen. Such are starch, gum, cellulose, and so forth, which are almost identical in their ultimate composition, and admit of ready conversion into sugar by a simple process of vital chemistry. The oleaginous group comprises all oily matters, which are even purer hydro-carbons than the first-mentioned class. The third, or albuminous group, includes all substances closely allied to albumen, and hence containing a large proportion of nitrogen in addition to the other three elements. The last group consists also of nitrogenized substances, which resemble gelatine in many of their characteristics. The first two groups are called non-azotized, as they contain no nitrogen; the last two, azotized, containing nitrogen. "All articles of food that are to be employed in the production of heat must contain a larger proportion of hydrogen than is sufficient to form water with the oxygen that they contain, and none are appropriate for the maintenance of any tissues (except the adipose) unless they contain nitrogen." Hence the obvious restriction of the first two classes to the heat-producing function, and of the last two (or azotized) to the reparation of the tissues.

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We have, then, the two natural divisions of calorific and plastic foods: the one adapted to sustain the heat of the body, and enable us to maintain a temperature independent of that of the medium we may be in; the other to build up, repair, and preserve in their natural proportions the various tissues, as the muscular, fibrous, osseous, or nervous, which compose our frames. These two kinds of food we must have in due proportion and quantity in order to live. Neither the animal nor the vegetable kingdom furnishes the one to the exclusion of the other. We derive our supplies of each from both. More than this, we consume and appropriate certain incidental elements, which find their place and use in the healthy system. Iron floats in our blood, sulphur lies hidden in the hair and nails, phosphorus scintillates unseen in the brain, lime compacts our bones, and fluorine sets the enamelled edges of our teeth. At least one-third of all the known chemical elements exist in some part of the human economy, and are taken into the stomach hidden in our various articles of food. This would seem enough for Nature's requirements. It is enough for all the brute creation. As men, and as thinkers, we need something more.

In all the lower orders of creation the normal state is preserved. Health is the rule, and sickness the rare exception. Demand and supply are exactly balanced. The contraction of the voluntary muscles, and the expenditure of nervous power consequent on locomotion, the temperate use of the five senses, and the quiet, regular performance of the great organic processes, limit the life and the waste of the creature. But when the brain expands in the dome-like cranium of the human being, a new and incessant call is made on the reparative forces. The nervous system has its demands increased a hundred-fold. We think, and we exhaust; we scheme, imagine, study, worry, and enjoy, and proportionately we waste.

In the rude and primitive nations this holds good much less than among civilized people. Yet even among them, the faculties whose possession involves this loss have been ever exercised to repair it by artificial means. In the busy life of to-day how much more is this the case! Overworked brains and stomachs, underworked muscles and limbs, soon derange the balance of supply and demand. We waste faster than enfeebled digestion can well repair. We feel always a little depressed; we restore the equilibrium temporarily by stimulation,—some with alcohol and tobacco, others with coffee and tea. Now it is to these last means of supply that the name has been given of "accessory foods."



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“Accessories are those by whose use the moulting and renewing (that is, the metamorphosis) of the organic structures are modified, so as best to accommodate themselves to required circumstances. They may be subdivided into those which *arrest* and those which *increase* metamorphosis.” It is under the former class that are placed alcohol, sugar, coffee, and tea. Again, says Dr. Chambers,—“Not satisfied with the bare necessities,” (the common varieties of plastic and calorifacient food,) “we find that our species chiefly are inclined by a *soi-disant* instinct to feed on a variety of articles the use of which cannot be explained as above; they cannot be found in the organism; they cannot, apparently, without complete disorganization, be employed to build up the body. These may be considered as extra diet, or called accessory foods..... These are what man does not want, if the protracting from day to day his residence on earth be the sole object of his feeding. He could live without them, grow without them, think, after a fashion, without them. A baby does. Would he be wise to try and imitate it?”

“Thus, there is no question but that easily assimilable brown meat is the proper food for those whose muscular system is subjected to the waste arising from hard exercise; and if plenty of it is to be got, and the digestive organs are in sufficiently good order to absorb enough to supply the demand, it completely covers the deficiency. Water, under these circumstances, is the best drink; and a ‘total abstainer,’ with plenty of fresh meat, strong exercise, and a vigorous digestion, will probably equal anybody in muscular development. But should the digestion not be in such a typical condition, should the exercise be oversevere and the victuals deficient, then the waste must be limited by some arrester of metamorphosis; if it is not, the system suffers, and the man is what is called ‘overworked.’.... Intellectual labor also exercises the demand for food, and at the same time, unfortunately, injures the assimilating organs; so that, unless a judicious diet is employed, waste occurs which cannot be replaced.”

Waste, we may be told, is life, and the rapidity of change marks the activity of the vital processes. True, if each particle consumed is at once and adequately replaced. Beyond that point, let the balance once tend to over-consumption, and we approach the confines of decay. Birds live more and faster than men, and insects probably most of all; yet many of the latter are ephemeral.

Every-day experience had long pointed to the recurring coincidence, that, of the annual victims of pulmonary consumption, few were to be found among the habitual consumers of ardent spirits. Science volunteered the explanation, that alcohol supplied a hydro-carbonaceous nutriment similar to that furnished by the cod-liver oil, which, serving as fuel, spared the wasting of the tissues, just in proportion to its own consumption



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and assimilation. Other aid it was supposed to lend, by stimulating the function of nutrition to renewed energy. Later investigations have proved that it exercises a yet more important influence as an arrester of metamorphosis. It was on arriving at this conclusion, that Dr. Boecker was led to institute a series of careful experiments to determine the influence of water on the physical economy, and the real value of salt, sugar, coffee, tea, and other condiments, as articles of food. "The experimenter appears to have used the utmost precision, and details so conscientiously the mode adopted of making his estimates, that additional knowledge may perhaps alter the conclusions drawn, but can never diminish the value of the experiments." They are not open to the objections of mistaken sensations, and honest, though ludicrous, misapprehension of fallible symptoms, to which the testing of drugs homeopathically is liable, and of which another instance has just occurred in London, in the "proving" of the new medicinal agent, gonoin. They rather resemble in accuracy a quantitative, as well as a qualitative, analysis. We will cite first the experiments on tea, and quote from the interesting narrative of Dr. Chambers.

"After Dr. Boecker had determined by some preliminary trials what quantity of food and drink was just enough to satiate his appetite without causing loss of weight to his body, —that is to say, was sufficient to cover exactly the necessary outgoings of the organism, —he proceeded to special experiments, in which, during periods of twenty-four hours, he took the amount of victuals ascertained by the former trials.

"The first set of the first series of experiments consists of seven observations, of twenty-four hours' duration each, in the months of July and August, with three barely sufficient meals *per diem*, in quantities as nearly equal each day as could be managed, and only spring-water to drink. The second set comprises the same number of observations in August, September, and October, under similar circumstances, except that infusion of tea, drunk cold, was taken instead of plain water.

"Each day there are carefully recorded" qualitative and quantitative analyses of the excretions,—estimates of "the amount of insensible perspiration, and of expired carbonic acid,—the quickness of respiration,—the beats of the pulse,—together with accurate notes of the duration of bodily exercise in the open air, the loss of weight of the whole body, the general feelings, and the circumstances, thermometric, barometric, and meteoric, under which the observations are taken.

"A second series of seventeen experiments of equal duration were made, and at a different time of year, so as to answer the question, which might arise, as to whether the season made any difference."

In these experiments similar observations and records are made as previously, “under the three following circumstances, namely: while taking tea as an ordinary drink, on the days immediately following the leaving it off, and on other days when it was not taken.”



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“A third series, of four experiments, was also made during four fasts of thirty-six hours each—two with water only, and two with tea to drink.

“In the following particulars, all the three series so entirely coincide, that the conclusions will be set down as general deductions from the whole.

“Tea, in ordinary doses, has not any effect on the amount of carbonic acid expired, the frequency of the respirations, or of the pulse.”

Obviously, then, it is not with reference to the heat-producing function that we can look upon tea as in any sense a nutriment; and if it causes no saving of carbon, its effects must be sought in checking some other waste, or in the less consumption of nitrogen. The pulse, and hence the respiration, are unaltered; for the two great processes of circulation and aeration of the blood are interdependent functions, and have, in health, a definite ratio of activity one with the other. As a nervous stimulant, tea in excess will, as we all know, produce an exaltation of the action of the heart, amounting in some persons to a painful and irregular palpitation. No such result seems to follow its moderate use.

“The loss by perspiration is limited by tea.” This seems, at first, contrary to common experience, as the sensible perspiration produced by several cups of warm tea is a familiar fact to all tea-drinkers. That this effect is wholly owing to the warmth of the mixture, it being drunk usually in hot infusion or decoction, was pointed out long since by Cullen. Tea limits perspiration, perhaps, by the astringent action of the tannin which it contains,—of which more hereafter. What is saved by limiting perspiration? Water, largely; carbonic acid, in considerable amount; ammonia (a nitrogenized substance;) salts of soda, potash and lime, and a trace of iron, all in quantities minute, to be sure, but to be counted in the aggregate of arrest of metamorphosis.

But the great fact which establishes tea as an arrester of the change of tissue is, that its use diminishes remarkably the amount of nitrogen thrown off by the excretions, specially destined to remove that element, when in excess, from the system. “We have before called attention to the fact, that an indispensable component of plastic food, by which alone the tissues are repaired, is nitrogen. By a chemico-vital process, nitrogen builds up and is incorporated in the tissues. Nitrogen, again, is one of the resulting components of the change of tissue. This element forms a large part of the effete particles which are rejected on accumulation from such change or waste. That a less amount is excreted by the tea-drinker, when similar quantities are ingested, the weight and plumpness of the body remaining undiminished the while, is proof of the slower change of tissue which takes place under the modifying influence of tea. The importance of this effect we shall presently see.



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“In the first series of experiments, the daily allowance of food, though less copious on the tea days, was more nitrogenized, and nitrogen also was taken in as theine. Yet, in spite of this, the quantity thrown off in twenty-four hours was nearly a *gramme* less than on the water days. Still more strikingly is this shown in the days of complete fast, when pure spring-water is seen to cause a greater loss of nitrogen than infusion of tea, in spite of the supply of nitrogen contained in the latter. The difference also is seen to exist in spite of an increased amount of bodily exercise.”

As final deductions from these experiments, there result, first, “that, when the diet is sufficient, the body *is* more likely to gain weight when tea is taken than when not”; second, “that, when the diet is *insufficient*, tea *limits* very much *the loss of weight* thereby entailed.”

A set of experiments made by Dr. Lehmann are parallel with these. They exhibit the effects of coffee on the excretion of phosphorus, chloride of sodium, (common salt,) and nitrogen. If less full than Dr. Boecker’s, they appear to be equally accurate, and more complete in showing the separate actions of the several constituents of coffee. It would be tedious to the general reader to follow them in detail, and we shall avail ourselves of the brief *resume* of Dr. Chambers.

“First,—Coffee produces on the organism two chief effects, which it is very difficult to connect together,—namely, the raising the activity of the vascular and nervous systems, and protracting remarkably the decomposition of the tissues. Second,—that it is the reciprocal modifications of the specific actions of the empyreumatic oil and caffeine contained in the bean which call forth the stimulant effects of coffee, and therefore those peculiarities of it which possess importance in our eyes,—such as the rousing into new life the soul prostrated by exertion, and especially the giving it greater elasticity, and attuning it to meditation, and producing a general feeling of comfort. Third,—that the protraction of metamorphic decomposition which this beverage produces in the body is chiefly caused by the empyreumatic oil, and that the caffeine only causes it when it is taken in larger quantity than usual. Fourth,—that caffeine (in excess) produces increased action of the heart, rigors, headache, a peculiar inebriation, delirium, and so on. Fifth,—that the empyreumatic oil (in excess) causes perspirations, augmented activity of the understanding, which may end in irregular trains of thought, restlessness, and incapacity for sleep.”

It follows that both the active elements of the coffee-berry are necessary to insure its grateful effects,—that the volatile and odorous principle alone protracts decomposition,—and that careful preparation in roasting and decocting are essential to secure the full benefits of it as a beverage.



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It would be difficult to overestimate the practical importance of these results. They raise coffee and tea from the rank of stimulants to that of food,—from idle luxuries to real agents of support and lengthening of life. Henceforth the economist can hear of their increasing consumption without a regret. The poor may indulge in them, not as extravagant enjoyments, but practical goods. The cup of tea, which is the sole luxury of their scanty meal, lessens the need for more solid food; it satisfies the stomach, while it gladdens the heart. It saves them, too, the waste of those nitrogenized articles of food which require so much labor and forethought to procure. The flesh meats and the cereals, which contain the largest amounts of this requisite of organic life, are always the dearest articles of consumption. Certainly it is not as positive nutriment that we recommend the use of coffee and tea; for although they contain a relatively large amount of nitrogen, that supply can be better taken in solid food. Their benefit is two-fold. While they save more than enough of the waste of tissue to justify their use as economical beverages, they supply a need of the nervous system of no small importance. They cheer, refresh, and console. They thus fill a place in the wants of humanity which common articles of food cannot, inasmuch as they satisfy the cravings of the spirit as well as of the flesh.

We have before attempted to show that the human race is liable to a peculiar and constant waste from the development of the nervous system, and that the body has to answer for the labor of the mind. At first thought, we shall find it difficult to appreciate the endless vigilance and activity of the brain. Like the other organisms which possess a proper nervous system, man carries on the common organic processes of life with a regularity and unflinching accuracy which seem to verge on the mechanical forces, or to be, at least, automatic. All habitual voluntary acts by repetition become almost automatic, or require no perceptibly distinct impulse of the will. When we emerge from this necessary field of labor, we come to those functions peculiar to the proper brain. Here all is continual action. Thought, imagination, will, the conflicting passions, language, and even articulation, claim their first impulse from the nervous centre. The idlest reverie, as well as the most profound study, taxes the brain. That distinguishing attribute of man can almost never rest. In sleep, to be sure, we find a seeming exception. Then only its inferior portion remains necessarily at work to supervise the breathing function. Yet we know that we have often dreamed,—while we do not know how often we fail to recall our dreams. The duality of the cerebrum may also furnish a means of rest in all trivial mental acts. Still, the great demands of the mind upon the nervous tissues remain. And it is these losses which may be peculiarly supplied by the nervous stimulants. Such are coffee

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and tea. Common nutrition by common food, and particularly the adipose and phosphatic varieties, nourishes nerve tissue, no doubt, as gluten and fibrine do muscle. But the stimulants satisfy temporarily their pressing needs, and enable them to continue their labors without exhaustion. Reacting again upon the rest of the body, they invigorate the processes of ordinary nutrition; for whatever rests or stimulates the nerve proportionately refreshes and vitalizes the tissues which it supplies.

It would be curious and well worth while to follow out the peculiar connection between the use of coffee and the excretion of phosphorus, which has been before hinted at. Other experiments of Dr. Boecker prove sugar to be a great saver of the phosphates, and hence of bone,—which affords, at least, a very plausible reason for the instinctive fondness of children for sweets, during the building portion of their lives.

In exhausting labors, long-continued exposure, and to insure wakefulness, the uses of coffee and tea have long been practically recognized by all classes. The sailor, the trapper, and the explorer value them even above alcohol; and in high latitudes we are assured of their importance in bracing the system to resist the rigors of the Arctic winter.

There is of course, as in all human history, another side of this picture. Abuse follows closely after use. The effects of the excessive employment of nervous stimulants in shaking the nerves themselves, and in impairing digestion, are too familiar to need description. Yet even here abuse is not followed by those terrible penalties which await the drunkard or the opium-eater. Idiosyncrasy, too, may forbid their use; and this is not very rare. As strengtheners and comforters of the average human system, however, they have no superiors, and none others are so largely used.

It is a little singular that the active principles of coffee and tea are probably identical,—no more so, however, than the marvellous similarity of starch, gum, and sugar, or other chemical wonders. They have been called caffeine and theine, respectively. They are azotized, and contain quite a marked amount of nitrogen. Chemically, they consist of carbon 19, hydrogen 10, nitrogen 4, oxygen 4. Some allowance is therefore to be made for them as plastic food.

This peculiar principle (theine) is also found in the leaves of the *Ilex Paraguayensis*, or Paraguay tea, used in South America, as a beverage.

“Good black tea contains of theine from 2.00 to 2.13 per cent.  
Coffee-leaves contain of theine from 1.15 to 1.25 per cent.  
Paraguay tea contains of theine from 1.01 to 1.23 per cent.  
The coffee-berry a mean of 1.00 per cent.



“Besides the theine and the essential oils, which latter give the aroma of the plants, there is contained in both coffee and tea a certain amount of difficultly soluble vegetable albumen, and in the



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latter, especially, a large quantity of tannin. Roasting renders volatile the essential oil of the coffee-berry. The tea-leaf, infused for a short time, parts with its essential oil, and a small portion of alkaloid, (theine,) a good deal of which is thrown away with the grounds. If it stands too long, or is boiled, more indeed is got out of it, but an astringent, disagreeable drink is the result. The boiling of coffee extracts all its oil and alkaloid too, and, when it is drunk with the grounds, allows the whole nutriment to be available. Even when strained, it is clearly more economical than tea.”

Roasted coffee is a powerful deodorizer, also. This fact is familiarly illustrated by its use in bar-rooms; and it might be made available for other purposes.

The cost and vast consumption of coffee and tea have made the inducements to adulterate them very great. The most harmless form, is the selling of coffee-grounds and old tea-leaves for fresh coffee and tea. There is no security in buying coffee ready-ground; and we always look at the neat little packages of it in the grocers' windows with a shudder. Beans and peas we have certainly tasted in ground coffee. The most fashionable adulteration, and one even openly vaunted as economical and increasing the richness of the beverage, is with the root of the wild endive, or chicory. Roasted and ground, it closely resembles coffee. It contains, however, none of the virtues of the latter, and has nothing to recommend it but its cheapness. The leaves of the ash and the sloe are used to adulterate tea. They merely dilute its virtues, without adding any that are worth the exchange.

The coffee-tree is a native of Ethiopia or Abyssinia. Bruce tells us that the nomad tribes of that part of Africa carry with them, in crossing deserts on hostile expeditions, only balls of pulverized roasted coffee mixed with butter. One of these as large as a billiard-ball keeps them, they say, in strength and spirits during a whole day's fatigue, better than a loaf of bread or a meal of meat. The Arabs gave the first written account of coffee, and first used it in the liquid form. Burton, in his “Anatomy of Melancholy,” mentions it as early as 1621. “The Turks have a drink they call coffee, (for they use no wine,)—so named of a berry as black as soot, and as bitter, which they sip up as warm as they can suffer, because they find by experience that that kind of drink, so used, helpeth digestion and procureth alacrity.”

The coffee-tree reaches a height of from six to twelve feet, and when fully grown much resembles the apple-tree. Its leaves are green all the year; and in almost all seasons, blossoms and green and ripe fruit may be seen on the same tree at the same time. When the blossom falls, there springs from it a small fruit, green at first, red when ripe, and under its flesh, instead of a stone, is the bean or berry we call coffee. “It has but recently become known by Europeans



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that the leaves of the coffee-plant contain the same essential principle for which the berries are so much valued. In Sumatra, the natives scarcely use anything else. The leaves are cured like tea. And the tree will produce leaves over a much larger *habitat* than it will berries." Should the decoction of the leaves prove as agreeable as that of the berry, we shall have a much cheaper coffee; though it remains to be proved that they contain the essential oil as well as the caffeine.

The coffees of Java, Ceylon, and Mocha are most esteemed. The quantities produced are quite limited. Manila and Arabia together give less than 4,500 tons. Cuba yields 5,000 tons *per annum*; St. Domingo, 18,000; Ceylon and the British East Indies, 16,000; Java, 60,000; and Brazil, 142,000. Yet, in 1774, a Franciscan friar, named Villasó, cultivated a single coffee-tree in the garden of the convent of San Antonio, in Brazil. In the estimates for 1853, we find that Great Britain consumes 17,500 tons; France, 21,500; Germany, (Zollverein), 58,000; and the United States, about 90,000 tons. It is worth remarking how small is the comparative consumption of tea in France. The importation of tea for 1840 was only 264,000 kilogrammes (less than 600,000 pounds).

In Asia, coffee is drunk in a thick farinaceous mixture. With us the cup of coffee is valued by its clearness. We generally drink it with sugar and milk. The French with their meals use it as we do,—but after dinner, invariably without milk (*café noir*). And we would suggest to the nervous and the dyspeptic, who do not want to resign the luxury of coffee, or to whom its effects as an arrester of metamorphosis are beneficial, that when drunk on a full stomach its effects upon the nerves are much less felt than when taken fasting or with the meals.

In the consumption of tea the United States rank next to Great Britain. Tea is the chief import from China into this country. The tea-plant flourishes from the equator to the forty-fifth parallel of latitude; though it grows best between the twenty-third and the twenty-fifth parallels. Probably it can be successfully cultivated in our Southern States. Mr. Fortune considers that all varieties of tea are derived from the same plant. Other authorities say that there are two species, the green and the black,—*Thea viridis* and *Thea Bohea*. This point is yet unsettled. Tea is grown in small, shrub-like plantations, resembling vineyards. As it is a national beverage, certain localities are as much valued for choice varieties as are the famous vintage-hills and slopes of Southern France. The buds and the leaves are used; and there are three harvestings,—in February, April, and June. The young, unfolded buds of February furnish the "Youi" and "Soumlo," or "Imperial Teas." These are the delicate "Young Hysons" which we are supposed to buy sometimes, but most of which are consumed by the Mandarins. Souchong, Congo,



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and Bohea mark the three stages of increasing size and coarseness in the leaves. Black tea is of the lowest kind, with the largest leaves. In gathering the choicer varieties, we are told on credible authority that “each leaf is plucked separately; the hands are gloved; the gatherer must abstain from gross food, and bathe several times a day.” Many differences in the flavor and color of green and black teas are produced by art. Mr. Fortune says of green tea, that “it has naturally no bloom on the leaf, and a much more natural color. It is dyed with Prussian blue and gypsum. Probably no bad effects are produced. There is no foundation for the suspicion that green tea owes its verdure to an inflorescence acquired from plates of copper on which it is curled or dried. The drying-pans are said to be invariably of sheet-iron.” We drink our tea with milk or sugar, or both, and always in warm infusion. In Russia, it is drunk cold,—in China, pure; in Ava, it is used as a pickle preserved in oil.

It would be improper not to notice, finally, the moral effect of coffee- and tea-drinking. How much resort to stronger stimulants these innocent beverages prevent can be judged only by the weakness of human nature and the vast consumption of both.

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## MEN OF THE SEA.

When the little white-headed country-boy of an inland farmstead lights upon a book which shapes his course in life, five times out of six the volume of his destiny will turn out to be “Robinson Crusoe.” That wonderful fiction is one of the servants of the sea,—a sort of bailiff, which enters many a man’s house and singles out and seizes the tithe of his flock. Or rather, cunning old De Foe,—like Odusseus his helmet, wherewith he detected the disguised Achilles among the maids-of-honor,—by his magic book, summons to the service of the sea its predestined ones. Why is it, but from a difference in blood and soul, that the sea gets its own so surely? The farmer’s sons grow up about the fireside, do chores together, together range the woods for squirrels, woodchucks, chestnuts, and sassafras, go to the same “deestrick-school,” and succeed to the same ambitions and hopes. Reuben, the first-born, comes in due time to the care of the paternal acres and oxen. Simeon, Dan, Judah, Benjamin, and the rest, grow up and emigrate to Western clearings. Levi, it may be, pale, thoughtful Levi, sees other fields “white to harvest,” and struggles up through a New England academy- and college-education, to find a seat in the lecture-rooms of Andover, and to hope for a pulpit hereafter. But Joseph, the pet and pride of the household,—what becomes of him? Unlucky little duck! why could he not go “peeping” at the heels of the maternal parent with his brother and sister biddies? Why must he be born with webbed toes, and run at once to the wash-tub, there to make nautical experiments with walnut-shells?



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I know why the boys of a seaport-town take kindly to the water. All the birds of the shore are something marine, and their table-flavor is apt to be fishy. We youngsters, who were rocked to sleep with the roar of the surf in our ears,—one wall of whose play-room was colored in blue edged with white, in striking contrast with the peaceful green of the three other sides,—who have many a night lain warm in bed and listened to the distant roll of a sea-chorus and the swinging tramp of a dozen jolly blue-jackets,—we whose greatest indulgence was a sail with Old Card, *the* boatman *par excellence*,—we who knew ships, as the farmer's boy knows his oxen, before we had mastered the multiplication-table,—it is not strange that we should take kindly to salt water. So, too, all along the lovely “fiords” of Maine, in the villages which cluster about the headlands of Essex, in the brown and weather-mossed cottages which dot the white sands of Cape Cod, by the southern shore of Long Island, wherever the sea and the land meet, the boy grows up drawing into his lungs the salt air, which passes in Nature's mysterious alchemy into his blood, so that he can never wholly disown his birthright. But what is it that draws from the remote inland the predestinate children of the deep?

Poor little Joseph! he tries to slip along with the others; but when the holiday comes, instinct takes him straight to the mill-pond, there to construct forbidden rafts and adventure contraband voyages. The best-worn page of his Malte-Brun Geography is that which treats the youthful student to a packet-passage to England. He can tell the names of all islands, capes, and bays; but ask him the boundaries of Bohemia or Saxony, the capitals of Western States, and down he goes to the foot of the class. Thus it continues awhile, till, after a fracas at school, or a neglected duty on the farm, or similar severance of the bonds of home, Master Joe may be seen trudging along the dusty seaport-highway, in a passion of tears, but with a resolute heart, and an ever-deepening conviction that he must go on, and not back.

Then there is another class,—the poetical, dreamy adventurer, to whom the sea beckons in every white Undine that rises along the beaches of a moonlight night, to whom it calls in that mournful and magic undertone heard only by those who love and listen. These do not often run away to go to sea; they prefer to voyage genteelly in yachts or packet-ships, and, if the impulse be very strong, will get a commission in the navy. However, if circumstances compel a Tapleyan “coming out strong,” they will sometimes face their work, and that right nobly; for there is nowhere that gentle blood so tells as at sea. The utter absence of all sham or room for sham brings out true and noble qualities as well as mean and selfish ones. For ordinary work, one man's muscle is as good as another's. It is only when the time of trial comes,—when the volunteers are called to man the boat that is



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to venture through the wild seas to pick off the crew of a foundering wreck,—“when the jerking, slatting sail overhead must be got in somehow,” though topmast and yard and sail may go any minute,—when the quailing mate or frightened captain dares not *order* men to all but certain death, and still less dares to *lead*,—then it is, when the lives of all hang on the heroism of one, that the good blood will assert itself.

Then there is the class who are *sent* to sea,—scapegraces all. The alternative is not unfrequently the one of which Dr. Johnson chose the other side. The Doctor being *sans question* a landsman, *he* never saw, we warrant, any resemblance to fore and main and mizzen in the three spires of Litchfield. But the Doctor, not being a scamp, was not compelled to choose. Many another is not so well off. Like little boys who are sent to school, they learn what they learn from pretty much the same motive. Sometimes they turn out good and gallant men; but not often does it reform a man who is unfit for the shore to dispatch him to sea. If there are any vices he does not carry with him, they are commonly to be had dog- and dirt-cheap at the first port his ship makes.

Then, last of all, there is a large and increasing class who *get* to sea. They fall into the calling, they cannot tell how; they continue in it, they cannot tell why. Some have friends who would rescue them, if they could; others have no friend, no home, no nationality even, the pariahs of the sea, sullen, stupid, and broken-down, burnt-out shells of men, which the belaying-pin of some brutal or passionate mate crushes into sudden collapse, or which the hospital duly consigns to the potter's field.

There is a popular idea of the sailor, which, beginning at the lowest note of the gamut, with the theatrical and cheap-novelist mariner, runs up its do-re-mi with authors, preachers, public speakers, reformers, and legislators, but always in the wrong key. There is no use in making up an ideal of any class; but if you must have one, let it be of an extinct class. It does not much harm to construct horrible plesiosaurians from the petrified scales we dig out of a coal-mine or chalk-pit; but when it comes to idealizing the sea-serpent, who winters at the Cape Verds and summers at Nahant, it is a serious matter. For the love of Agassiz, give us true dimensions or none.

So, too, fancy Greeks and Romans may be ever preferable to the true Aristophanic or Juvenalian article,—imaginary Cavaliers or Puritans not at all hard to swallow,—but ideal sailors, why in the world must we bear them, when we can get the originals so cheaply? When the American “Beggar's Opera” was put upon the stage, “Mose” stepped forward, the very impersonation of the Bowery. If it was low, it was at least true, a social fact. But the stage sailor is not as near probability as even the stage ship or the theatrical ocean. He is



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a relic of the past,—a monstrous compound out of the imperfect gleanings of the Wapping dramatists of the last century. Yet all those who deal with this character of the sailor begin upon the same false notion. In their eyes the seaman is a good-natured, unsophisticated, frank, easy-going creature, perfectly reckless of money, very fond of his calling, unhappy on shore, manly, noble-hearted, generous to a degree inconceivable to landsmen. He is a child who needs to be put in leading-strings the moment he comes over the side, lest he give way to an unconquerable propensity of his to fry gold watches and devour bank-notes, *a la sandwich*, with his bread and butter.

With this theory in view, all sorts of nice schemes are set forward for the sailor, and endless are the dull and decorous substitutes for the merriment or sociability of his favorite boarding-house, and wonderful are the schemes which are to attract the nautical Hercules to choose the austere virtue and neglect the rollicking and easy-going vice. Beautiful on paper, admirable in reports, pathetic in speeches,—all pictorial with anchors and cables and polar stars, with the light-house of Duty and the shoals of Sin. But meanwhile the character of the merchant-marine is daily deteriorating. More is done for the sailor now by fifty times than was done fifty years ago; yet who will compare the crews of 1858 with those of 1808?

There are many reasons for this change, and one is Science. That which always makes the rich richer and the poor poorer, and which can be made to restore the lost equilibrium in a higher civilization only by the strong pressure of an enlightened Christianity, has been at work upon the sea. Columbus sailed out of Palos in a very different looking craft from the “Great Republic.” The Vikings had small knowledge of taking a lunar, and of chronometers set by Greenwich time. Sir Humphrey Gilbert, when he so gallantly and piously reminded his crew that “heaven was as near by sea as on land,” was sitting in the stern of a craft hardly so large as the long-boat of a modern merchantman. Yet the modern time does not give us commanders such as were of old, still less such seamen. Science has robbed the sea of its secret,—is every day bearing away something of the old difficulties and dangers which made the wisest head and the strongest arm so dear to their fellows, which gave that inexpressible sense of brotherhood. Science has given us the steamship,—it has destroyed the sailor. The age of discovery is closing with this century. Up to the limits of the ice-fields, every shore is mapped out, every shoal sounded. Not only does Science give the fixed, but she is even transferring to her charts the variable features of the deep,—the sliding current, the restless and veering wind.

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The personal qualities which were once needed for the sea-service are fast passing away. The commander or the master needs no longer to lean upon his men, or they to trust in him. He wants drudges, not shipmates,—obedient, active drudges,—men who can be drilled to quick execution of duty, even as in a machine the several parts. The navy is manned after this pattern; but there is a touchstone which sharpens the edge dulled with routine,—the touchstone of war. When the time comes that the drum-tap calls to quarters, and the decks are strewn with sand,—when with silence as of the grave, fore and aft, the frigate moves stately and proud into the line of her adversaries' fire, then it is that the officer and the man meet face to face, and the awful truth of battle compels them to own their common brotherhood. The merchant-service has few such exigencies. The greater the size of the ship, the greater the number of the crew. The system of shipping-offices and outfitters breaks up almost all the personal contact between master and men. They come on board at the hour of sailing. A gang of riggers, stevedores, or lightermen work the vessel into the stream. A handful of boosy wretches are bundled into the forecastle, and as many more rolled, dead-drunk, into their bunks, to sleep off their last spree. The mates are set to the task of dragooning into order the unruly mass. Half the men have spent their advance, and mean to run as soon as the ship arrives. They intend to do as little as they can,—to “soger,” and shirk, and work against the ship all they can. The captain cares only to make a quick passage and get what he can out of the crew. Community of interest there is none. Brutal authority is pitted against sullen discontent.

In the old days of the little white-headed farmer's boy's dreams, there were discovery and trading-ships sailing into unknown seas, and finding fairy islands never visited before. There were savages to trade with,—to fight with, it might be. There were a thousand perils and adventures that called for all the manly and ennobling qualities both of generous command and loyal obedience. It was a point of honor to stick by ship and captain while ship and captain remained to stick by; for the success of a voyage depended on such mutual trust and help. But now where is the sea's secret? There is hardly a square league of water which has not been sailed over. Find an island large enough to land a goat upon, and you will find it laid down in the charts,—and, if it be only far enough south, a Stonington sealer at anchor under its lee, or a New Bedford whaler's crew ashore picking up drift-wood. Where are the old dangers of the sea? We are fast learning to calculate for the storms, and to run from them. Steam-frigates have ended forever the pirates of the Spanish Main. The long, low, black schooner, which could sail dead to windward through the pages of the cheap “yellow-covers,” and the likeness of which sported its skull and crossbones on the said covers, is to be met with nowhere else. Neither the Isle of Pines nor the numberless West India keys know her or her romantic commander any more.



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The relations of trade, too, have changed with the changes of Science. We were once gathered with the group of travellers who are wont to smoke the cigar of peace beside the pilot-house of one of our noble Sound steamers. As we rounded the Battery and sped swiftly up the East River, the noblest avenue of New York, lined with the true palaces of her merchant-princes,—an avenue which by its solid and truthful architecture half atones for the flimsiness of its land structures,—as we passed the ocean steamships lying at the “Hook,” the sea-captains about me began to talk of the American triumphs of speed. “They say to the Englishmen now,” said one, “that we’re going to take the berths out of the ‘Pacific.’” (She had just made the then crack passage.) “When the English fellows ask, ‘What for?’—they say, ‘Because Collins intends to run her for a day-boat.’” This extravaganza raised a laugh; but one of the older brethren shook his head solemnly and sadly. “It’s all very well,” said he; “but what with a steamer twice a week, and your telegraph to New Orleans, they know what’s going on at Liverpool as well as if they were at Prince’s Dock. It don’t pay now to lay a week alongside the levee on the chance of five cents for cotton.”

It was a text that suggested a long homily. The shipmaster was degraded from his old position of the merchant’s friend, confidential agent, and often brother-merchant. He was to become a mere conductor, to take the ship from port to port. No longer identified with the honor and success of a great and princely house, with the old historic kings of the Northwest Coast, or of Canton, or of Calcutta, he sinks into a mere navigator, and a smuggler of Geneva watches or Trench embroideries.

We state facts. Thus much has Science done to deteriorate the men of the sea. It has robbed them of all the noblest parts of their calling. It has taken away the spirit of adventure, the love of enterprise, and the manly spirit which braved unknown dangers. It has destroyed their interest by its new-modelling of trade; it has divided labor, and is constantly striving to solve the problem, How to work a ship without requiring from the sailor any courage or head-work, or anything, in short, but mere muscle. It interferes with the healthful relations of officer and man. The docks of Liverpool are a magnificent work, but they necessitate the driving of the seaman from his ship into an atmosphere reeking with pollution. The steam-tugs of New York are a wonderful convenience, but they help to further many a foul scheme of the Cherry-Street crimps and land-sharks.

For all this Science owes a remedy. It must be in a scientific way. We have indicated some of the leading causes of the decline of the seaman’s character. The facts are very patent. Step into any shipping-office, or consult any sea-captain of your acquaintance, and you will have full evidence of what we say.



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The remedy must not be outside the difficulty. You may build “Bethels” into which the sailor won’t come, and “Homes” where he won’t stay, distribute ship-loads of tracts, and scatter Bibles broadcast, but you will still have your work to do. The Bethel, the Home, and the Bible are all right, but they are for the shore, and the sailor’s home is on the sea. It points an address prettily, no doubt, to picture a group of pious sailors reading their Bibles aloud of a Sunday afternoon, and entertaining each other with profound theological remarks, couched in hazy nautical language. But what is the real truth of the case? It may be a ship close-hauled, with Cape Horn under her lee,—all hands on deck for twelve hours,—sleet, snow, and storm,—the slide over the fore-castle hatchway,—no light below by which to make out a line even of the excellent type of the American Bible Society, and on deck a gale blowing that would take the leaves bodily out of any book short of a fifteenth-century folio,—this, with the men now reefing and now shaking out topsails and every other thing, as the gale rages or lulls, in the hope of working to windward of certain destruction.

The remedy, to be effectual, must touch the seaman’s calling. It is of no use to appeal to his better nature, if he hasn’t any. If you make a drudge and a beast of him, you can’t do him much good by preaching at him. The working of the present system is, that there are afloat a set of fellows who are a sort of no-countrymen. Like the beach-combers of the Pacific, they have neither country, home, nor friends, and are as different from the old class of American sailors as the *condottiere* from the loyal soldier. Let the navigation-laws be enforced first of all, and see that the due proportion of the crews of every ship be native-born. Let the custom-house protections be no longer the farce they are,—where a man who talks of “awlin haft the main tack” is set down as a native of Martha’s Vineyard, and his messmate, who couldn’t say “peas” without betraying County Cork, is permitted to hail from the interior of Pennsylvania. Let the ship-owners combine (it is for their interest) to do away with the whole body of shipping-agents, middlemen, and land-sharks. Jack will take his pleasure ashore,—you can’t help that; and perhaps so would you, Sir, after six months of “old horse” and stony biscuit, with a leaky fore-castle and a shorthanded crew. Jack will take his pleasure, and that in ways we may all of us object to; but, for Heaven’s sake, break up a system of which the whole object is to degrade the man into the mere hack of a set of shore harpies. Do not leave him in the hands of those whom you are now permitting to combine with you to clear him out as swiftly as possible, and then dispatch him to sea. Let the captains ship their own crews on board the ship, and do away with the system of advances. But, at any rate, do learn to treat the sailor as if he were not altogether a fool. He has sense,



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plenty of it, shrewd, strong, common sense, and more real gentlemanly feeling than we on shore generally suppose, a good deal of faith, and certain standing principles of seamorality. But at the same time he has prejudices and whims utterly unaccountable to men living on shore. He will forfeit one or two hundred dollars of wages to run from a ship and captain with which he can find no fault. He will ship the next day in a worse craft for smaller wages. You cannot understand his impulses and moods and grievances till you see them from a forecastle point of view.

It may be that Science will solve the riddle by casting aside the works and improvements of a thousand years,—the “wave line,” the spar, the sail, and all,—and with them the men of the sea. It may be that “Leviathans” will march unheedingly *through* the mountain waves,—that steam and the Winans’s model will obliterate old inventions and labors and triumphs. Blake and Raleigh and Frobisher and Dampier may be known no more. The poetry and the mystery of the sea may perish altogether, as they have in part. Out of the past looks a bronzed and manly face; along the deck of a phantom-ship swings a square and well-knit form. I hear, in memory, the ring of his cheerful voice. I see his alert and prompt obedience, his self-respecting carriage, and I know him for the man of the sea, who was with Hull in the “Constitution” and Porter in the “Essex.” I look for him now upon the broad decks of the magnificent merchantmen that lie along the slips of New York, and in his place is a lame and stunted, bloated and diseased wretch, spiritless, hopeless, reckless. Has he knowledge of a seaman’s duty? The dull sodden brain can carry the customary orders of a ship’s duty, but more than that it cannot. Has he hopes of advancement? His horizon is bounded by the bar and the brothel. A dog’s life, a dog’s berth, and a dog’s death are his heritage.

The old illusion still prevails and has power over little towheaded Joseph on the Berkshire interval. It will not prevail much longer. It is fast yielding to the power of facts. The Joes of next year may run from home in obedience to the planetary destiny which casts their horoscope in Neptune, but they will not run to the forecastle. We shall have officers and men of a different class,—the Spartan on the quarter-deck, the Helot in the forecastle. We have it now. A story of brutal wrong on shipboard startles the public. A mutiny breaks out in the Mersey, and a mate is beaten to death, and we wonder why the service is so demoralized. The story could be told by a glance at the names upon the shipping-papers. The officers are American,—the men are foreigners, blacks, Irish, Germans, non-descripts, but hopelessly severed from the chances of the quarter-deck. The law may interpose a strong arm, and keep the officer from violence, the men from mutiny. We may enact a Draconian code which shall maintain a sullen and revengeful order upon the seas, but all fellowship



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and mutual helpfulness are gone. When the day of trial comes,—the wreck, the fire, the leak,—subordination is lost, and every man scrambles for his own selfish safety, leaving women and children to the flames and the waves. Why is it that ships, dismasted, indeed, but light and staunch, are so often found rolling abandoned on the seas? It is the daily incident of our marine columns. I have been told by an old shipmaster, how, when he was a young mate, his ship was dismasted on the Banks of Newfoundland, on a voyage to Europe. The captain had been disabled and the vessel was leaking. He came into command. But in those days men never dreamed of leaving their ship till she was ready to leave them. They rigged jury-masts, and, under short canvas and working at the pumps, brought their craft to the mouth of Plymouth Harbor. The pilot demanded salvage, and was refused leave to come on board. The mate had been into that port before, was a good seaman and a sharp observer, and he took his vessel safely to her anchorage himself, rather than burden his owners with a heavy claim. Captains and mates will not now-a-days follow that lead, because they cannot trust their men, because with every emergency the *morale* of the forecastle is utterly gone.

For all this there is of course no universal panacea. Nor do I believe that legislation will much help the matter. The common-law of the seas, well carried out by competent courts of admiralty, is better than many statutes. For emergencies require extraordinary powers and a wide discretion. There can be no divided rule in a ship. But if every man know his place and his duty, and none overstep it, there will come thereof successful and happy voyages. There must be discipline, subordination, and law. The republican theory stops with the shore. "Obey orders, though you break owners," is the Magna Charta of the main. This can be well and wisely carried out only with some homogeneity of the ship's company, with a community of feeling and a community of interest. Everybody who has been off soundings knows, or ought to know, the difference between things "done with a will" and "sogering." If it be important on land to adjust the relations of employer and employed, it is doubly important on the sea, where the peril and the privation are great. For it is a hard life, a life of unproductive toil, that oftenest shows no results while accomplishing great ends. It cannot be made easy. The gale and the lee-shore are the same as when the sea-kings of old dared them and did battle with them in the heroic energy of their old Norse blood. The wet, the cold, the exposure must be, since you cannot put a Chilson's furnace into a ship's forecastle, nor wear India-rubbers and carry an umbrella when you go aloft. But men will brave all such discomforts and the attendant perils with a hearty delight, if you will train up the right spirit in them. Better the worst night that ever darkened off Hatteras, than



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the consumption-laden atmosphere of the starving journeyman-tailor's garret, the slow inhalation of pulverized steel with which the needle-maker draws his every breath! The sea's work makes a man, and leaves him with his duty nobly done, a man at the last. Courage, loyal obedience, patient endurance, the abnegation of selfishness,—these are the lessons the sea teaches. Why must the shore make such diabolical haste and try such fiendish ingenuity to undo them? The sea is pure and free, the land is firm and stable,—but where they meet, the tide rises and falls, leaving a little belt of sodden mud, of slippery, slimy weeds, where the dead refuse of the sea is cast up to rot in the hot sun. Something such is the welcome the men of the sea get from that shore which they serve. Into this Serbonian bog between them and us we let them flounder, instead of building out into their domain great and noble piers and wharves, upon which they can land securely and come among us.

Some years ago, a young scholar was led to step forth from his natural sphere into the fore-castle of a merchantman. No quarrel with the world, no romantic fancy, drove him thither, but a plain common-sense purpose. He saw what he saw fairly, and he has told the tale in a volume which, for picturesque clearness, vigor, and manly truthfulness, will scarcely find its equal this side the age of Elizabeth. He owed it to the sea, for the sea gave him health, self-reliance, and fearlessness, and that persistent energy which saved him from becoming that which elegant tastes and native refinement make of too many of our young men, a mere literary or social *dilettante*, and raised him up to be a champion of right, a chivalrous defender of the oppressed, whose name has honored his calling. His book was an effort in the right direction. By that we of the land were brought nearer to those to whom this country owes so much, its merchant-seamen. But we want more than the work, however noble, of one man. We want the persistent and Christian interest in the elevation of the seaman of every man who is connected with his calling. We do not want a Miss-Nancyish nor Rosa-Matildan sentimentalism, but a good, earnest, practical handling of the matter. We call our merchants princes. If wealth and lavish expenditure make the prince, they are, indeed, fit peers of Esterhazy or Lichtenstein. But the true princely heart looks after the humblest of its subjects. When the poor of Lyons were driven from their homes by the flooded Rhone, Louis Napoleon urged his horse breast-deep into the tide to see with his own eyes that his people were thoroughly rescued. The merchant whose clippers have coined him gold should spare more than a passing thought upon the men who hung over the yards and stood watchful at the wheel. England's earls can afford to look after the toiling serfs in their collieries; the patricians of New York and Boston might read as startling a page as ever darkened a Parliamentary Blue-book, with a single glance into Cherry and Ann Streets.



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For a thousand years the Anglo-Saxon race has been sending its contributions to the nation of the Men of the Sea. Ever since the Welshman paddled his coracle across Caernarvon Bay, and Saxon Alfred mused over the Danish galley wrecked upon his shore, each century has been adding new names of fame to the Vikings' bead-roll. Is the list full? has Valhalla no niche more for them? and must the men of the sea pass away forever? If it must be so,—it must. *Che sara sara*. But if there is no overruling Fate in this, but only the working of casual causes, it is somebody's care that they be removed. In almost all handicrafts and callings the last thirty years have wrought a vast and rapid deterioration of the men who fill them. Machinery, the boasted civilizer, is the true barbarizer. The sea has not escaped. Its men are not what the men of old were. The question is, Can we let them go?—can they be dispensed with among the elements of national greatness?

Passing fair is Venice, but she sits in lonely widowhood in the deserted Adriatic. Amalfi crouches under her cliffs in the shame of her poverty. The harbors of Tyre and Carthage are lonesome pools. They tell their own story. When the men of the sea no longer find a home or a welcome on the shore,—when they are driven to become the mere hirelings who fight the battles of commerce, like other hirelings they will serve beneath the flag where the pay and the provant are most abundant. The vicissitudes of traffic are passing swift in these latter days; and it does not lie beyond the reach of a possible future that the great commercial capitals of the Atlantic coast may be called to pause in their giddy race, even before they have rebuilt the Quarantine Hospital, or laid the capstone of the pharos of Minot's Ledge.

\* \* \* \* \*

### CHICADEE.

The song-sparrow has a joyous note,  
The brown thrush whistles bold and free;  
But my little singing-bird at home  
Sings a sweeter song to me.

The cat-bird, at morn or evening, sings  
With liquid tones like gurgling water;  
But sweeter by far, to my fond ear,  
Is the voice of my little daughter.

Four years and a half since she was born,  
The blackcaps piping cheerily,—  
And so, as she came in winter with them,  
She is called our Chicadee.



She sings to her dolls, she sings alone,  
And singing round the house she goes,—  
Out-doors or within, her happy heart  
With a childlike song o'erflows.

Her mother and I, though busy, hear,—  
With mingled pride and pleasure listening,—  
And thank the inspiring Giver of song,  
While a tear in our eye is glistening.

Oh! many a bird of sweetest song  
I hear, when in woods or meads I roam;  
But sweeter by far than all, to me,  
Is my Chicadee at home.



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THE ILLUSTRIOUS OBSCURE.

A SECOND LETTER FROM PAUL POTTER, OF NEW YORK, TO THE DON ROBERTO WAGONERO, COMMORANT OF WASHINGTON, IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.

22,728, Five Hundred and Fifty-First St., } New York, June 1, 1858. }

Dear Don Bobus,—I see that you have been Christian enough to send my last letter to “The Atlantic Monthly,” and that the editors of that famous work have confirmed my opinion of their high taste by printing it. Your disposition of my MSS. I do not quarrel with; although it must be regarded in law as an illegal liberty, inasmuch as the Court of Chancery has decided that a man does not part with property in his own letters merely by sending them; but I ask permission to hint that your conduct will acquire a certain graceful rotundity, if you will remit to me in current funds the munificent sum of money which the whole-souled and gentlemanly proprietors—pardon the verbal habits of my humble calling!—have without doubt already remitted to you. *Pecunia prima quaerenda, virtus post nummos*. Mind you, I do not expect to be as well paid as Sannazarius.

“Who the deuse was he?” I hear you growling.

My dear Iberian friend, I really thought that you knew everything; but I find that you have set up for an Admirable Crichton upon an inadequate capital. Know, then, that a great many years ago Sannazarius—never mind who he was,—I do not justly know, myself—wrote an hexastich on the city of Venice, and sent it to the potent Senators of that moist settlement. It was as follows:—

“Viderat Adriacis Venetam Neptunus in undis  
Stare urbem et toti ponere jura mari.  
Nunc mihi Tarpeias quantumvis, Jupiter, arces,  
Objice, et ilia tui moenia Martis, ait;  
Sic Pelago Tibrim praefers; urbem aspice utramque,  
Illam homines dices, hanc posuisse deos.”

Which may be liberally rendered thus:—

When sea-faring Neptune saw Venice well-founded  
And stiffly coercing the Adrian main,  
The jolly tar cried, in a rapture unbounded:  
“Why, d—ash my eyes, Jove, but I have you again;  
You may boast of your city, and Mars of his walling;  
But while I’m afloat, I’ll stick to it that mine



Beats yours into rope-yarn in spite of your bawling,  
Just as snuffy old Tiber is flogged by the brine;  
And he who the difference cannot discern  
Is a lob-sided lubber from bowsprit to stern.

“Very free, indeed!” you will say. It might have been worse, if I had staid at college a year or two longer, or if I had been elevated to a place in the Triennial Catalogue,—thus:



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PAULUS POTTER, LL.D., S.T.D.; Barat. V. Gubernator, Lit. Hum. Prof., e Cong., Praeses Rerumpub. Foed., A.B. Yal., M.D. Dart., D.D. Dart., P.D. V. Mon., etc., etc., etc.

I have put myself down *stelliger*, because it is certain, that, after obtaining all the above honors, if not an inmate of the cold and silent tomb, I should be false to my duties as a member of society, and a nuisance to my fellow-creatures. The little anachronism of translating after being translated you will also pardon; and talking of the tomb, let us return to Sannazarius. I pray that your nicely noble nose may not be offended by the tarry flavor of my version. You will find the Latin in Howell's "Survey of Venice," 1651, —a book so thoroughly useless, and so scarce withal, that I am sure it must be in your library. By the way, as you have written travels in all parts of this and other worlds, without so much as stirring from your arm-chair, and have calmly and coolly published the same, I must quote to you the rebuke of Howell, who says, "He would not have adventured upon the remote, outlandish subject, had he not bin himself upon the place; had he not had practical conversation with the people of whom he writes." This veracious person very properly dedicated his book to the saints in Parliament assembled, many of whom had, soon after, ample leisure for perusing the fat folio. Nor is it perfectly certain that you have read the book, although you may own it; since it is your sublime pleasure to collect books like Guiccardini's History, which somebody went to the galleys rather than read through.

But let us return, my dear Bobus, to the money question. Know, then, that the Sannazarian performance above quoted, so different from the language of the malignant and turbaned Turks, filled with rapture the first Senator and the second Senator and all the other Senators mentioned in Act I., Scene 3, of "Othello," so that, in grand committee, and, for all I know to the contrary, with Brabantio in the chair, they voted to the worthy author a reward of three hundred zechins, or, to state it cambistically in our own beloved Columbian currency, \$1,233.20,—this being the highest literary remuneration upon record, if we except the untold sums lavished by "The New York Blotter" upon the fascinating author of "Steel and Strychnine; or, the Dagger and the Bowl." But as we have had enough of Sannazarius, let us leave him with the gentle hope that his check was cashed in specie at the Rialto Bank, and that he made a good use of the money.

Now, dear Don, in the great case of Virtue vs. Money, I appear for the defendant. Confound Virtue, say I, and the whole tribe of the Virtuous! I am as weary of both as was that sensible Athenian of hearing Aristides called *The Just*; and if I had been there, and a legal voter, I know into which box my humble oyster-shell would have been plumped. Such was the vile, self-complacent habit of the Athenians,



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that I suspect the best fellows then were not good fellows at all. And what did the son of Lysimachus make by being recalled from banishment? He died so poor, that he was buried at the public charge, and left a couple of daughters as out-door pensioners upon public charity. The Athenians, I aver, were a duncified race; and it would have pleased me hugely to have been in the neighborhood when Alcibiades rescinded his dog's charming tail,—a fine practical protest, although unpleasant to the dog. Virtue may be well enough by way of variety; but for a good, steady, permanent pleasure, commend me to Avarice! Yes, O my Bobus, I, who was once, as to money, "still in motion of raging waste," and, like Timon, "senseless of expense,"—I, who have many a time borrowed cash of you with amiable recklessness, and have never asked you to take it back again,—I, who have had many a race with the constable, and have sometimes been overtaken,—I, who have in my callow days spoken disrespectfully of Mammon in several charming copies of verses,—I am waxing sordid. I am for the King of Lydia against Solon. How do I know that the insolent Cyrus was not blandished out of his bloodthirsty intention of roasting his deposed brother by a little cash which the son of Gyges had saved out of the wide, weltering wreck of his wealth, and had concealed in his boots? Royal palms were not wholly free from *pruritus* even then. Why has this silly world still persisted in putting long ears upon Midas? I do not know whether he sang better or worse than Apollo; and I am sure it is much better, and bespeaks more sense, to play the flute ill than to play it well. Depend upon it, his Majesty of Phrygia has been very much abused by the mythologists. With that particular skill of his, during an epidemic of the *brevitas pecuniaria*, (*Angl.* shorts,) he would have been just the person to coax into one's house of accompt, at five minutes before two o'clock in the afternoon, to work a little involuntary transmutation,—to change the coal-scuttle into ingots, and the ruler into a great, gorged, glittering *rouleau*. So little would his auricular eccentricity have hindered his welcome, that I verily believe he would have been heartily received, if he had come with ensanguined chaps straight from the pillory, and had left both ears nailed to the post.

Don't talk to me about filthy lucre! Pray, when would Sheikh Tahar, that eminent Koordish saint, have become convinced that he was a great sinner, if they had not carried about the contribution-boxes in the little New England churches? Do you think it has cost nothing to demonstrate to the widows of Scindiah the folly of *suttee*? Don't you know that it has been an expensive work to persuade the Khonds of Goomsoor to give up roasting each other in the name of Heaven? Very fine is Epictetus,—but wilt he be your bail? Will Diogenes bring home legs of mutton? Can you breakfast upon the simple



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fact that riches have wings and use them? Can you lunch upon *vanitas vanitatum*? Are loaves and fishes intrinsically wicked? As for Virtue, we have the opinion of Horace himself, that it is viler than the vilest weed, without fortune to support it. Poets, of all men, are supposed to live most easily upon air; and yet, Don Bob, is not a fat poet, like Jamie Thomson, quite likely, although plumper than beseems a bard, to be ten thousand times healthier in his singing than my Lord Byron thinning himself upon cold potatoes and vinegar? Do you think that Ovid cuts a very respectable figure, blubbing on the Euxine shore and sending penitential letters to Augustus and afterward to Tiberius? He was a poor puppy, and as well deserved to have three wives as any sinner I ever heard of. Don't you think, that, if the cities of Smyrna, Chios, Colophon, Salamis, Rhodes, Argos, and Athens had given over disputing about the birthplace of the author of the "Iliad" and other poems, and had "pooled in" a handsome sum to send him to a blind asylum, it would have been a sensible proceeding? Do you think Milton would have written less sublimely, if he had been more prosperous? Do you think Otway choking, or Hudibras Butler dying by inches of slow starvation, pleasant to look upon? Are we to keep any terms with the thin-visaged jade, Poverty, after she has broken down a great soul like John Dryden's? That is a very foolish notion which has so long and so universally prevailed, that a poet must, by the necessity of the case, be poor. David was reckoned an eminent bard in his day, and he was a king; and Solomon, another sweet singer, was a king also. Depend upon it, no man sings, or thinks, or, if he be a man, works, the worse for being tolerably provided for in basket and pocket-money.

Objectively considered, I say that there is not in this world a sadder sight, one so touchingly suggestive of departed joys, departed never to return, as a pocketbook, flat, planed, exenterated, crushed by the elephantine foot of Fate,—nor is there one so ridiculous, inutile, impertinent, possibly reproachful and disagreeably didactic. Think of it, Don Bob,—for you in your day, as I in mine, have seen it. 'Tis so much leather stripped from the innocent beast, and cured and colored and polished and stamped to no purpose,—with a prodigious show of empty compartments, like banquet-halls deserted. It has a clasp to mount guard over nothing,—a clasp made of steel digged from the bowels of the earth, and smelted and hammered and burnished, only to keep watch and ward after the thief has made his visit leisurely. 'Tis an egregious chaos. 'Tis an absurd vacuum. To make it still more unpleasant, there are your memoranda. You are reminded that upon Thursday last you purchased butter flavous, or chops rosy; but where is hint, sign, direction, or instruction touching the purchase of either upon Thursday next? How much would it have helped poor Belisarius, in his sore estate,



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if he had kept a record of his household expenses, as my friend Minimus does? By the same token, he sometimes makes odd misentries, pious figurative fictions, in order to save the feelings of Mrs. Minimus, who is auditor-general and comptroller of the household. And speaking of Belisarius, just fancy the hard fate of that gallant and decayed soldier! Figure him left naked by the master whom he had served so well, crying out for a beggarly *obolus*! Now this, you must know, was one of the least respectable coins of ancient times, being of about the value of one farthing sterling. If the poor man had got his battered old helmet full of them, the ponderous alms would not have driven the wolf gaunt and grinning many paces from his squalid home,—always admitting that he had any home, however squalid, to crawl into at sunset. And how often he crouched and whined, white-headed and bare-headed all day, and did not get a *lepton* (which was, in value, thirty-one three hundred thirty-sixths of an English farthing) for his pains! 'Tis such a pitiful story, that I am truly glad that the eminent German scholar, Nicotinus of Heidelberg, in his work upon the Greek Participle, has pretty clearly shown (Vol. xxviii. pp. 2850 to 5945) that the story may be regarded as a myth, illustrating the great, eternal, and universal danger of ultimate seediness, in which the most prosperous creatures live. And just think of Napoleon squabbling about wine with Sir Hudson Lowe,—the hero of Areola, without courage enough to hang himself. Now you will notice, my dear friend, that he did not lose his dignity, until, with true British instinct, they took away his cash, and even opened his letters to confiscate his remittances. He should have hidden the imperial spoons in a secret pocket. He should, at least, have saved a sixpence wherewithal to buy Mr. Alison.

You may think, dear Don, that my views are exceedingly sordid. I readily admit that all the philosophy and poetry, and I suppose I must add the morality, of the world are against me. I know that it is prettier to turn up one's nose at ready cash. I have not found, indeed, that for the poetical pauper, in his proper person, the world, whether sentimental or stolid, has any deep reverence. Will old Jacob Plum, who lives on an unapproachably high avenue,—his house front and his heart of the same material,—and who made two mints of money in the patent *poudrette*, come to my shabby little attic in Nassau Street, and ask me to dinner simply because "The Samos (III.) Aristarchean" has spoken with condescending blandness of my poems? I know that Miss Plum dotes upon my productions. I know that she pictures me to herself as a Corydon in sky-blue smalls and broad-brimmed straw hat, playing elegies in five flats, or driving the silly sheep home through the evening shades. Now, whatever else I may be, I am not that. I keep my refinement for gala-days; I do not shave, because I would save sixpences; I do not



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wear purple and fine linen. I should be a woful disappointment to Mistress Plum: for I like beer with my beef, and a heart-easing tug at my pipe afterwards; and as for the album, we should never get along at all, for I have too much respect for poetry to write it for nothing. But if I have not wholly escaped the shiftlessness and improvidence of my vocation,—if I have never rightly comprehended the noble maxim, “A penny saved is a penny gained,” (which cannot in rigid mathesis be true, because by saving the penny you miss the enjoyment: that is, half-and-half, chops, or cheese, which the penny aforesaid would purchase; so that the penny saved is no better than pebbles which you may gather by the bushel upon any shore,)—if I like to haunt Old Tom’s, and talk of politics and poetry with the dear shabby set who nightly gather there, and are so fraternally blind to the holes in each other’s coats,—why it is all a matter between myself and Mrs. Potter, and perhaps the clock. We have a good, stout, manly supper,—no Apician kickshaws, the triumphs of palate-science,—no nightingales’ tongues, no peacocks’ brains, no French follies,—but just a rasher or so, in its naked and elegant simplicity. Montaigne’s cook, who treated of his art with a settled countenance and magisterial gravity, would have turned his nose skyward at our humble repast; and he would have cast like scorn upon that to which Milton with such charming grace invited his friend, in one of those matchless sonnets which make us weep to think that the author did not write a hundred of them. But Montaigne’s cook may follow his first master, the late Cardinal Caraffa, to that place where there will always be fire for his saucepans! The epicures of Old Tom’s would deal very crisply with that spit-bearing Italian, or his shade, should it appear to them. We are not very polished, but most of us could give hints to men richer than we can hope to be of a wiser use of money than the world is in any danger of witnessing. There is Old Sanders, the proof-reader,—“Illegitimate S.” we call him,—who knows where there is an exquisite black-letter Chaucer which he pants to possess, and which he would possess, were it not for a fear of Mrs. Sanders and a tender love of the little Sanderses. There is young Smooch,—he who smashed the Fly-Gallery in “The Mahlstick” newspaper, and was not for a moment taken in by the new Titian. There is Crosshatch, who has the marvellous etching by Rembrandt, of which there are only three copies in the world, and which he will not sell,—no, Sir,—not to the British Museum. There is Mr. Brevier Lead, who has in my time successively and successfully smitten and smashed all the potentates, big and little, of Europe, and who has in his museum a wooden model of the Alsop bomb. Give them money, and Sanders will rebuild and refurnish the Alexandrian Library,—Smooch will bid every young painter in America reset his palette and try again,—and Brevier Lead will be fool enough to start a newspaper upon his own



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account, and, while his purse holds out to bleed, will make it a good one. But until all these high and mighty things happen,—until we come into our property,—we must make the best of matters. I know a clever Broadway publisher, who, if I were able to meet the expenses, would bring out my minor poems in all the pomp of cream-laid paper, and with all the circumstance of velvet binding, with illustrations by Darley, and with favorable notices in all the newspapers. I should cut a fine figure, metaphorically, if not arithmetically speaking; whereas my farthing rush-light is now sputtering, clinkering, and guttering to waste, and all because I have not a pair of silver snuffers. If you wish me to move the world, produce your lever! Your wealthy bard has at least audience; and if he cannot sing, he may thank his own hoarse throat, and not the Destinies.

For myself, dear Don Bob, having come into my inheritance of oblivion while living,—having in vain called upon Fame to sound the trumpet, which I am sure is so obstinately plugged that it will never syllable my name,—having resolutely determined to be nobody,—I do not waste my sympathy upon myself, but generously bestow it upon a mob of fine fellows in all ages, who deserved, but did not grasp, a better fortune. All that live in human recollection are but a handful to the tribes that have been forgotten. You will be kind enough, my sardonic friend, to repress your sneers. I tell you that a great many worthy gentlemen and ladies have been shouldered out of the Pantheon who deserved at least a corner, and who would not while living have given sixpence to insure immortality, so certain were they of monuments harder than brass. The murrain among the poets is the severest. For, in the first place, a fine butterfly may have a pin stuck through his stomach even while living. There are Bavius and Maevius, who have been laughed at since Virgil wrote his Third Eclogue. Now why does the world laugh? What does the world know of either? They were stupid and malevolent, were they? Pray, how do you know that they were? You have Virgil's word for it. But how do you know that Virgil was just? It might have been the east wind; it might have been an indigestion; it might have been Virgil's vanity; it might have been all a mistake. When a man has once been thoroughly laughed down, people take his stupidity for granted; and although he may grow as wise as Solomon, living he is considered a fool, dying he is regarded as a fool, and dead he is remembered as a fool. Do you not suppose that very responsible folk were pilloried in the "Dunciad"? My own opinion is, that a person must have had some merit, or he would not have been put there at all. How many of those who laugh at Dennis and Shadwell know anything of either? And let me ask you if the Pope set had such a superabundance of heart, that you would have been willing, with childlike confidence, to submit your own verses to their criticism? For myself, I am free to say that I have no patience with satirists. I never knew a just one. I never heard of a fair one. They are a mean, malicious, murdering tribe,—they are a supercilious, dogmatical, envious, suspicious company,—knocking down their fellow-creatures in the name of Virtue for their own gratification,—mere Mohawks, kept by family influence out of the lock-up.



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But of all Mohawks, Time is the fiercest. If I were upon the high road to fame, if I had honestly determined to win immortality or perish in the attempt, I should look upon the gentleman with no clothing except a scanty forelock, and with no personal property save his scythe and hour-glass, as my greatest enemy,—and I should behold the perpetual efforts made to kill him with perfect complacency. This, I know, is not regarded as a strictly moral act; for this murderer of murderers is very much caressed by those who, in the name of Moses, would send a poor devil to his hempen destiny for striking an unlucky blow. How continually is it beaten upon the juvenile tympanum,—“Be careful of Time,”—“Time is money,”—“Make much of Time”! Certainly, I do not know what he has done to merit consideration so tender. The best that can be said of old Edax Rerum is that he has an unfailing appetite, and is not very fastidious about his provender,—and that, if he does take heavy toll of the wheat, he also rids the world of no small amount of chaff. But 'tis such a prodigious maw!

You think, Don Bob, that you know the name of every man who has distinguished himself since the days of Deucalion and Pyrrha. Let us see how much you know. I believe that in your day you had something to do with the new edition of the Aldine Poets. I therefore ask you, in the name of an outraged gentleman, who is too dead to say much for himself, why you left out of the series my friend Mr. Robert Baston. You have used Baston very ill. Baston was an English poet. Baston lived in the fourteenth century, and wove verses in Nottingham. When proud Edward went to Scotland, he took Baston along with him to sing his victories. Unhappily, Bruce caged the bird, and compelled him to amend his finest poems by striking out “Edward,” wherever the name of that revered monarch occurred, and inserting “Robert,” which, as I have said, he was obliged to do,—and a very ridiculous mess the process must have made of Mr. Baston’s productions. This is all I know of Baston; but is not this enough to melt the toughest heart? No wonder he prologued his piping after the following dismal fashion:—

“In dreary verse my rhymes I make,  
Bewailing whilst such theme I take.”

However, Baston was a monk of the Carmelite species, and I hope he bore his agonies with religious bravery.

And now let us make a skip down to Charles Aleyn, *temp.* Charles I. “of blessed memory.” A Sidney collegian of Cambridge, he began life as an usher in the celebrated school of Thomas Farnaby,—another great man of whom you never heard, O Don!—a famous school, in Goldsmith’s Rents, near Red-Cross Street, in the Parish of St. Giles, Cripplegate. Those were stirring times; but Aleyn managed to write, before he died, in 1640, a rousing great poem, intituled, “The Battailes of Crescey and Poictiers, under the Fortunes and Valour of King Edward the Third of that Name, and his Sonne, Edward, Prince of Wales, surnamed The Black.” 8vo. 1633. Let me give you a taste of his quality, in the following elaborate catalogue of the curiosities of a battle-field:—



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“Here a hand severed, there an ear was cropped;  
Here a chap fallen, and there an eye put out;  
Here was an arm lopped off, there a nose dropped;  
Here half a man, and there a less piece fought;  
Like to dismembered statues they did stand,  
Which had been mangled by Time’s iron hand.”

This is prosaic enough, and might have been written by a surgical student; but this is better:—

“The artificial wood of spears was wet  
With yet warm blood; and trembling in the wind,  
Did rattle like the thorns which Nature set  
On the rough hide of an armed porcupine;  
Or looked like the trees which dropped gore,  
Plucked from the tomb of slaughtered Polydore.”

So much for Mr. Charles Aley.

But it is at the theatre, as you may well believe, that poets live and die most like the blithesome grasshoppers. The poor players, marvellous compounds of tin, feathers, and tiffany, fret but a brief hour; but the playwright, less considered alive, is sooner defunct. I have not Dodsley’s Plays by me, but, if my memory does not deceive me, not one of them keeps the stage; nor did dear Charles Lamb make many in love with that huge heap in the British Museum. Alas! all these good people, now grown so rusty, fusty, and forgotten, might have rolled under their tongues, as a sweet morsel, those lines which civil Abraham Cowley sent to Leviathan Hobbes:—

“To things immortal Time can do no wrong;  
And that which never is to die forever must be young.”

Alas! they had great first nights and glorious third nights,—lords and ladies smiled and the groundlings were affable,—they lived in a paradise of compliment and cash,—and then were no better off than the garreteer who took his damnation comfortably early upon the first night, and ran back to his den to whimper with mortification and to tremble with cold. There is worthy Mr. Shakspeare, of whom an amiable writer kindly said, in 1723,—“There is certainly a great deal of entertainment in his comical Humors, and a pleasing and well-distinguished variety in those characters which he thought fit to meddle with. His images are indeed everywhere so lively, that the thing he would represent stands full before you, and you possess every part of it. His sentiments are great and natural, and his expression just, and raised in proportion to the subject and occasion.” You may laugh at this as much as you please, Don Bob; but I think it quite as sensible as many of the criticisms of Samuel Johnson, LL.D.,—as that one of his, for instance, upon “Measure for Measure,” which I never read without a feeling of personal



injury. I should like to know if it is writing criticism to write,—“Of this play, the light or comic part is very natural and pleasing; but the grave scenes, if a few passages be excepted, have more labor than elegance.” Now, if old Boltcourt had written instead, as he might have done, if the fit



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had been on him,—“Of this play, the heavy or tragic part is very natural and pleasing; but the comic scenes, if a few passages be excepted, have more labor than elegance,”—his remark would have been quite as sonorous, and just a little nearer the truth. For my own part, I think there is nothing finer in all Shakspeare than the interview between Angelo and Isabella, in the Second Act, or that exquisite outburst of the latter, afterward, “Not with fond shekels of the tested gold,” which is a line the sugar of which you can sensibly taste as you read it. Incledon used to wish that his old music-master could come down from heaven to Norwich, and could take the coach up to London to hear that d—d Jew sing,—referring thus civilly to the respectable John Braham. I have sometimes wished that Shakspeare could make a similar descent, and face his critics. Ah! how much he could tell us over a single bottle of *Rosa Solis* at some new “Mermaid” extemporized for the occasion! What wild work would he make with the commentators long before we had exhausted the ordinate cups! and how, after we had come to the inordinate, would he be with difficulty prevented from marching at once to break the windows of his latest glossator! If anything could make one sick of “the next age,” it would be the shabby treatment which the Avonian has received. I do not wonder that the illustrious authors of “Salmagundi” said,—“We bequeathe our first volume to future generations,—and much good may it do them! Heaven grant they may be able to read it!” Seeing that contemporary fame is the most profitable,—that you can eat it, and drink it, and wear it upon your back,—I own that it is the kind for which I have the most absolute partiality. It is surely better to be spoken well of by your neighbors, who do know you, than by those who do not know you, and who, if they commend, may do so by sheer accident.

You never heard of Mr. Horden, of Charles Knipe, of Thomas Lupon, of Edward Revet? Great men all, in their day! So there was Mr. John Smith,—*clarum et venerabile nomen!*—who in 1677 wrote a comedy called “Cytherea; or, the Enamoring Girdle.” So there was Mr. Swinney, who wrote one play called “The Quacks.” So there was Mr. John Tutchin, 1685, who wrote “The Unfortunate Shepherd.” So there is Mr. William Smith, Mr. H. Smith, author of “The Princess of Parma,” and Mr. Edmund Smith, 1710, author of “Phedra and Hippolytus,” who is buried in Wiltshire, under a Latin inscription as long as my arm. There is Thomas Yalden, D.D., 1690, who helped Dryden and Congreve in the translation of Ovid, who wrote a Hymn to Morning, commencing vigorously thus:—

“Parent of Day! whose beauteous beams of light  
Sprang from the darksome womb of night!”—

and who was a great friend of Addison, which is the best I know of him. He might have been, like Sir Philip Sidney, “scholar, soldier, lover, saint,”—for Doctors of Divinity have been all four,—but I declare that I have told you all I have learned about him.



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It is grievous to me, dear Bobus, a man of notorious gallantry, to find that the ladies, after consenting to smirch their rosy fingers with Erebean ink, are among the first who are discarded. If you will go into the College Library, Mr. Sibley will show you a charming copy of the works of Mrs. Behn, with a roguish, rakish, tempting little portrait of the writer prefixed. Poor Mrs. Behn was a notability as well as a notoriety in her day; and when I have great leisure for the work, I mean to write her life and do her justice. The task would have been worthy of De Foe; but, with a little help from you, I hope to do it passably. Poor Aphra! poet, dramatist, intriguing strumpet! Worthy of no better fate, take my benison of light laughter and of tears! Then there is Mrs. Elizabeth Singer, who was living in 1723, who selected as the subject of her work nothing less than the Creation, and who was a woman of great religion. Her poem commences patronizingly thus:—

“Hail! mighty Maker of the Universe! *My* song shall still *thy* glorious deeds rehearse. *Thy* praise, whatever subject others choose, Shall be the lofty theme of *my* aspiring Muse.”

Elizabeth was a Somersetshire woman, a clothier's daughter; and if she had thrown away her lyre and gone back to the distaff, I do not think Parnassus would have broken its heart. Then there is our fair friend, Mrs. Molesworth. Her father was a Right Honorable Irish peer of the same name, who had some acquaintance, if not a friendlier connection, with John Locke. Her Muse was rather high-skirted, as you may believe, when you read this epitaph:—

“O'er this marble drop a tear!  
Here lies fair Rosalinde;  
All mankind was pleased with her,  
And she with all mankind.”

Let me introduce you to one more lady. This is Mrs. Wiseman, dear Don! She was of “poor, but honest” parentage; and if she did wash the dishes of Mr. Recorder Wright of Oxford, she did better than my Lady Hamilton or my Lady Blessington of later times. Mrs. Wiseman read novels and plays, and, of course, during the intervals of domestic drudgery, began to write a drama, which she finished after she went to London. It was of high-sounding title, for it was called, “Antiochus the Great; or, the Fatal Relapse.” Who relapsed so fatally—whether Antiochus with his confidant, or his wife with her confidante, or Ptolemy Pater with his confidant, or Epiphanes with his confidant—is more than I can tell. Indeed, I am not sure that I know which Antiochus was honored by Mrs. Wiseman's Muse. Whether it was Antiochus Soter, or Antiochus Theos, or Antiochus the Great, or Antiochus the Epiphanous or Illustrious, or Antiochus Eupator, or Antiochus Eutheus, or Antiochus Sidetes, or Antiochus Grypus, or Antiochus Cyzenicus, or Antiochus Pius,—the greatest rogue of the whole dynasty,—or Antiochus Asiaticus, who “used up” the family entirely in Syria—is more than I



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can tell. Indeed, Antiochus was such a favorite name with kings, that, without seeing the play,—and I have not seen it,—I cannot inform you which Antiochus we are talking about. Possibly it was the Antiochus who went into a fever for the love of Stratonice; and if so, please to notice that this was the wicked Antiochus Soter, the son of Selencus, and the scapegrace who married his mother-in-law, by the advice of the family-doctor, while his fond father stood tearfully by and gave away the bride. After such a scandalous piece of business, I shall have nothing more to do with the family, but shall gladly return to our talented friend, Mrs. Wiseman. She brought out her work at the Theatre Royal in 1706, “with applause”; and the play, I am glad to inform you, brought in money, so that an enterprising young vintner, by the name of Holt, besought her hand, and won it. With the profits of “Antiochus” they established a tavern in Westminster, and the charming Wiseman with her own hand drew pots of half-and-half, or mixed punch for the company. I should very much like to see two-thirds of our many poet-esses doing the same thing.

But enough, probably too much, of this skimble-skamble! If you will look into a copy of Dr. Johnson’s Dictionary, (Worcester’s edition,) you will find the names of nearly a thousand English authors cited in alphabetical order as authorities. Of these it is safe to say that not more than one hundred are remembered by the general reader. Such is Fame! Such is the jade who leads us up hill and down, through jungles and morasses, into deep waters and into swamps, through thick weather and thin, under blue skies and brown ones, in heat and in cold, hungry and thirsty and ragged, and heart-sore and foot-sore, now hopeful and now hopeless, now striding and now stumbling, now exultant and now despairing, now singing, now sighing, and now swearing, up to her dilapidated old temple. And when we get there, we find Dr. Beattie, in a Scotch wig, washing the face of young Edwin! A man of your pounds would be a fool to undertake the journey; but if you will be such a fool, you must go without the company of

Your terrestrial friend,

PAUL POTTER.

\* \* \* \* \*

“THE NEW LIFE” OF DANTE.

I.

“At that season,” says Boccaccio, in his Life of Dante, “when the sweetness of heaven reclothes the earth with its adornments, and makes it all smiling with flowers among the green leaves, it was the custom in our city for the men and for the ladies to celebrate



festivals in their own streets in separate companies. Wherefore it happened, that, among the rest, Folco Portinari, a man held in much honor in those times among the citizens, had collected his neighbors at a feast in his own house on the first of May. Among them was the before-named Alighieri,—and, as little boys are wont to follow their fathers, especially to festive places,

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Dante, whose ninth year was not yet finished, accompanied him. It happened, that here, with others of his age, of whom, both boys and girls, there were many at the house of the entertainer, he gave himself to merry-making, after a childish fashion. Among the crowd of children was a little daughter of Folco, whose name was Bice,—though this was derived from her original name, which was Beatrice. She was, perhaps, eight years old, a pretty little thing in a childish way, very gentle and pleasing in her actions, and much more sedate and modest in her manners and words than her youthful age required. Beside this, she had very delicate features, admirably proportioned, and full, in addition to their beauty, of such openness and charm, that she was looked upon by many as a little angel. She then, such as I depict her, or rather, far more beautiful, appeared at this feast before the eyes of our Dante, not, I believe, for the first time, but first with power to enamor him. And although still a child, he received her image into his heart with such affection, that, from that day forward, never, as long as he lived, did it leave him."[1]

It was partly from tradition, partly from the record which Dante himself had left of it, that Boccaccio drew his account of this scene. In the *Vita Nuova*, "The New Life," Dante has written the first part of the history of that love which began at this festival, and which, growing with his growth, became, not many years after, the controlling passion of his life. Nothing is better or more commonly known about Dante than his love for Beatrice; but the course of that love, its relation to his external and public life, its moulding effect upon his character, have not been clearly traced. The love which lasted from his boyhood to his death, keeping his heart fresh, spite of the scorplings of disappointment, with springs of perpetual solace,—the love which, purified and spiritualized by the bitterness of separation and trial, led him through the hard paths of Philosophy and up the steep ascents of Faith, bringing him out of Hell and through Purgatory to the glories of Paradise and the fulfilment of Hope,—such a love is not only a spiritual experience, but it is also a discipline of character whose results are exhibited in the continually renewed struggles of life.

The earthly story of this love, of its beginning, its irregular course, its hopes and doubts, its exaltations and despairs, its sudden interruption and transformation by death, is the story which the "Vita Nuova" tells. The narrative is quaint, embroidered with conceits, deficient in artistic completeness, but it has the *naivete* and simplicity of youth, the charm of sincerity, the freedom of personal confidence; and so long as there are lovers in the world, so long as lovers are poets, so long will this first and tenderest love-story of modern literature be read with appreciation and responsive sympathy.



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But "The New Life" has an interest of another sort, and a claim, not yet sufficiently acknowledged, upon all who would read the "Divina Commedia" with fit appreciation, in that it contains the first hint of the great poem itself, and furnishes for it a special, interior, imaginative introduction, without the knowledge of which it is not thoroughly to be understood. The character of Beatrice, as she appears in the "Divina Commedia," the relation in which the poet stands to her, the motive of the dedication of the poem to her honor and memory, and many minor allusions, are all explained or illustrated by the aid of the "Vita Nuova." Dante's works and life are interwoven as are those of no other of the poets who have written for all time. No other has so written his autobiography. With Dante, external impressions and internal experiences—sights, actions, thoughts, emotions, sufferings—were all fused into poetry as they passed into his soul. Practical life and imaginative life were with him one and indissoluble. Not only was the life of imagination as real to him as the life of fact, but the life of fact was clothed upon by that of imagination; so that, on the one hand, daily events and common circumstances became a part of his spiritual experience in a far more intimate sense than is the case with other men, while, on the other, his fancies and his visions assumed the absoluteness and the literal existence of positive external facts. The remotest flights of his imagination never carry him where his sight becomes dim. His journey through the spiritual world was no less real to him than his journeys between Florence and Rome, or his wanderings between Verona and Ravenna. So absolute was his imagination, that it often so far controls his reader as to make it difficult not to believe that the poet beheld with his mortal eyes the invisible scenes which he describes. Boccaccio relates, that, after that part of the "Commedia" which treats of Hell had become famous it happened one day in Verona, that Dante "passed before a door where several women were sitting, and one of them, in a low voice, yet not so but that she was well heard by him and his companion, said to another woman: 'See that man who goes through Hell and comes back when he pleases, and brings news of those who are down there!' And then one of them replied simply: 'Indeed, what you say must be true; for do you not see how his beard is crisped and his face brown with the heat and smoke of it?'"[2]

From this close relation between his life and his works, the "Vita Nuova" has a peculiar interest, as the earliest of Dante's writings, and the most autobiographic of them in its form and intention. In it we are brought into intimate personal relations with the poet. He trusts himself to us with full and free confidence; but there is no derogation from becoming manliness in his confessions. He draws the picture of a portion of his youth, and lays bare its tenderest emotions; but he does so with



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no morbid self-consciousness, and no affectation. Part of this simplicity is due, undoubtedly, to the character of the times, part to his own youthfulness, part to downright faith in his own genius. It was the fashion for poets to tell of their loves; in following the fashion, he not only gave expression to real feeling, but claimed his rank among the poets, and set a new style, from which love-poetry was to take a fresh date.

This first essay of his poetic powers exhibits the foundation upon which his later life was built. The figure of Beatrice, which appears veiled under the allegory, and indistinct in the bright cloud of the mysticism of the "Divina Commedia," takes her place in life and on the earth through the "Vita Nuova," as definitely as Dante himself. She is no allegorized piece of humanity, no impersonation of attributes, but an actual woman,—beautiful, modest, gentle, with companions only less beautiful than herself,—the most delightful figure in the midst of the picturesque life of Florence. She is seen smiling and weeping, walking with stately maidenly decorum in the street, praying at the church, merry at festivals, mourning at funerals; and her smiles and tears, her gentleness, her reserve, all the sweet qualities of her life, and the peace of her death, are told of with such tenderness and refinement, such pathetic melancholy, such delicate purity, and such passionate vehemence, that she remains and will always remain the loveliest and most womanly woman of the Middle Ages,—at once absolutely real and truly ideal.

It was in the year 1292, about two years after the death of Beatrice, and when he himself was about twenty-seven years old, that Dante collected into this *libretto d' amore* the poems that he had written during Beatrice's life, adding to them others relating to her written after her death, and accompanying all with a narrative and commentary in prose. The meaning of the name which he gave to the book, "La Vita Nuova," has been the cause of elaborate discussion among the Italian commentators. Literally "The New Life," it has been questioned whether this phrase meant simply early life, or life made new by the first experience and lasting influence of love. The latter interpretation seems the most appropriate to Dante's turn of mind and to his condition of feeling at the time when the little book appeared. To him it was the record of that life which the presence of Beatrice had made new.[3]

But whatever be the true significance of the title, this "New Life" is full not only of the youthfulness of its author, but of the fresh and youthful spirit of the time. Italy, after going through a long period of childhood, was now becoming conscious of the powers of maturity. Society, (to borrow a fine figure from Lamennais,) like a river, which, long lost in marshes, had at length regained its channel, after stagnating for centuries, was now again rapidly advancing. Throughout Italy there was a morning



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freshness, and the thrill and exhilaration of conscious activity. Her imagination was roused by the revival of ancient and now new learning, by the stories of travellers, by the gains of commerce, by the excitements of religion and the alarms of superstition. She was boastful, jealous, quarrelsome, lavish, magnificent, full of fickleness,—exhibiting on all sides the exuberance, the magnanimity, the folly of youth. After the long winter of the Dark Ages, spring had come, and the earth was renewing its beauty. And above all other cities in these days Florence was full of the pride of life. Civil brawls had not yet reduced her to become an easy prey for foreign conquerors. She was famous for wealth, and her spirit had risen with prosperity. Many years before, one of the Provençal troubadours, writing to his friend in verse, had said,—“Friend Gaucelm, if you go to Tuscany, seek a shelter in the noble city of the Florentines, which is named Florence. There all true valor is found; there joy and song and love are perfect and adorned.” And if this were true in the earlier years of the thirteenth century, it was still truer of its close; for much of early simplicity and purity of manners had disappeared before the increasing luxury (*le morbidezze d’ Egitto*, as Boccaccio terms it) and the gathered wealth of the city,—so that gayety and song more than ever abounded. “It is to be noted,” says Giovanni Villani, writing of this time, “it is to be noted that Florence and her citizens were never in a happier condition.” The chroniclers tell of constant festivals and celebrations. “In the year 1283, in the month of June, at the feast of St. John, the city of Florence being in a happy and good state of repose,—a tranquil and peaceable state, excellent for merchants and artificers,—there was formed a company of a thousand men or more, all clothed in white dresses, with a leader called the Lord of Love, who devoted themselves to games and sports and dancing, going through the city with trumpets and other instruments of joy and gladness, and feasting often together. And this court lasted for two months, and was the most noble and famous that ever was in Florence or in all Tuscany, and many gentlemen came to it, and many rhymers,[4] and all were welcomed and honorably cared for.” Every year, the summer was opened with May and June festivals. Florence was rejoicing in abundance and beauty.[5] Nor was it only in passing gayeties that the cheerful and liberal temper of the people was displayed.

The many great works of Art which were begun and carried on to completion at this time show with what large spirit the whole city was inspired, and under what strong influences of public feeling the early life of Dante was led. Civil liberty and strength were producing their legitimate results. Little republic as she was, Florence was great enough for great undertakings. Never was there such a noble activity within the narrow compass of her walls as from about 1265, when Dante



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was born, to the end of the century. In these thirty-five years, the stout walls and the tall tower of the Bargello were built, the grand foundations of the Palazzo Vecchio and of the unrivalled Duomo were laid, and both in one year; the Baptistery—*Il mio bel San Giovanni*—was adorned with a new covering of marble; the churches of Sta Maria Novella, of Or San Michele, (changed from its original object,) and Sta Croce,—the finest churches even now in Florence,—were all begun and carried far on to completion. Each new work was at once the fruit and the seed of glorious energy. The small city, of less than one hundred thousand inhabitants, the little republic, not so large as Rhode Island or Delaware, was setting an example which later and bigger and richer republics have not followed.[6] It might well, indeed, be called a “new life” for Florence, as well as for Dante. When it was determined to supply the place of the old church of Santa Reparata with a new cathedral, a decree was passed in words of memorable spirit: “Whereas it is the highest interest of a people of illustrious origin so to proceed in its affairs that men may perceive from its external works that its doings are at once wise and magnanimous, it is therefore ordered, that Arnolfo, architect of our commune, prepare the model or design for the rebuilding of Santa Reparata, with such supreme and lavish magnificence that neither the industry nor the capacity of man shall be able to devise anything more grand or more beautiful; inasmuch as the most judicious in this city have pronounced the opinion, in public and private conferences, that no work of the commune should be undertaken, unless the design be to make it correspondent with a heart which is of the greatest nature, because composed of the spirit of many citizens united together in one single will.”[7] The records of few other cities contain a decree so magnificent as this.

It would be strange, indeed, if the youthful book of one so sensitive to external influences as Dante did not give evidence of sympathy with such pervading emotion. And so apparent is this,—that one may say that only at such a period, when strength of sentiment was finding vent in all manner of free expression, was such a book possible. Confidence, frankness, directness in the rendering of personal feeling are rare, except in conditions of society when the emotional spirit is stronger than the critical. The secret of the active power of the arts at this time was the conscious or unconscious resort of those who practised them to the springs of Nature, from which the streams of all true Art proceed. Dante was the first of the moderns to seek Poetry at the same fountain, and to free her from the chains of conventionality which had long bound her. In this he shows his close relation to his times. It is his fidelity to Nature which has made him a leader for all successive generations. The “Vita Nuova” was the beginning of a new school of poetry and of prose as completely as Giotto’s O was the beginning of a new school of painting.

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The Italian poets, before Dante, may be broadly divided into two classes. The first was that of the troubadours, writing in the Provençal language, hardly to be distinguished from their contemporaries of the South of France, giving expression in their verses to the ideas of love, gallantry, and valor which formed the base of the complex and artificial system of chivalry, repeating constantly the same fancies and thoughts in similar formulas of words, without scope or truth of imagination, with rare exhibitions of individual feeling, with little regard for Nature. Ingenuity is more characteristic of their poetry than force, subtilty more obvious in it than beauty. The second and later class were poets who wrote in the Italian tongue, but still under the influence of the poetic code which had governed the compositions of their Provençal predecessors. Their poetry is, for the most part, a faded copy of an unsubstantial original,—an echo of sounds originally faint. Truth and poetry were effectually divided. In the latter half of the thirteenth century, however, a few poets appeared whose verses give evidence of some native life, and are enlivened by a freer play of fancy and a greater truthfulness of feeling. Guido Guinicelli, who died in 1276, when Dante was eleven years old, and, a little later, Guido Cavalcanti, and some few others, trusting more than had been done before to their own inspiration, show themselves as the forerunners of a better day.[8] But as, in painting, Margheritone and Cimabue, standing between the old and the new styles, exhibit rather a vague striving than a fulfilled attainment, so is it with these poets. There is little that is distinguishingly individual in them. Love is still treated mostly as an abstraction, and one poet might adopt the others' love-verses with few changes of words for any manifest difference in them of personal feeling.

Not so with Dante. The "Vita Nuova," although retaining many ideas, forms, and expressions derived from earlier poets, is his, and could be the work of no other. Nor was he unaware of this difference between himself and those that had gone before him, or ignorant of its nature. In describing himself to Buonagiunta da Lucca in Purgatory, he says, "I am one who, when Love breathes, mark, and according as he dictates within, I report"; to which the poet of Lucca replies, "O brother, now I see the knot which kept the Notary and Guittone and me back from that sweet new style which now I hear. I see well how your pens have followed close on the dictator, which truly was not the case with ours." [9] As Love was the common theme of the verses from which Buonagiunta drew his contrast, the difference between them lay plainly in sincerity of feeling and truth of expression. The following close upon the dictates of his heart was the distinguishing merit of Dante's love-poetry over all that had preceded it and most of what has followed it. There are, however, some among his earlier poems in which the "sweet



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new style" is scarcely heard,—and others, of a later period, in which the accustomed metaphysical and fanciful subtleties of the elder poets are drawn out to an unwonted fineness. These were concessions to a ruling mode,—concessions the more readily made, owing to their being in complete harmony with the strong subtilizing and allegorizing tendencies of Dante's own mind. Still, so far as he adopts the modes of his predecessors in this first book of his, Dante surpasses them all in their own way. He leaves them far behind him, and goes forward to open new paths which he is to tread alone.

But there is yet another tendency of the times, to which Dante, in his later works, has given the fullest and most characteristic expression, and which exhibits itself curiously in the "Vita Nuova." Corresponding with the new ardor for the arts, and in sympathy with it, was a newly awakened and generally diffused ardor for learning, especially for the various branches of philosophy. Science was leaving the cloister, in which she had sat in dumb solitude, and coming out into the world. But the limits and divisions of knowledge were not firmly marked. The relations of learning to life were not clearly understood. The science of mathematics was not yet so advanced as to bind philosophy to exactness. The intellects of men were quickened by a new sense of freedom, and stimulated by ardor of imagination. New worlds of undiscovered knowledge loomed vaguely along the horizon. Philosophy invaded the sphere of poetry, while, on the other hand, poetry gave its form to much of the prevailing philosophy. To be a proper poet was not only to be a writer of verses, but to be a master of learning. Boccaccio describes Guido Cavalcanti as "one of the best logicians in the world, and as a most excellent natural philosopher,"[10] but says nothing of his poetry. Dante, more than any other man of his time, resumed in himself the general zeal for knowledge. His genius had two distinct, and yet often intermingling parts,—the poetic and the scientific. No learning came amiss to him. He was born a scholar, as he was born a poet,—and had he written not a single poem, he would still be famous as the most profound student of his times. Far as he surpassed his contemporaries in poetry, he was no less their superior in the depth and the extent of his knowledge. And this double nature of his genius is plainly shown in many parts of "The New Life." A youthful incapacity to mark clearly the line between the work of the student and the work of the poet is manifest in it. The display of his acquisitions is curiously mingled with the narrative of his emotions. This is not to be charged against him as pedantry. His love of learning partook of the nature of passion; his judgment was not yet able, if indeed it ever became able, to establish the division between the abstractions of the intellect and the affections of the heart. And above all, his early claim of honor as a poet was to be justified by his possession of the fruits of study.

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But there was also in Dante a quality of mind which led him to unite the results of knowledge with poetry in a manner almost peculiar to himself. He was essentially a mystic. The dark and hidden side of things was not less present to his imagination than the visible and plain. The range of human capacity in the comprehension of the spiritual world was not then marked by as numerous boundary-stones of failure as now limit the way. Impossibilities were sought for with the same confident hope as realities. The alchemists and the astrologers believed in the attainment of results as tangible and real as those which travellers brought back from the marvellous and still unachieved East. The mystical properties of numbers, the influence of the stars, the powers of cordials and elixirs, the virtues of precious stones, were received as established facts, and opened long vistas of discovery before the student's eyes. Curiosity and speculative inquiry were stimulated by wonder and fed by all the suggestions of heated fancies. Dante, partaking to the full in the eager spirit of the times, sharing all the ardor of the pursuit of knowledge, and with a spiritual insight which led him into regions of mystery where no others ventured, naturally connected the knowledge which opened the way for him with the poetic imagination which cast light upon it. To him science was but another name for poetry.

Much learning has been expended in the attempt to show that even the doctrine of Love, which is displayed in "The New Life," is derived, more or less directly, from the philosophy of Plato. It has been supposed that this little autobiographic story, full of the most intimate personal revelations, and glowing with a sincere passion, was written on a preconceived basis of theory. A certain Platonic form of expression, often covering ideas very far removed from those of Plato, was common to the earlier, colder, and less truthful poets. Some strains of such Platonism, derived from the poems of his predecessors, are perhaps to be found in this first book of Dante's. But there is nothing to show that he had deliberately adopted the teachings of the ancient philosopher. It may well, indeed, be doubted if at the time of its composition he had read any of Plato's works. Such Platonism as exists in "The New Life" was of that unconscious kind which is shared by every youth of thoughtful nature and sensitive temperament, who makes of his beloved a type and image of divine beauty, and who by the loveliness of the creature is led up to the perfection of the Creator.

The essential qualities of the "Vita Nuova," those which afford direct illustration of Dante's character, as distinguished from those which may be called youthful, or merely literary, or biographical, correspond in striking measure with those of the "Divina Commedia." The earthly Beatrice is exalted to the heavenly in the later poem; but the same perfect purity and intensity of feeling with which she is reverently



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regarded in the “Divina Commedia” is visible in scarcely less degree in the earlier work. The imagination which makes the unseen seen, and the unreal real, belongs alike to the one and to the other. The “Vita Nuova” is chiefly occupied with a series of visions; the “Divina Commedia” is one long vision. The sympathy with the spirit and impulses of the time, which in the first reveals the youthful impressibility of the poet, in the last discloses itself in maturer forms, in more personal expressions. In the “Vita Nuova” it is a sympathy mastering the natural spirit; in the “Divina Commedia” the sympathy is controlled by the force of established character. The change is that from him who follows to him who commands. It is the privilege of men of genius, not only to give more than others to the world, but also to receive more from it. Sympathy, in its full comprehensiveness, is the proof of the strongest individuality. By as much as Dante or Shakspeare learnt of and entered into the hearts of men, by so much was his own nature strengthened and made peculiarly his own. The “Vita Nuova” shows the first stages of that genius, the first proofs of that wide sympathy, which at length resulted in the “Divine Comedy.” It is like the first blade of spring grass, rich with the promise of the golden harvest.

[Footnote 1: *Vita di Dante*. Milan, 1823, pp. 29, 30.]

[Footnote 2: *Vita di Dante*, p. 69.]

[Footnote 3: For *vita nova* in the sense of *early life*, see *Purgatory*, xxx. 115, with the comments of Landino and Benvenuto da Imola; and for *eta novella* in a similar sense, see Canzone xviii. st. 6. Fraticelli, who supports this interpretation, gives these with other examples, but none more to the point. Mr. Joseph Carrow, who had a translation into English of the *Vita Nuova*, printed at Florence in 1840, entitles his book “The Early Life of Dante Allighieri.” But as giving probability to the meaning to which we incline, see Canzone x. st. 5.

“Lo giorno che costei nel mondo venne,  
Secondo che si trova  
Nel libro della mente che vien meno,  
La mia persona parvola sostenne  
Una passion nova.”

That day when she unto the world attained,  
As is found written true  
Within the book of my now sinking soul,  
Then by my childish nature was sustained  
A passion new.



In referring to Dante's Minor Poems, we shall refer to them as they stand in the first volume of Fraticelli's edition of the *Opere Minore al Dante*, Firenze, 1834. There is great need of a careful, critical edition of the *Canzoniere* of Dante, in which poems falsely ascribed to him should no longer hold place among the genuine. But there is little hope for this from Italy; for the race of Italian commentators on Dante is, as a whole, more frivolous, more impertinent, and duller, than that of English commentators on Shakespeare.]



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[Footnote 4: The word in the original (Villani, Book vii. C. 89) is *Giocolari*, the Italian form of the French *jongleur*,—the appellation of those whose profession was to sing or recite the verses of the troubadours or the romances of chivalry.]

[Footnote 5: See Boccaccio, *Decamerone*, Giorn. vi, Nov. 9, for an entertaining picture of Florentine festivities.]

[Footnote 6: The feeling which moved Florence thus to build herself into beauty was one shared by the other Italian republican cities at this time. Venice, Verona, Pisa, Siena, Orvieto, were building or adding to churches and palaces such as have never since been surpassed.]

[Footnote 7: Cicognara, *Storia della Scultura*, II. 147.]

[Footnote 8: Guido Guinicelli will always be less known by his own verses than by Dante's calling him

-----"father  
Of me and all those better others  
Who sweet chivalric lovelays formed."  
*Purg.* xxvi. 97-99.

And Guido Cavalcanti, "he who took from this other Guido the praise of speech," (*Purg.* xi. 97,) is more famous as Dante's friend than as a poet.]

[Footnote 9: *Purgatory*, xxiv. 53-60.]

[Footnote 10: *Decamerone*, Giorn. vi. Nov. 9. *Logician* is here to be understood in an extended sense, as the student of letters, or *arts*, as they were then called, in general.]

\* \* \* \* \*

AT SEA.

The night is made for cooling shade,  
For silence, and for sleep;  
And when I was a child, I laid  
My hands upon my breast, and prayed,  
And sank to slumbers deep:  
Childlike as then, I lie to-night,  
And watch my lonely cabin light.



Each movement of the swaying lamp  
Shows how the vessel reels:  
As o'er her deck the billows tramp,  
And all her timbers strain and cramp  
With every shock she feels,  
It starts and shudders, while it burns,  
And in its hinged socket turns.

Now swinging slow, and slanting low,  
It almost level lies;  
And yet I know, while to and fro  
I watch the seeming pendule go  
With restless fall and rise,  
The steady shaft is still upright,  
Poising its little globe of light.

O hand of God! O lamp of peace!  
O promise of my soul!—  
Though weak, and tossed, and ill at ease,  
Amid the roar of smiting seas,  
The ship's convulsive roll,  
I own, with love and tender awe,  
Yon perfect type of faith and law!

A heavenly trust my spirit calms,  
My soul is filled with light:  
The ocean sings his solemn psalms,  
The wild winds chant: I cross my palms,  
Happy as if, to-night,  
Under the cottage-roof, again  
I heard the soothing summer-rain.

\* \* \* \* \*

BULLS AND BEARS.



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[Continued.]

### CHAPTER V.

WHICH TREATS OF THE MODESTY OF CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE.

Mr. Sandford sat in his private room. Through the windows in front were seen the same bald and grizzly heads that had for so many years given respectability to the Vortex Company. The contemplation of the cheerful office and the thought of its increasing prosperity seemed to give him great satisfaction; for he rubbed his white and well-kept hands, settled his staid cravat, smoothed his gravely decorous coat, and looked the picture of placid content. He meditated, gently twirling his watch-seal the while.

“Windham will be here presently, for my note admitted only of an answer in person. A very useful person to have a call from is Windham; these old gentlemen will put up their gold spectacles when he comes, and won’t think any the less of me for having such a visitor. I noticed that Monroe was much impressed the other day. Then Bullion and Stearine will drop in, I think,—both solid men, useful acquaintances. If Plotman has only done what he promised, the thing will come round right. I shall not seek office,—oh, no! I could not compromise my position. But if the people thrust it upon me, I cannot refuse. Citizenship has its duties as well as its privileges, and every man must take his share of public responsibility. By-the-by, that’s a well-turned phrase; ’twill bear repeating. I’ll make a note of it.”

True enough, Mr. Windham called, and, after the trivial business-affair was settled, he introduced the subject he was expected to speak on.

“We want men of character and business habits in public station, my young friend, and I was rejoiced to-day to hear that it was proposed to make you a Senator. We have had plenty of politicians,—men who trade in honors and offices.”

“I am sensible of the honor you mention,” modestly replied Sandford, “and should value highly the compliment of a nomination, particularly coming from men like yourself, who have only the public welfare at heart. But if I were to accept, I don’t know how I could discharge my duties. And besides, I am utterly without experience in political life, and should very poorly fulfil the expectations that would be formed of me.”

“Don’t be too modest, Mr. Sandford. If you have not experience in politics, all the better; for the ways to office have been foul enough latterly. And as to business, we must arrange that. Your duties here you could easily discharge, and we will get some other young man to take your place in the charitable boards;—though we shall be fortunate, if we find any one to make a worthy successor.”



After a few words, the stately Mr. Windham bowed himself out, leaving Sandford rubbing his hands with increased, but still gentle hilarity.

Mr. Bullion soon dropped in. He was a stout man, with a round, bald head, short, sturdy legs, and a deep voice,—a weighty voice on 'Change, though, as its owner well knew,—the more, perhaps, because it dealt chiefly in monosyllables.



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“How are you, Sandford? Fine day. Anything doing? Money more in demand, they say. Hope all is right; though it looks like a squall.”

Mr. Sandford merely bowed, with an occasional “Ah!” or “Indeed!”

“How about politics?” Bullion continued. “Talk of sending you to the Senate. Couldn’t do better,—I mean the city couldn’t; *you’d* be a d—d fool to go. Somebody has to, though. You as well as any. Can I help you?”

“You rather surprise me. I had not thought of the honor.”

Bullion turned his eye upon him,—a cool, gray eye, overhung by an eyebrow that seemed under perfect muscular control; for the gray wisp of hair grew pointed like a paint-brush, and had a queer motion of intelligence.

“Oh, shy, I see! Just as well. Too forward is bad. We’ll fix it. Good morning!”

And Bullion, sticking his hands in his pockets, went away with a half-audible whistle, to look after his debtors, and draw in his resources before the anticipated “squall” should come. Mr. Sandford had lost the opportunity of making his carefully studied speech; but, as Bullion had said, it was just as well.

Mr. Stearine came next,—a tall, thin man, with a large, bony frame, and a bilious temperament. A smile played perpetually around his loose mouth,—not a smile of frank good-humor, but of uneasy self-consciousness. He smiled because it was necessary to do something; and he had not the idea of what repose meant.

“You are going to the Senate, I hear,” said the visitor.

“Indeed!”

“Oh, yes,—I’ve heard it from several. Mr. Windham approves it, and I just heard Bullion speak of it. A solid man is Bullion; a man of few words, but all his words tell; they drop like shot.”

“Mr. Windham was good enough to speak of it to me to-day; but I haven’t made up my mind. In fact, it will be time enough when the nomination is offered to me. By-the-way, Mr. Stearine, you were speaking the other day of a little discount. If you want a thousand or two, I think I can get it for you. Street rates are rather high, you know; but I will do the best I can.”

Mr. Stearine smiled again, as he had done every minute before, and expressed his gratification.



“Let me have good paper on short time; it’s not my money, and I must consult the lender’s views, you know. About one and a half per cent. a month, I think; he may want one and three quarters, or two per cent,—not more.”

Mr. Stearine hoped his friend would obtain as favorable terms as he could.

“You’ll have no trouble in meeting the larger note due, Bullion, on which I am indorser?” said Sandford.

“None at all, I think,” was the reply.

“Two birds with one stone,” thought Sandford, after his friend’s departure. “A good investment, and the influence of a good man to boot. Now to see Fletcher and learn how affairs are coming on. We’ll make that ten thousand fifteen before fall is over, if I am not mistaken.”



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### CHAPTER VI.

WHEREIN THE INVESTMENT IS DISCUSSED.

It was the evening of a long day in summer. Mrs. Monroe had rolled up her sewing and was waiting for her son. Tea was ready in the pleasant east room, and the air of the house seemed to invite tranquillity and repose. It was in a quiet street, away from the rattle of carriages, and comparatively free from the multitudinous noises of a city. The carts of milkmen and marketmen were the only vehicles that frequented it. The narrow yard in the rear, with its fringe of grass, and the proximity to the pavement in front, were the only things that would have prevented one from thinking himself a dweller in the country. As the clock struck six, Walter Monroe's step was heard at the door;—other men might be delayed; he never. No seductions of billiards or pleasant company ever kept him from the society of his mother. He had varied sources of amusement, and many friends, attracted by his genial temper and tried worth; but he never forgot that his mother denied herself all intercourse with society, and was indifferent to every pleasure out of the sphere of home. Nor did he meet her as a matter of course; mindful of his mother's absorbing love, and heartily returning it, he seemed always, upon entering the room, to have come home as from a long absence. He kissed her fondly, asked concerning her health and spirits, and how she had passed the day.

"The day is always long till you come, Walter. Tea is ready now, my son. When you are rested, we will sit down."

"Ah, mother, you are cheerful to-day. I have brought you, besides the papers, a new book, which we will commence presently."

"A thoughtful boy you are; but you haven't told me all, Walter. I see something behind those eyes of yours."

"What telltales they must be! Well, I have a pretty present for you,—a sweet picture I bought the other day, and which will come home to-morrow, I fancy."

"Is that all? I shall be glad to see the picture, because you like it. But you have something else on your mind."

"I see I never keep anything from you, mother. You seem to know my thoughts."

"Well, what is it?"

"I have been thinking, mother, that our little property was hardly so productive as it ought to be,—earning barely six per cent., while I know that many of my friends are getting eight, and even ten."



“I am afraid that the extra interest is only to pay for the risk of losing all.”

“True, that is often the case; but I think we can make all safe.”

“Well, what do you propose doing?”

“I have left it with Mr. Sandford, an acquaintance of mine, to invest for me. He is secretary of an insurance company, and knows all the ways of the money-lending world.”

“It’s a great risk, Walter, to trust our all.”

“Not our all, mother. I have a salary, and, whatever may happen, we can always depend on that. Besides, Mr. Sandford is a man of integrity and credit. He has the unlimited confidence of the company, and I rely upon him as I would upon myself.”



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“How has he invested it? Have you got the securities?”

“Not yet, mother. I have left the money on his note for the present; and when he has found a good chance to loan it, he will give me the mortgages or stocks, as the case may be. But come, mother, let us sit down to tea. All is safe, I am sure; and to-morrow I will make you satisfied with my prudent management.”

When the simple meal was over, they sat in the twilight before the gas was lighted. The moments passed rapidly in their free and loving converse. Then the table was drawn out and the new book was opened. Mrs. Monroe suddenly recollected something.

“Walter, my dear, a letter was left here to-day by the postman. As it was directed to the street and number, it did not go to your box. Here it is. I have read it; and rather sad news it brings. Cousin Augustus is failing, so his daughter writes, and it is doubtful whether he ever recovers. Poor child! I am sorry for her.”

Walter took the letter and hastily read it.

“A modest, feeling, sensible little girl, I am sure. I have never seen her, you know; but this letter is simple, touching, and womanly.”

“A dear, good girl, I am sure. How lonely she must be!”

“Mother, I believe I’ll go and see them. In time of trouble we should forget ceremony. Cousin Augustus has never invited me, but I’ll go and see him. Won’t you go, too?”

“Dear boy, I couldn’t! The cars? Oh, never!”

Walter smiled. “You don’t get over your prejudices. The cars are perfectly safe, and more comfortable than coaches.”

“I can’t go; it’s no use to coax me.”

“I have but one thing to trouble me, mother,—and that is, that I can never get you away from this spot.”

“I’m very happy, Walter, and it’s a very pleasant spot; why should I wish to go?”

“How long since you have been down Washington Street?”

“Ten years, I think.”

“And you have never seen the new theatre, nor the Music Hall?”

“No.”



“Nor any of the new warehouses?”

“I don’t want to see them.”

“And you wouldn’t go to church, if it were more than a stone’s throw away?”

“I am afraid not.”

“How long since you were in a carriage?”

Her eyes filled with tears, but she made no reply.

“Forgive me, mother! I remember the time,—five years! and it seems like yesterday when father”—

There was a silence which, for a time, neither cared to break.

“Well,” said Walter, at length, “I shall have to go alone. To-morrow morning I will arrange my business,—not forgetting our securities,—and start in the afternoon train.”

“Your father often spoke of Cousin Augustus and his lovely wife; I wonder if the daughter has her mother’s beauty?”

“I can’t tell. I hope so. But don’t look so inquiringly. I don’t love a woman in the world, —except you, mother. I shan’t fall in love, even if she is an angel.”



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“If Cousin Augustus should be worse,—should die, what will become of the poor motherless child?”

“There are no nearer relatives than we, mother,—and we must give her a home, if she will come.”

“Certainly, Walter, we must not be hard-hearted.”

Mrs. Monroe was charitable, kind, and motherly towards the distressed; she felt the force of her son’s generous sentiments. If it were her Cousin Augustus himself who was to be sheltered, or his son, if he had one,—or if the daughter were unattractive, a hoyden even, she would cheerfully make any sacrifice in favor of hospitality. But she could not repress a secret fear lest the beauty and innocence of the orphan should appeal too strongly to Walter’s heart. She knew the natural destiny of agreeable young men; she acknowledged to herself that Walter would sometime marry; but she put the time far off as an evil day, and kept the subject under ban. None of her neighbors who had pretty daughters were encouraged to visit her on intimate terms. She almost frowned upon every winsome face that crossed her threshold when Walter was at home. So absorbing was this feeling, that she was not aware of its existence, but watched her son by a sort of instinct. Her conduct was not the result of cool calculation, and, if it could have been properly set before her generous, kindly heart, she would have been shocked at her own fond selfishness.

So she sat and speculated, balancing between fear and hope. If Walter built air-castles, was he to blame? At twenty-four, with a heart untouched, with fresh susceptibilities, and a little romance withal, is it to be wondered that his fancy drew such pleasing pictures of his cousin?

We will leave them to their quiet evening’s enjoyment and follow Greenleaf to the house of Mr. Sandford.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE MUSICAL SOIREE.

A small, but judiciously-selected company had assembled; all were people of musical tastes, and most of them capable of sharing in the performances. There were but few ladies; perhaps it did not suit the mistress of the house to have the attentions of the gentlemen divided among too many. Miss Sandford was undeniably queen of the evening; her superb face and figure, and irreproachable toilet, never showed to better advantage. And her easy manners, and ready, silvery words, would have given a dangerous charm to a much plainer woman. She had a smile, a welcome, and a compliment for each,—not seemingly studied, but gracefully expressed, and sufficient to



put the guests in the best humor. Mrs. Sandford, less demonstrative in manner than her sister-in-law, and less brilliant in conversation and personal attractions, was yet a most winning, lovable woman,—a companion for a summer ramble, or a quiet *tete-a-tete*, rather than a belle for a drawing-room. Mr. Sandford was calmly conscious, full of subdued spirits, cheerful

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and ready with all sorts of pleasant phrases. It is not often that one sees such a manly, robust figure, such a handsome, ingenuous face, and such an air of agreeable repose. Easemann was present, retiring as usual, but with an acute eye that lost nothing while it seemed to be observing nothing. Greenleaf was decidedly the lion. It was not merely his graceful person and regular features that drew admiring glances upon him; the charm lay rather in an atmosphere of intellect that surrounded him. His conversation, though by no means faultless, was marked by an energy of phrase joined to an almost womanly delicacy and taste. His was the “hand of steel,” but clothed with the “glove of velvet.” Easemann followed him with a look half stealthy, half comical, as he saw the unusual vivacity of the reigning beauty when in his immediate society. Her voice took instinctively a softer and more musical tone; she showered her glances upon him, dazzling and prismatic as the rays from her diamonds; she seemed determined to captivate him without the tedious process of a siege. And, in truth, he must have been an unimpressible man that could steel himself against the influence of a woman who satisfied every critical sense, who piqued all his pride, who stimulated all that was most manly in his nature, and without apparent effort filled his bosom with an exquisite intoxication.

The music commenced under Marcia’s direction. There were piano solos that were *not* tedious,—full of melody and feeling, and with few of the pyrotechnical displays which are too common in modern virtuoso-playing; vocal duets and quartets from the Italian operas, and from *Orfeo* and other German masterpieces; and solos, if not equal to the efforts of professional singers, highly creditable to amateurs, to say the least. The auditors were enthusiastic in praise. Even Charles, who came in late, declared the music “Vewy good, upon my soul,—surpwizingly good!”

Greenleaf was listening to Marcia, with a pleased smile on his face, when Mr. Sandford approached and interrupted them.

“You are proficient in more than one art, I see. You paint as well as though you knew nothing of music, and yet you sing like a man who has made it an exclusive study.”

Greenleaf simply bowed.

“How do you come on with the picture?” Mr. Sandford continued.

“Very well, I believe.”

“My dear Sir, make haste and finish it.”

“I thought you were not in a hurry.”



“Not in the least, my friend; but when you get that finished, you can paint others, which I can probably dispose of for you.”

“You are very kind.”

“I speak as a business man,” said Sandford, in a lower tone, at which Marcia withdrew. “The arts fare badly in time of a money panic, and all the pictures you can sell now will be clear gain.”

“Are there signs of a panic?”

“Decidedly; the rates of interest are advancing daily, and no one knows where it will end. Unless there is some relief in the market by Western remittances, the distress will be wide-spread and severe.”



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“I am obliged to you for the hint. I have two or three pictures nearly done.”

“I will look at them in a day or two, and try to find you purchasers.”

Greenleaf expressed his thanks, warmly, and then walked towards Mrs. Sandford, who was sitting alone at that moment.

“There is no knowing what Marcia may do,” thought Sandford; “I have never seen her when she appeared so much in earnest,—infatuated like a candle-fly. I hope she won’t be fool enough to marry a man without money. These artists are poor sheep; they have to be taken care of like so many children. At all events, it won’t cost much to keep him at work for the present. Meanwhile she may change her mind.”

Greenleaf was soon engaged in conversation with Mrs. Sandford. She had too much delicacy to flatter him upon his singing, but naturally turned the current towards his art. Without depreciating his efforts or the example of deservedly eminent American painters, she spoke with more emphasis of the acknowledged masters; and as she dwelt with unaffected enthusiasm upon the delight she had received from their immortal works, his old desire to visit Europe came upon him with redoubled force. There was a calm strength in her thoughts and manner that moved him strangely. He saw in a new light his thoughtless devotion to pleasure, and especially the foolish fascination into which he had been led by a woman whom he could not marry and ought not to love. Mrs. Sandford did not exhort, nor even advise; least of all did she allude to her sister-in-law. Hers was only the influence of truth,—of broad ideas of life and its noblest ends, presented with simplicity and a womanly tact above all art. It seemed to Greenleaf the voice of an angel that he heard, so promptly did his conscience respond. He listened with heightening color and tense nerves; the delirious languor of amatory music, and the delirium he had felt while under the spell of Marcia’s beauty, passed away. It seemed to him that he was lifted into a higher plane, whence he saw before him the straight path of duty, leading away from the tempting gardens of pleasure,—where he recognized immutable principles, and became conscious that his true affinities were not with those who came in contact only with his sensuous nature. He had never understood himself until now.

A long meditation, the reader thinks; but, in reality, it was only an electric current, awakening a series of related thoughts; as a flash of lightning at night illumines at once a crowd of objects in a landscape, which the mind perceives, but cannot follow in detail.

When, at length, Greenleaf looked up, he was astonished to find the room silent, and himself with his companion in the focus of all eyes. Marcia looked on with a curiosity in which there was perhaps a shade of apprehension. Easemann relieved the momentary embarrassment by walking towards his friend, with a meaning glance, and taking a seat near Mrs. Sandford.

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“I can’t allow this,” said Easelmann. “You have had your share of Mrs. Sandford’s time. It is my turn. Besides, you will forget it all when you cross the room.”

“Trust me, I shall *never* forget,” said Greenleaf, with a marked emphasis, and a grateful look towards the lovely widow.

“What’s this? What’s this?” said Easelmann, rapidly. “Insatiate trifler, could not one suffice?”

“Oh, we understand each other, perfectly,” said Mrs. Sandford, in a placid tone.

“You do, eh? I should have interrupted you sooner. It might have saved my peace of mind, and perhaps relieved some other anxieties I have witnessed. But go, now!” Greenleaf turned away with a smile.

Marcia at once proposed a duet to conclude the entertainment, —Rossini’s *Mira bianca luna*,—a piece for which she had reserved her force, and in which she could display the best qualities of her voice and style. Greenleaf had a high and pure tenor voice; he exerted himself to support her, and with some success; the duet was a fitting close to a delightful and informal concert. But he was thoroughly sobered; the effects he produced were from cool deliberation, rather than the outbursts of an enthusiastic temper. Earlier in the evening the tones and the glances of his companion would have sent fiery thrills along his nerves and lifted him above all self-control.

In the buzz of voices that followed, Marcia commenced a lively colloquy with Greenleaf, as though she desired to leave him under the impressions with which the evening commenced. The amusements of summer were discussed, the merits of watering-places and other fashionable resorts, when Greenleaf accidentally mentioned that he and Easelmann were going presently to Nahant.

“Delightful!” she exclaimed, “to enjoy the ocean and coast-scenery after the rush of company has left! While the fashionable season lasts, there is nothing but dress and gossip. You are wise to avoid it.”

“I think so,” he replied. “Neither my tastes nor my pursuits incline me to mingle in what is termed fashionable society. It makes too large demands upon one’s time, to say nothing of the expense or the unsatisfactory nature of its pleasures.”

“I agree with you. So you are going to sketch. Would not you and Mr. Easelmann like some company? You will not pore over your canvas *all* day, surely.”

“We should be delighted; *I* should, certainly. And if you will look at my friend’s face just now, as he is talking to your beautiful sister-in-law, you will see that he would not object.”



“Do you think Lydia is *beautiful*?”

The tone was quiet, but the glance questioning.

“Not classically beautiful,—but one of the most lovely, engaging women I ever met.”

“Yes,—she is charming, truly. I don’t think her strikingly handsome, though; but tastes rarely agree, you know. I only asked to ascertain your predilections.”



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"I understand," thought Greenleaf; but he made no further reply.

"Don't be surprised, if you see us before your stay is over,—that is, if Lydia and I can induce Charles to go down with us. Henry is too busy, I suppose."

Charles passed just then; he was endeavoring to form a cotillon, declaring that talk was slow, and, now that the music was over, a dance would be the thing.

"Charles, you will go to Nahant for a week,—won't you?"

"What! now?"

"In a day or two."

"Too cold, Sister Marcia; too late, altogether."

"But you were unwilling to go early in the season."

"Too early is as bad as too late; it is chilly there till the company comes. No billiards, no hops, no pwetty girls, no sailing, no wides on the beach, no pwomenades on the moonlight side of the piazza. No, my deah, Nahant is stupid till the curvent sets that way."

"Southern visitors warm the coast like the Gulf Stream, I suppose," said Greenleaf.

"Pwecisely so,"—then, after the idea had reached his brain, adding, "Vewy good, Mr. Gweenleaf! Vewy good!"

The soiree ended as all seasons of pleasure must, and without the dance on which Charles had set his heart. The friends walked home together. Greenleaf was rather silent, but Easemann at last made him talk.

"What do you think of the beauty, now?" the elder asked.

"Still brilliant, bewitching, dangerous."

"You are not afraid of her?"

"Upon my soul, I believe I am."

"What has frightened you? What faults or defects have you seen?"

"Two. One is, she uses perfumes too freely. Stop that laugh of yours! It's a trifling thing, but it is an indication. I don't like it."



“Fastidious man, what next? Has she more hairs on one eyebrow than the other? Or did you see a freckle of the size of a fly’s foot?”

“The second is in her manner, which, in spite of its ease and apparent artlessness, has too much method in it. Her suavity is no more studied than her raptures. She is frosted all over,—frosted like a cake, I mean, and not with ice. And, to follow the image, I have no idea what sort of a compound the tasteful confectionery covers.”

“Well, if that is all, I think she has come out from under your scrutiny pretty well. I should like to see the woman in whom you would not find as many faults.”

“If a man does not notice trifles, he will never learn much of character. With women especially, one should be as observing as a Huron on the trail of an enemy.”

“Ferocious hunter, who supposed there were so many wiles in your simple heart?”

“Odd enough, there seemed to be a succession of warnings this evening. I was dazzled at first, I own,—almost hopelessly smitten. But Sandford gave me a jolt by bringing in business; he thinks there is to be a smash, and advises me to make hay while the sun shines. Then I talked with Mrs. Sandford.”



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“Now we come to the interesting part—to me!”

“But I shan’t gratify you, you mouser! It is enough to say, that in a few simple words, uttered, I am sure, without forethought, she placed my frivolity before me, and then showed me what I might and ought to be. I was like a grasshopper before, drunk with dew, and then sobered by a plunge into a clear, cool spring. Besides, I have thought more about your advice in regard to the lady, you dissembling old rascal! For you know that in such matters you never mean what you say; and when you counsel me to fall in love with a coquette, you only wish me to be warned in time and make good my escape. If it were light enough, I should see that grizzly moustache of yours curl like a cat’s, this minute. You can grin, you amiable Mephistopheles, but I know you! No, my dear Easemann, I am cured. I shall take hold of my pencils with new energy. I will save money and go abroad, and—I had nearly forgotten her! I will take a new look at my darling’s sweet face in my pocket, and, like Ulysses, I’ll put wax into my ears when I meet the singing Siren again.”

“I hope your rustic *fiancee* is not clairvoyant?”

“I hope not.”

“If she is, she will cry her little eyes out to-night.”

“Don’t speak of it, I beg of you.”

“You are getting lugubrious; we shall have to change the subject. Love affects people in as many different ways as wine. Some are exalted,—their feet spurn the earth, their heads are in the clouds; some pugnacious, walking about with a chip on the shoulder; others are stupidly happy,—their faces wearing a sickly smile that becomes painful to look at; others again, like you, melancholy as a wailing tenor in the last act of ‘Lucia.’ Like learning, a little draught of love is dangerous; drink largely and be sober. The charmer will not cast so powerful a spell upon you the next time, and you will come away more tranquil.”

There was just the least shade of sarcasm in the tone, and Greenleaf, as usual, was a little puzzled. For Easemann was a study,—always agreeable, never untruthful, but fond of launching an idea like a boomerang, to sweep away, apparently, but to return upon some unexpected curve. His real meaning could not always be gathered from any isolated sentence; and to strangers he was a living riddle. But Greenleaf had passed the excitable period, and had lapsed into a state of moody repentance and grim resolution.

“You need not tempt me,” he said, “even if that were your object, which I doubt, you sly fox! And if you mean only to pique my pride in order to cure my inconstancy to my



betrothed, I assure you it is quite unnecessary. I shall have too much self-respect to place myself in the way of temptation again.”

“Now you are growing disagreeable; the virtuous resolutions of a diner-out, on the headachy morning after, are never pleasant to hear. There is so much implied! One does not like to follow the idea backward to its naughty source. The penitent should keep his sermons and soda-water to himself.”



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“Well, here we are at home. We have walked a mile, and yet it seems but a furlong. If I were not so disagreeable as you say, we would take another turn about the Common.”

“Sleep will do you more good, my friend; and I think I’ll go home. I haven’t smoked since dinner. Good night!”

Greenleaf went to his room, but not at once to sleep; his nerves were still too tremulous. With the picture of Alice before him, he sat for hours in a dreamy reverie; and when at last he went to bed, he placed the miniature under his pillow.

### CHAPTER VIII.

#### A YOUNG FINANCIER AT HOME.

John Fletcher lived in a small, but neat house at the South End. Slender and youthful as he looked, he was not a bachelor, but had a pretty, fragile-looking wife, to whom he was married when only nineteen years of age. Such a union could have been brought about only by what the world calls an indiscretion, or from an unreflecting, hasty impulse. Girl as Mrs. Fletcher seemed to be, she was not without prudence as a housekeeper; and as far as she could command her inconstant temper, she made home attractive to her husband. But neither of them had the weight of character to act as a counterpoise to the vacillation of the other. It was not a sun and a planet, the one wheeling about the other, nor yet were they double stars, revolving about a centre common to both; their movements were like nothing so much as the freaks of a couple of pith-balls electrically excited, at one time drawn furiously together, and then capriciously repelling each other. Their loves, caresses, spats, quarrels, poutings, and reconciliations were as uncertain as the vagaries of the weather, as little guided by sense or reason as the passions of early childhood. On one subject they agreed at all times, and that was to pet and spoil most thoroughly their infant daughter, a puny, weak-voiced, slender-limbed, curly-haired child, with the least possible chance of living to the age of womanhood.

Fletcher was confidential clerk to the great banking-house of Foggarty, Danforth, and Dot. The senior partner rarely took any active part in business, but left it to the management of Danforth and Dot. Danforth had the active brain to plan, Dot the careful, cool faculty to execute. Fletcher had a good salary,—so large that he could always reserve a small margin for “outside operations,” by which in one way or another he generally contrived to lose.

The god he worshipped was Chance; by which I do not refer at all to any theory of the creation of matter, but to the course and order of human affairs. His drawers were full of old lottery-schemes; he did not long buy tickets, because he was too shrewd; but he made endless calculations upon the probability of drawing prizes,—provided the tickets

were really all sold, and the wheel fairly managed. A dice-box was always at hand upon the mantel.



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He had portraits of celebrated racers, both quadruped and biped, and he could tell the fastest time ever made by either. His manipulation of cards was, as his friends averred, one of the fine arts; and in all the games he had wrought out problems of chances, and knew the probability of every contingency. A stock-list was always tacked above his secretary, and another constantly in his pocket. And this evening he had brought home a revolving disk, having figures of various values engraved around its edge, carefully poised, with a hair-spring pointer, like a hand on a dial-plate.

“What have you got, John?” asked his wife.

“Only a toy, a plaything, deary. See it spin!” and he gave the disk a whirl.

“But what is it *for*?”

“Oh, nothing in particular. I thought we could amuse ourselves in turning it for the largest throws.”

“Is that all? It is a heavy thing, and must have cost a good lot of money.”

“Not much. Now see! You know I have tried to show you how chance rules the world; and if you once get the chances in your favor, all is right. Now suppose we take this wheel, and on the number 2,000 we paste ‘Michigan Central,’ ‘Western’ over 1,000, ‘Vermont and Massachusetts’ over 500, ‘Cary Improvement’ over 400, and so on. Now, after a certain number of revolutions, by keeping account, we get the chance of each stock to come up.”

“I don’t understand.”

“I don’t suppose you do; you don’t give your mind to it, as I do.”

“But you know you had the same notion once about cards, and pasted the names of the stocks on the court cards; and then you shuffled and cut and dealt and turned up, night after night.”

“Little doxy! small piece of property! you’d best attend to that baby, and other matters that you know something about.”

The “little doxy” felt strongly inclined to cry, but she kept back the sobs and said, “You know, John, how sullen and almost hateful you were before, when you were bewitched after those mean stocks. I don’t think you should meddle with such things; they are too big for you. Let the rich fools gamble, if they want to; if *they* lose, they can afford it, and nobody cares but to laugh at them. Oh, John, you promised me you wouldn’t gamble any more.”



“Well, I don’t gamble. I haven’t been to a faro bank for a year. I stay away just to please you, although I know all the chances, and could break the bank as easy as falling off a log.”

“You don’t gamble, you say, but you are uneasy till you put all your money at risk on those paper things. I don’t see the difference.”

“You *needn’t* see the difference; nobody asked you to see the difference. Gamble, indeed! there isn’t a man on the street that doesn’t keep an eye on the paper things, as you call them.”

“You see what I told you. You are cross. You like anything better (*a sob*) than your poor (*another*) neglected wife.”



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The sobs now thickened into a cry, and, with streaming eyes, she picked up the puny child and declared she was going to bed. To this proposal the moody man emphatically assented. But as Mrs. Fletcher passed near her husband, the child reached out its slender arms and caught hold of him by his cravat, screaming, "Papa! papa! I stay, papa!"

"Let go!" roughly exclaimed the amiable father. But she held the tighter, and shouted, "Papa! my papa!"

What sudden freak overcame his anger probably not even Fletcher himself could tell. But, turning towards his wife, who was supporting the child, whose little fingers still held him fast, his face cleared instantly, and, with a sudden movement, he drew the surprised and delighted woman down upon his knee, and loaded her with every form of childish endearment. Her tears and sorrows vanished together, like the dew.

"Little duck," said he, "if I were alone, I shouldn't care for any more money. I know I can always take care of myself. But for your sake I want to be independent,—rich, if you please. I want to be free. I want to meet that wily, smooth, plausible, damned, respectable villain face to face, and with as much money as he."

His eyes danced with a furious light and motion, and the fringy moustache trembled over his thin and sensitive mouth. But in a moment he repented the outbreak; for his wife's face blanched then, and the tears leaped from her eyes.

"Oh, John," she exclaimed, "what is this awful secret? I know that something is killing you. You mutter in sleep; you are sullen at times; and then you break out in this dreadful way."

Fletcher meditated. "I can't tell her; 'twould kill her, and not do any good either. No, one good streak of luck will set me up where I can defy him. I'll grin and bear it."

"What is it, John? Tell your poor little wife!"

"Oh, nothing, my dear. I do some business for Sandford, who is apt to be domineering,—that's all. To-day he provoked me, and when I am mad it does me good to swear; it's as natural as lightning out of a black cloud."

"It may do *you* good to swear, John; but it makes the cold chills run over me. Why do you have anything to do with anybody that treats you so? You are so changed from what you were! Oh, John, something is wrong, I know. Your face looks sharp and inquiring. You are thin and uneasy. There's a wrinkle in your cheek, that used to be as smooth as a girl's."

She patted his face softly, as it rested on her shoulder; but he made no reply save by an absent, half-audible whistle.



“You don’t answer me, John, dear!”

“I’ve nothing especial to say, doxy,—only that I will wind up with Sandford as soon as we finish the business in hand.”

“The business in hand? Has he anything to do with Foggarty, Danforth, and Dot?”

Fletcher was not skilful under cross-examination. So he simply answered, “No,” and then stopping her mouth with kisses, promised to explain the matter another day.



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“Well, John, I am tired; I think I’ll take baby and go to bed. Don’t sit up and get blue over your troubles!”

As she left the room, Fletcher drew a long breath. What an accent of despair was borne on that sigh! His busy brain was active in laying plans which his vacillating will could never execute without help. Often before, he had determined to confront Sandford and defy him; but as often he had quailed before that self-possessed and imperious man. What hope was there, then, for this timid, crouching man, as long as the hand of his haughty master was outstretched in command? None!

### CHAPTER IX.

STATE STREET.

The stringency of the money-market began to frighten even Mr. Sandford who had been predicting a panic. There had been but few failures, and those were generally of houses that ought to fail, being insolvent from losses or mismanagement. Mr. Sandford studied over his sheet of bills payable and receivable almost hourly. The amount intrusted to him by Monroe had been loaned out; for which he was now very sorry, as the rate of interest had nearly doubled since he made the last agreement. This, however, was but a small item in his accounts; other transactions of greater magnitude occupied his attention. As he looked over the array of promisors and indorsers, he said to himself, “I am safe. If these men fail, it will be because the universal bottom has dropped out and chaos come again. If anybody is shaky, it is Stearine. He believes, though, that Bullion will help him through, and extend that note. Perhaps he will. Perhaps, again, he will have enough to do to keep on his own legs. He fancies himself strong because he owns the most of the Neversink Mills. But he doesn’t know what I know, that Kerbstone, the treasurer of the Mills, is in the street every day, looking like a gambler when his last dollar is on the table. A few more turns of the screw and down goes Kerbstone. Who knows that the Mills won’t tumble, too, and Bullion after them? *He* may go hang; but we must look after Stearine, and prop him, unnecessary. That twenty thousand is more than we can afford to lose just now. Lucky, there he comes!”

Mr. Stearine entered, not with his usual smile, but with an expression like that of a man trying to be jolly with the toothache. A short, but dexterous cross-examination showed to Sandford, that, if the twenty-thousand-dollar note could be extended over to better times, Stearine was safe. But the note was soon due, and Bullion might be unable or unwilling to renew; in which case, the Vortex would have to meet it. That was a contingency to be provided against; for Mr. Sandford did not intend that the public should know that the credit of the Company had been used for private purposes by its officers. He therefore called in Mr. Fayerweather, the President, and the affair was talked over and settled between them.



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“One thing more,” said Sandford. “Suppose any one *should* get wind of this, and grow suspicious;—Bullion himself might be foolish enough to let the cat out of the bag;—we might find the shares of the Vortex in the market, and the bears running them down to an uncomfortable figure.”

“True enough. We must stop that.”

“The only way is to keep a sharp lookout, and if any of the stock is offered, to buy it up. Half a dozen of us can take all that will be likely to come into market.”

“How many shares do you own, Sandford?” asked Mr. Fayerweather, with a quizzical look. “Is this a nice little scheme of yours to run them off at par? It’s a shrewd dodge.”

“You do me wrong,” said Sandford, with a look of wounded innocence. “I merely want to sustain the credit of the Company.”

“Oh, no doubt!” said the President. “Well, we will agree, then, not to let the shares fall below ninety, say. It would be suspicious, I think, to hold them higher than that, when money is two and a half per cent. a month.”

“Very well. You will see to this? Be careful what men you speak to.”

Mr. Sandford, being left alone, bethought him of Monroe. He did not wish to give him a statement of affairs; he had put him off once, and must find some way to satisfy him. How was it to be done? The financier meditated. “I have it,” said he; “I’ll send him a quarter’s interest in advance. That’s as much as I can spare in these times, when interest grows like those miraculous pumpkin-vines out West.” He drew a check for two hundred dollars, and dispatched it to Monroe by letter.

So Mr. Sandford had all things snug. The Vortex was going on under close-reefed topsails. If the notes he held were paid as they matured, he would have money for new operations; if not, he had arranged that the debtors should be piloted over the bar and anchored in safely till the storm should blow over. Everything was secured, as far as human foresight could anticipate.

Mr. Sandford had now but little use for Fletcher’s services, except to look after his debtors,—to know who was “shinning” in the street, or “kite-flying” with accommodation-paper. Still he did not admit the agent into his confidence. But this active and scheming mind was not long without employment. Mr. Bullion had seen him in frequent communication with Sandford, and thereby formed a high opinion of his shrewdness and tact; for he knew that Sandford was very wary in selecting his associates. He sought Fletcher.

“Young man,” said Bullion, pointing his wisp of an eyebrow at him, “do you want a job? Few words and keep mum. Yes or no?”



“Yes,” said Fletcher, decidedly.

“I like your pluck,” said Bullion.

“It doesn’t take much pluck to follow Mr. Bullion’s lead.”

“None of your nonsense. How do you know anything about me, or what I am going to do? I may fail to-morrow,—God forbid!—but when the wind comes, it’s the tall trees that are knocked over.”



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Fletcher thought the comparison rather ludicrous for a man standing on such remarkably short pegs, but he said nothing.

"I mean to sell a few shares of stock, and I want you to do the business. I am not to be known in it."

Fletcher bowed, and asked what the stocks were.

"No matter; any you can sell to advantage. I haven't a share, but I needn't tell you *that* doesn't make any difference."

"Let me understand you clearly," said Fletcher.

"Sell under. For instance, take a stock that sells to-day at ninety-four; offer to deliver it five days hence at ninety. To-morrow offer it a peg lower, and so on, till the market is easier. When the first contract is up, we shall get the stock at eighty-eight, or less, perhaps,—deliver to the buyers, and pocket the difference."

"But it may not fall."

"It's bound to fall. People that hold stock *must* sell to pay their notes. Every day brings a fresh lot of shares to the hammer."

"But the bulls may corner you; they will try mightily to keep prices up."

"But they can't corner, I tell you; there are too many of them in distress. Besides, we'll spread; we won't put all our eggs into one basket. If I stuck to 'bearing' one stock, the holders might get all the shares and break me by keeping them so that I couldn't comply with my contracts. I shan't do it. I'll pitch into the 'fancies' mainly; they are held by speculators, who must be short, and they'll come down with a run."

"How deep shall I go in?"

"Fifty thousand, to begin with. However, there won't be many transfers actually made; the bulls will merely pay the differences."

"Or else waddle out of the street lame ducks."

Bullion rubbed his hands, while his eyes shone with a colder glitter.

"Well, you are a bear, truly," said Fletcher, with unfeigned admiration,—*"a real Ursa Major."*

"To be sure, I'm a bear. What's the use in being a bull in times like these, to be skinned and sold for your hide and tallow?"



“The market is falling, and no mistake.”

“Yes, and will fall lower. Stocks haven’t been down since ’37 so low as you will see them a month from now.”

Fletcher bowed—and waited. Bullion pointed the eyebrow again.

“You don’t want to begin on an uncertainty. I see. Sharp. Proper enough. I’ll give you ten per cent. of the profits,—you to pay the commissions. Each day’s work to be set down, and at the end of each week I’ll give you a note for your share. That do? I thought it would. I offer a liberal figure, for I think you know something, youngster. Use your judgment, now. Consult me, of course; but mum’s the word. If any stock is pushed in, lay hold, and don’t be afraid. The holders must sell, and they must sacrifice. We’ll skin ’em, by G—,” said Bullion, with an excitement that was rare in a cool, hard head like his. Then thinking he had been too outspoken, he resumed his former concise manner.



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“All fair, you know. Bargain is a bargain. They must sell; we won’t buy, without we buy cheap; their loss, to be sure, but our gain. All trade on the same plan. Seller gets the most he can; buyer pays only what he must.”

“That’s it,” said Fletcher. “Every man for himself in this world.”

“Well, good morning, young man. Sharp’s the word. Call at my office this afternoon.” And, with a queer sweep of the pointed eyebrow, he departed.

What visions of opulence rose before Fletcher’s fancy! He would now lay the foundations of his fortune, and, perhaps, accomplish it. He would become a power in State Street; and, best of all, he would escape from his slavery to Sandford, and perhaps even patronize the haughty man he had so long served. How to begin? He could not attend the sales at the Brokers’ Board in person, as he was not a member. Should he confide in Danforth? No,—for, with his relations to the house, his own share in the profits would be whittled down. He determined to employ Tonsor, an old acquaintance, who would be glad to buy and sell for the regular commissions. The preliminaries were speedily concluded, and a list of stocks made out on which to operate. The excitement was almost too great for Fletcher to bear. As he counted the piles of bank-bills on his employers’ counter, or stacked up heaps of coin, in his ordinary business, he fancied himself another Ali Baba, in a cave to which he had found the Open Sesame, and he could hardly contain himself till the time should come when he should take possession of his unimaginable wealth. He had built air-castles before, but never one so magnificent, so real. He could have hugged Bullion, bear as he was.—We leave Fletcher and his principal on the high road to success.

## CHAPTER X.

### THE SIREN COMES TO THE SEA-SHORE.

Greenleaf worked assiduously upon his landscapes, and, notwithstanding the pressure in the money-market, was fortunate enough to dispose of them to gentlemen whose incomes were not affected by the vicissitudes of business. For this he was principally indebted to Sandford, who took pains to bring his works to the notice of connoisseurs. But, with all his success, the object of his ambition was as far off as at first. Imperceptibly he had acquired expensive habits. He was not prodigal, not extravagant; but, having a keen sense of the beautiful, he gradually became more fastidious in dress, and in all those nameless elegancies which seem of right to belong to the accomplished man, as to the gentleman in easy circumstances. This desire for ease and luxury did not conflict with simplicity; he seemed born for all the enjoyment which the most cultivated society could bestow. He had the power to spend the income of a fortune worthily; unhappily, he did not have it to spend. He had written constantly to his betrothed, and when he told her of the prices he had received for his pictures,



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he was at a loss how to make her comprehend the new relations into which he had grown,—to explain that he was practically as poor as when he first came to the city. How could he assure her of his desire to end the engagement in marriage, if he spoke of postponement now that he had an income beyond his first expectations? Imperceptibly to himself, his letters became more like intellectual conversations, or essays, rather,—pleasant enough in themselves, but far different from the simple and fervent epistles he wrote while the memory of Alice was fresher. *She* felt this, although she had not reasoned upon it, and her sensitive womanly heart was full of vague forebodings.

Would he confess to himself, that, as he looked at her cherished picture, another face, with a more brilliant air and a more dazzling beauty, came between him and the silent image before him? Dared he to think, that, in his frequent visits to Miss Sandford, the ties which bound him to his betrothed were daily weakening?—that he found a charm in the very caprices and waywardness of the new love, which the unvarying constancy and placid affection of the old had never created? The one put her heart unreservedly into his keeping; she knew nothing of concealment, and he read her as he would an unsophisticated child; there was not a nook or cranny in her heart, he thought, that he had not explored. The other was full of surprises; she had as many phases as an April day; and from mere curiosity, if from no other motive, Greenleaf was piqued to follow on to understand her real character. The apprehensions he felt at first wore away; he became accustomed to her measured sentences and her apparently artificial manner. What seemed affectation now became a natural expression. The secret influence she exerted increased, and, at length, possessed him wholly while in her company. It drew him as the moon draws the tides, silently, unconsciously, but with a power he could not resist. It was only when he was away from her that he could reason himself into a belief in his independence.

Greenleaf and Easemann were at Nahant at the close of the season. A few straggling visitors only remained; the fashionable world had returned to the city. The friends wandered over the rocky peninsula, walked the long beach that leads to the main land, sketched the sea from the shore, and the shore from the sea, and watched and transferred the changing phases of Nature in sunshine and in storm. They were fortunate enough to see one magnificent tempest, by which the ocean was lashed into fury, breaking in thunder over the rugged coast-line, and dashing spray sheer over the huge back of Egg Rock.

Miss Sandford's threat was carried into execution; the family came to the hotel, and, for a week, Greenleaf and his friend were most devoted in their attentions. Marcia was charmed with their sketches, and, with a tact as delicate as it is rare, gave them time for their cherished pursuits, and planned excursions only for their unemployed hours. They collected colored mosses, star-fish, and other marine curiosities; they sailed, fished,



scampered over the rocks, drove over the beach at twilight, sang, danced, and bowled. And when weary of active amusement, they reclined on the grass and listened to the melancholy rote of the sea,—the steady pulsations of its mighty heart.



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Easelmann, with his usual raillery, congratulated his friend on his prospects, and declared that the pupil was surpassing the teacher in the beau's arts.

"Finely, Greenleaf! You are just coming to the interesting part of the process. You are a little flushed, however,—not quite cool enough. A wily adversary she is; if you allow your feelings to run away with you, it's all up. She will hold the reins as coolly as you held your trotting pony yesterday. Keep the bits out of your mouth, my boy."

"Don't trouble yourself. I shall keep cool. I am not going to make a fool of myself by proposing."

"Oh, you aren't? We shall see. But she'll refuse you, and then you'll come to your senses."

"I'm deusedly afraid she would accept me."

"The vanity of mankind! Don't tell me that women are vain. Every man thinks himself irresistible,—that he has only to call, to have the women come round him like colts around a farmer with a measure of corn. Shake the kernels in your dish, and cry, 'Kerjock!' Perhaps she *will* come."

"I suppose you think, with Hosea Bigelow, that

""Ta'n't a knowin' kind o' cattle  
That is ketched with mouldy corn.""

"I needn't tell you that Marcia Sandford is knowing,—too knowing to let an enthusiastic lover relapse into a humdrum husband. You amuse her now: for she likes to enjoy poetry and sentiment, dances, rides, and rambles, in company with a man of fresh susceptibilities;—a good phrase that, 'fresh susceptibilities.'—The instant you become serious and ask her to marry you, the dream is over; she will hate you."

"Well, what is to become of a lady like this,—a creature you think too bright, if not too good, for human nature's daily food?"

"An easy prophecy. The destiny of a pretty woman is to catch lovers."

"The cat doth play, and after slay," said Greenleaf, laughing.

"Play while you can, my dear boy; if she *is* a cat, you'll get the final *coup* soon enough. To finish the fortune-telling,—she will continue her present delightful pursuits as long as youth and beauty last; and the beauty will last a long time after the youth has gone. She *may* pick up some young man of fortune and marry him; but it is not likely; the rich always marry the rich. Just this side of the *blase* period, while still in the fulness of her charms, she will open her battery of smiles upon some wealthy old widower and compel



him to place her at the head of his establishment. Then, with a secure position and increased facilities, she will draw new throngs of admirers, as long as she has power to fascinate, or until there are no more fools left.”

“A pleasing picture of domestic felicity for the husband!”

“Precisely what he deserves. When an old fool marries a young flirt, he deserves to wear whatever honors she may bestow upon him.”



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“Do you remember how you artfully persuaded me into this intimacy? And now you are making game of me for following your own suggestions.”

“Me? I never suggest; I never persuade.”

“You did, you crafty old fox! You advised me to fall in love with her.”

“Did I? Well, I think now you have gone far enough. A sip from the cup of enchantment is quite sufficient; you needn’t swallow the whole of it.”

“But people can’t always control themselves. Can you trust yourself to stop this side of insensibility, when you take ether? or be sure you won’t get drunk, if you commence the evening with a party of dissipated fellows?”

“That will do, my friend. I know there are people who are fond of confessing their weakness; don’t you do it. Where is the supremacy of mind and will, and all that nonsense, if a man can’t amuse himself with a clever woman’s artifices without tumbling into the snare he is watching?”

“We’ll see how you succeed with the charming widow,—whether the wise man, when his own *jecur* is pierced with the arrow, may not show it, as well as other people. And by-the-by, you will have an excellent opportunity for your experiment. Marcia and I are going to take a sail this afternoon, and you can entertain Mrs. Sandford while we are gone.”

Easelmann softly whistled.

[To be continued.]

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## THE PROFESSOR AT THE BREAKFAST-TABLE.

WHAT HE SAID, WHAT HE HEARD, AND WHAT HE SAW.

I intended to have signalized my first appearance by a certain large statement, which I flatter myself is the nearest approach to a universal formula of life yet promulgated at this breakfast-table. It would have had a grand effect. For this purpose I fixed my eyes on a certain divinity-student, with the intention of exchanging a few phrases, and then forcing my picture-card, namely, *The great end of being*.—I will thank you for the sugar,—I said.—Man is a dependent creature.

It is a small favor to ask,—said the divinity-student,—and passed the sugar to me.



—Life is a great bundle of little things,—I said.

The divinity-student smiled, as if that was the concluding epigram of the sugar question.

You smile,—I said.—Perhaps life seems to you a little bundle of great things?

The divinity-student started a laugh, but suddenly reined it back with a pull, as one throws a horse on his haunches.—Life is a great bundle of great things,—he said.

(*Now, then!*) The great end of being, after all, is——

Hold on!—said my neighbor, a young fellow whose name seems to be John, and nothing else,—for that is what they all call him,—hold on! the Sculpin is go'n' to say somethin'.



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Now the Sculpin (*Cottus Virginianus*) is a little water-beast which pretends to consider itself a fish, and, under that pretext, hangs about the piles upon which West-Boston Bridge is built, swallowing the bait and hook intended for flounders. On being drawn from the water, it exposes an immense head, a diminutive bony carcass, and a surface so full of spines, ridges, ruffles, and frills, that the naturalists have not been able to count them without quarrelling about the number, and that the colored youth, whose sport they spoil, do not like to touch them, and especially to tread on them, unless they happen to have shoes on, to cover the thick white soles of their broad black feet.

When, therefore, I heard the young fellow's exclamation, I looked round the table with curiosity to see what it meant. At the further end of it I saw a head, and a small portion of a little deformed body, mounted on a high chair, which brought the occupant up to a fair level enough for him to get at his food. His whole appearance was so grotesque, I felt for a minute as if there was a showman behind him who would pull him down presently and put up Judy, or the hangman, or the Devil, or some other wooden personage of the famous spectacle. I contrived to lose the first part of his sentence, but what I heard began so:—

—by the Frog-Pond, when there were frogs in it, and the folks used to come down from the tents on 'Lection and Independence days with their pails to get water to make egg-pop with. Born in Boston; went to school in Boston as long as the boys would let me.—The little man groaned, turned, as if to look round, and went on.—Ran away from school one day to see Phillips hung for killing Denegri with a loggerhead. That was in flip days, when there were always two or three loggerheads in the fire. I'm a Boston boy, I tell you,—born at North End, and mean to be buried on Copps' Hill, with the good old underground people,—the Worthylakes, and the rest of 'em. Yes, Sir,—up on the old hill, where they buried Captain Daniel Malcolm in a stone grave, ten feet deep, to keep him safe from the red-coats, in those old times when the world was frozen up tight and there wasn't but one spot open, and that was right over Faneuil Hall,—and black enough it looked, I tell you! There's where my bones shall lie, Sir, and rattle away when the big guns go off at the Navy Yard opposite! You can't make me ashamed of the old place! Full of crooked little streets;—I was born and used to run round in one of 'em

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—I should think so,—said that young man whom I hear them call "John,"—softly, not meaning to be heard, nor to be cruel, but thinking in a half-whisper, evidently.—I should think so; and got kinked up, turnin' so many corners.—The little man did not hear what was said, but went on,—

—full of crooked little streets; but I tell you Boston has opened, and kept open, more turnpikes that lead straight to free thought and free speech and free deeds than any other city of live men or dead men,—I don't care how broad their streets are, nor how high their steeples!



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—How high is Bosting meet'n'-house?—said a person with black whiskers and imperial, a velvet waistcoat, a guard-chain rather *too* massive, and a diamond pin so *very* large that the most trusting nature might confess an inward *suggestion*,—of course, nothing amounting to a suspicion. For this is a gentleman from a great city, and sits next to the landlady's daughter, who evidently believes in him, and is the object of his especial attention.

How high?—said the little man.—As high as the first step of the stairs that lead to the New Jerusalem. Isn't that high enough?

It is,—I said.—The great end of being is to harmonize man with the order of things; and the church has been a good pitch-pipe, and may be so still. But who shall tune the pitch-pipe? *Quis cus*—(On the whole, as this quotation was not entirely new, and, being in a foreign language, might not be familiar to all the boarders, I thought I would not finish it.)

—Go to the Bible!—said a sharp voice from a sharp-faced, sharp-eyed, sharp-elbowed, strenuous-looking woman in a black dress, appearing as if it began as a piece of mourning and perpetuated itself as a bit of economy.

You speak well, Madam,—I said;—yet there is room for a gloss or commentary on what you say. "He who would bring back the wealth of the Indies must carry out the wealth of the Indies." What you bring away from the Bible depends to some extent on what you carry to it—Benjamin Franklin! Be so good as to step up to my chamber and bring me down the small uncovered pamphlet of twenty pages which you will find lying under the "Cruden's Concordance." [The boy took a large bite, which left a very perfect crescent in the slice of bread-and-butter he held, and departed on his errand, with the portable fraction of his breakfast to sustain him on the way.]

Here it is. "Go to the Bible. A Dissertation, *etc.*, *etc.* By J.J. Flourney. Athens, Georgia. 1858."

Mr. Flourney, Madam, has obeyed the precept which you have judiciously delivered. You may be interested, Madam, to know what are the conclusions at which Mr. J.J. Flourney of Athens, Georgia, has arrived. You shall hear, Madam. He has gone to the Bible, and he has come back from the Bible, bringing a remedy for existing social evils, which, if it is the real specific, as it professes to be, is of great interest to humanity, and to the female part of humanity in particular. It is what he calls *trigamy*, Madam, or the marrying of three wives, so that "good old men" may be solaced at once by the companionship of the wisdom of maturity, and of those less perfected but hardly less engaging qualities which are found at an earlier period of life. He has followed your precept, Madam; I hope you accept his conclusions.

The female boarder in black attire looked so puzzled, and, in fact, “all abroad,” after the delivery of this “counter” of mine, that I left her to recover her wits, and went on with the conversation, which I was beginning to get pretty well in hand.



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But in the mean time I kept my eye on the female boarder to see what effect I had produced. First, she was a little stunned at having her argument knocked over. Secondly, she was a little shocked at the tremendous character of the triple matrimonial suggestion. Thirdly.— I don't like to say what I thought. Something seemed to have pleased her fancy. Whether it was, that, if trigamy should come into fashion, there would be three times as many chances to enjoy the luxury of saying, "No!" is more than I can tell you. I may as well mention that B.F. came to me after breakfast to borrow the pamphlet for "a lady,"—one of the boarders, he said,—looking as if he had a secret he wished to be relieved of.

—I continued.—If a human soul is necessarily to be trained up in the faith of those from whom it inherits its body, why, there is the end of all reason. If, sooner or later, every soul is to look for truth with its own eyes, the first thing is to recognize that no presumption in favor of any particular belief arises from the fact of our inheriting it. Otherwise you would not give the Mahometan a fair chance to become a convert to a better religion.

The second thing would be to depolarize every fixed religious idea in the mind by changing the word which stands for it.—I don't know what you mean by "depolarizing" an idea,—said the divinity-student.

I will tell you,—I said.—When a given symbol which represents a thought has lain for a certain length of time in the mind, it undergoes a change like that which rest in a certain position gives to iron. It becomes magnetic in its relations,—it is traversed by strange forces which did not belong to it. The word, and consequently the idea it represents, is *polarized*.

The religious currency of mankind, in thought, in speech, and in print, consists entirely of polarized words. Borrow one of these from another language and religion, and you will find it leaves all its magnetism behind it. Take that famous word, O'm, of the Hindoo mythology. Even a priest cannot pronounce it without sin; and a holy Pundit would shut his ears and run away from you in horror, if you should say it aloud. What do you care for O'm? If you wanted to get the Pundit to look at his religion fairly, you must first depolarize this and all similar words for him. The argument for and against new translations of the Bible really turns on this. Skepticism is afraid to trust its truths in depolarized words, and so cries out against a new translation. I think, myself, if every idea our Book contains could be shelled out of its old symbol and put into a new, clean, unmagnetic word, we should have some chance of reading it as philosophers, or wisdom-lovers, ought to read it,—which we do not and cannot now, any more than a Hindoo can read the "Gayatri" as a fair man and lover of truth should do. When society has once fairly dissolved the New Testament, which it never has done yet, it will perhaps crystallize it over again in new forms of language.



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—I didn't know you was a settled minister over this parish,—said the young fellow near me.

A sermon by a lay-preacher may be worth listening to,—I replied, calmly.—It gives the *parallax* of thought and feeling as they appear to the observers from two very different points of view. If you wish to get the distance of a heavenly body, you know that you must take two observations from distant points of the earth's orbit,—in midsummer and midwinter, for instance. To get the parallax of heavenly truths, you must take an observation from the position of the laity as well as of the clergy. Teachers and students of theology get a certain look, certain conventional tones of voice, a clerical gait, a professional neckcloth, and habits of mind as professional as their externals. They are scholarly men and read Bacon, and know well enough what the "idols of the tribe" are. Of course they have their false gods, as all men that follow one exclusive calling are prone to do.—The clergy have played the part of the fly-wheel in our modern civilization. They have never suffered it to stop. They have often carried on its movement, when other moving powers failed, by the momentum stored in their vast body. Sometimes, too, they have kept it back by their *vis inertiae*, when its wheels were like to grind the bones of some old canonized error into fertilizers for the soil that yields the bread of life. But the mainspring of the world's onward religious movement is not in them, nor in any one body of men, let me tell you. It is the people that makes the clergy, and not the clergy that makes the people. Of course, the profession reacts on its source with variable energy.—But there never was a guild of dealers or a company of craftsmen that did not need sharp looking after.

Our old friend, Dr. Holyoke, whom we gave the dinner to some time since, must have known many people that saw the great bonfire in Harvard College yard.

—Bonfire?—shrieked the little man.—The bonfire when Robert Calef's book was burned?

The same,—I said,—when Robert Calef the Boston merchant's book was burned in the yard of Harvard College, by order of Increase Mather, President of the College and Minister of the Gospel. You remember the old witchcraft revival of '92, and how stout Master Robert Calef, trader, of Boston, had the pluck to tell the ministers and judges what a set of fools and worse than fools they were—

Remember it?—said the little man.—I don't think I shall forget it, as long as I can stretch this forefinger to point with, and see what it wears.—There was a ring on it.

May I look at it?—I said.

Where it is,—said the little man;—it will never come off, till it falls off from the bone in the darkness and in the dust.



He pushed the high chair on which he sat slightly back from the table, and dropped himself, standing, to the floor,—his head being only a little above the level of the table, as he stood. With pain and labor, lifting one foot over the other, as a drummer handles his sticks, he took a few steps from his place,—his motions and the dead beat of the misshapen boots announcing to my practised eye and ear the malformation which is called in learned language *talipes varus*, or inverted club-foot.



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Stop! stop!—I said,—let me come to you.

The little man hobbled back, and lifted himself by the left arm, with an ease approaching to grace which surprised me, into his high chair. I walked to his side, and he stretched out the forefinger of his right hand, with the ring upon it. The ring had been put on long ago, and could not pass the misshapen joint. It was one of those funeral rings which used to be given to relatives and friends after the decease of persons of any note or importance. Beneath a round bit of glass was a death's head. Engraved on one side of this, "L.B. AEt. 22,"—on the other, "Ob. 1692."

My grandmother's grandmother,—said the little man.—Hanged for a witch. It doesn't seem a great while ago. I knew my grandmother, and loved her. Her mother was daughter to the witch that Chief Justice Sewall hanged and Cotton Mather delivered over to the Devil.—That was Salem, though, and not Boston. No, not Boston. Robert Calef, the Boston merchant, it was that blew them all to——

Never mind where he blew them to,—I said;—for the little man was getting red in the face, and I didn't know what might come next.

This episode broke me up, as the jockeys say, out of my square conversational trot; but I settled down to it again.

——A man that knows men, in the street, at their work, human nature in its shirt-sleeves,—who makes bargains with deacons, instead of talking over texts with them,—a man who has found out that there are plenty of praying rogues and swearing saints in the world,—above all, who has found out, by living into the pith and core of life, that all of thy Deity which can be folded up between the sheets of any human book is to the Deity of the firmament, of the strata, of the hot aortic flood of throbbing human life, of this infinite, instantaneous consciousness in which the soul's being consists,—an incandescent point in the filament connecting the negative pole of a past eternity with the positive pole of an eternity that is to come,—that all of the Deity which any human book can hold is to this larger Deity of the working battery of the universe only as the films in a book of gold-leaf are to the broad seams and curdled lumps of ore that lie in unsunned mines and virgin placers,——Oh!—I was saying that a man who lives out-of-doors, among live people, gets some things into his head he might not find in the index of his "Body of Divinity."

I tell you what,—the idea of the professions' digging a moat round their close corporations, like that Japanese one at Jeddo, which you could put Park-Street Church on the bottom of and look over the vane from its side, and try to stretch another such spire across it without spanning the chasm,—that idea, I say, is pretty nearly worn out. Now when a civilization or a civilized custom falls into senile *dementia*, there is commonly a judgment ripe for it, and it comes as plagues come, from a breath,—as fires come, from a spark.



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Here, look at medicine. Big wigs, gold-headed canes, Latin prescriptions, shops full of abominations, recipes a yard long, “curing” patients by drugging as sailors bring a wind by whistling, selling lies at a guinea apiece,—a routine, in short, of giving unfortunate sick people a mess of things either too odious to swallow or too acrid to hold, or, if that were possible, both at once.

—You don’t know what I mean, indignant and not unintelligent country-practitioner? Then you don’t know the history of medicine,—and that is not my fault. But don’t expose yourself in any outbreak of eloquence; for, by the mortar in which Anaxagoras was pounded! I did not bring home Schenckius and Forestus and Hildanus, and all the old folios in calf and vellum I will show you, to be bullied by the proprietor of a “Wood and Bache,” and a shelf of peppered sheepskin reprints by Philadelphia Editors. Besides, many of the profession and I know a little something of each other, and you don’t think I am such a simpleton as to lose their good opinion by saying what the better heads among them would condemn as unfair and untrue? Now mark how the great plague came on the generation of drugging doctors, and in what form it fell.

A scheming drug-vendor, (inventive genius,) an utterly untrustworthy and incompetent observer, (profound searcher of Nature,) a shallow dabbler in erudition, (sagacious scholar,) started the monstrous fiction (founded the immortal system) of Homeopathy. I am very fair, you see,—you can help yourself to either of these sets of phrases.

All the reason in the world would not have had so rapid and general an effect on the public mind to disabuse it of the idea that a drug is a good thing in itself, instead of being, as it is, a bad thing, as was produced by the trick (system) of this German charlatan (theorist). Not that the wiser part of the profession needed him to teach them; but the routinists and their employers, the “general practitioners,” who lived by selling pills and mixtures, and their drug-consuming customers had to recognize that people could get well, unpoisoned. These dumb cattle would not learn it of themselves, and so the murrain of Homeopathy fell on them.

—You don’t know what plague has fallen on the practitioners of theology? I will tell you, then. It is SPIRITUALISM. While some are crying out against it as a delusion of the Devil, and some are laughing at it as an hysteric folly, and some are getting angry with it as a mere trick of interested or mischievous persons, Spiritualism is quietly undermining the traditional ideas of the future state which have been and are still accepted,—not merely in those who believe in it, but in the general sentiment of the community, to a larger extent than most good people seem to be aware of. It needn’t be true, to do this, any more than Homeopathy need, to do its work. The Spiritualists have some pretty strong instincts to pry over, which no doubt have been



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roughly handled by theologians at different times. And the Nemesis of the pulpit comes, in a shape it little thought of, beginning with the snap of a toe-joint, and ending with such a crack of old beliefs that the roar of it is heard in all the ministers' studies of Christendom! Sir, you cannot have people of cultivation, of pure character, sensible enough in common things, large-hearted women, grave judges, shrewd business-men, men of science, professing to be in communication with the spiritual world and keeping up constant intercourse with it, without its gradually reacting on the whole conception of that other life. It is the folly of the world, constantly, which confounds its wisdom. Not only out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, but out of the mouths of fools and cheats, we may often get our truest lessons. For the fool's judgment is a dog-vane that turns with a breath, and the cheat watches the clouds and sets his weathercock by them,—so that one shall often see by their pointing which way the winds of heaven are blowing, when the slow-wheeling arrows and feathers of what we call the Temples of Wisdom are turning to all points of the compass.

—Amen!—said the young fellow called John.—Ten minutes by the watch. Those that are unanimous will please to signify by holding up their left foot!

I looked this young man steadily in the face for about thirty seconds. His countenance was as calm as that of a reposing infant. I think it was simplicity, rather than mischief, with perhaps a youthful playfulness, that led him to this outbreak. I have often noticed that even quiet horses, on a sharp November morning, when their coats are just beginning to get the winter roughness, will give little sportive demi-kicks, with slight sudden elevation of the subsequent region of the body, and a sharp short whinny,—by no means intending to put their heels through the dasher, or to address the driver rudely, but feeling, to use a familiar word, frisky. This, I think, is the physiological condition of the young person, John. I noticed, however, what I should call a *palpebral spasm*, affecting the eyelid and muscles of one side, which, if it were intended for the facial gesture called a wink, might lead me to suspect a disposition to be satirical on his part.

—Resuming the conversation, I remarked,—I am, *ex officio*, as a Professor, a conservative. For I don't know any fruit that clings to its tree so faithfully, not even a "froze-'n'-thaw" winter-apple, as a Professor to the bough of which his chair is made. You can't shake him off, and it is as much as you can do to pull him off. Hence, by a chain of induction I need not unwind, he tends to conservatism generally.

But then, you know, if you are sailing the Atlantic, and all at once find yourself in a current and the sea covered with weeds, and drop your Fahrenheit over the side and find it eight or ten degrees higher than in the ocean generally, there is no use in flying in the face of facts and swearing there is no such thing as a Gulf-Stream, when you are in it.



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You can't keep gas in a bladder, and you can't keep knowledge tight in a profession. Hydrogen will leak out, and air will leak in, through India-rubber; and special knowledge will leak out, and general knowledge will leak in, though a profession were covered with twenty thicknesses of sheepskin diplomas. By Jove, Sir, till common sense is well mixed up with medicine, and common manhood with theology, and common honesty with law, *We the people*, Sir, some of us with nutcrackers, and some of us with trip-hammers, and some of us with pile-drivers, and some of us coming with a wish! like air-stones out of a lunar volcano, will crash down on the lumps of nonsense in all of them till we have made powder of them like Aaron's calf!

If to be a conservative is to let all the drains of thought choke up and keep all the soul's windows down,—to shut out the sun from the east and the wind from the west,—to let the rats run free in the cellar, and the moths feed their fill in the chambers, and the spiders weave their lace before the mirrors, till the soul's typhus is bred out of our neglect, and we begin to snore in its coma or rave in its delirium,—I, Sir, am a *bonnet-rouge*, a red-cap of the barricades, my friends, rather than a conservative.

—Were you born in Boston, Sir?—said the little man,—looking eager and excited.

I was not,—I replied.

It's a pity,—it's a pity,—said the little man;—it's the place to be born in. But if you can't fix it so as to be born here, you can come and live here. Old Ben Franklin, the father of American science and the American Union, wasn't ashamed to be born here. Jim Otis, the father of American Independence, bothered about in the Cape Cod marshes awhile, but he came to Boston as soon as he got big enough. Joe Warren, the first bloody ruffled-shirt of the Revolution, was as good as born here. Parson Charming strolled along this way from Newport, and staid here. Pity old Sam Hopkins hadn't come, too;—we'd have made a man of him.—poor, dear, good old Christian heathen! There he lies, as peaceful as a young baby, in the old burying-ground! I've stood on the slab many a time. Meant well,—meant well. Juggernaut. Parson Charming put a little oil on one linchpin, and slipped it out so softly, the first thing they knew about it was the wheel of that side was down. T'other fellow's at work now; but he makes more noise about it. When the linchpin comes out on his side, there'll be a jerk, I tell you! Some think it will spoil the old cart, and they pretend to say that there are valuable things in it which may get hurt. Hope not,—hope not. But this is the great Macadamizing place,—always cracking up something.

Cracking up Boston folks,—said the gentleman with the *diamond-pin*, whom, for convenience' sake, I shall hereafter call the *Koh-i-noor*.

The little man turned round mechanically towards him, as Maelzel's Turk used to turn, carrying his head slowly and horizontally, as if it went by cogwheels.—Cracking up all sorts of things,—native and foreign vermin included,—said the little man.



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This remark was thought by some of us to have a hidden personal application, and to afford a fair opening for a lively rejoinder, if the Koh-i-noor had been so disposed. The little man uttered it with the distinct wooden calmness with which the ingenious Turk used to exclaim, *E-chec!* so that it *must* have been heard. The party supposed to be interested in the remark was, however, carrying a large knife-blade-full of something to his mouth just then, which, no doubt, interfered with the reply he would have made.

—My friend who used to board here was accustomed sometimes, in a pleasant way, to call himself the *Autocrat* of the table,—meaning, I suppose, that he had it all his own way among the boarders. I think our small boarder here is like to prove a refractory subject, if I undertake to use the sceptre my friend meant to bequeathe me, too magisterially. I won't deny that sometimes, on rare occasions, when I have been in company with gentlemen who *preferred* listening, I have been guilty of the same kind of usurpation which my friend openly justified. But I maintain, that I, the Professor, am a good listener. If a man can tell me a fact which subtends an appreciable angle in the horizon of thought, I am as receptive as the contribution-box in a congregation of colored brethren. If, when I am exposing my intellectual dry-goods, a man will begin a good story, I will have them all in, and my shutters up, before he has got to the fifth “says he,” and listen like a three-years' child, as the author of the “Old Sailor” says. I had rather hear one of those grand elemental laughs from either of our two Georges, (fictitious names, Sir or Madam,) or listen to one of those old playbills of our College days, in which “Tom and Jerry” (“Thomas and Jeremiah,” as the old Greek Professor was said to call it) was announced to be brought on the stage with the whole force of the Faculty, read by our Frederick, (no such person, of course,) than say the best things I might by any chance find myself capable of saying. Of course, if I come across a real thinker, a suggestive, acute, illuminating, informing talker, I enjoy the luxury of sitting still for a while as much as another.

Nobody talks much that doesn't say unwise things,—things he did not mean to say; as no person plays much without striking a false note sometimes. Talk, to me, is only spading up the ground for crops of thought. I can't answer for what will turn up. If I could, it wouldn't be talking, but “speaking my piece.” Better, I think, the hearty abandonment of one's self to the suggestions of the moment, at the risk of an occasional slip of the tongue, perceived the instant it escapes, but, just one syllable too late, than the royal reputation of never saying a foolish thing.

—What shall I do with this little man?—There is only one thing to do,—and that is, to let him talk when he will. The day of the “Autocrat's” monologues is over.



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—My friend,—said I to the young fellow whom, as I have said, the boarders call “John,”—My friend,—I said, one morning, after breakfast,—can you give me any information respecting the deformed person who sits at the other end of the table?

What! the Sculpin?—said the young fellow.

The diminutive person, with angular curvature of the spine,—I said,—and double *talipes varus*,—I beg your pardon,—with two club-feet.

Is that long word what you call it when a fellah walks so?—said the young man, making his fists revolve round an imaginary axis, as you may have seen youth of tender age and limited pugilistic knowledge, when they show how they would punish an adversary, themselves protected by this rotating guard,—the middle knuckle, meantime, thumb-supported, fiercely prominent, death-threatening.

It is,—said I.—But would you have the kindness to tell me if you know anything about this deformed person?

About the Sculpin?—said the young fellow.

My good friend,—said I,—I am sure, by your countenance, you would not hurt the feelings of one who has been hardly enough treated by Nature to be spared by his fellows. Even in speaking of him to others, I could wish that you might not employ a term which implies contempt for what should inspire only pity.

A fellah’s no business to be so——crooked,—said the young man called John.

Yes, yes,—I said, thoughtfully,—the strong hate the weak. It’s all right. The arrangement has reference to the race, and not to the individual. Infirmity must be kicked out, or the stock run down. Wholesale moral arrangements are so different from retail!—I understand the instinct, my friend,—it is cosmic,—it is planetary,—it is a conservative principle in creation.

The young fellow’s face gradually lost its expression as I was speaking, until it became as blank of vivid significance as the countenance of a gingerbread rabbit with two currants in the place of eyes. He had not taken my meaning.

Presently the intelligence came back with a snap that made him wink, as he answered, —Jest so. All right. A 1. Put her through. That’s the way to talk. Did you speak to me, Sir?—Here the young man struck up that well-known song which I think they used to sing at Masonic festivals, beginning, “Aldiborontiphoscophornio, Where left you Chrononholonthologos?”

I beg your pardon.—I said;—all I meant was, that men, as temporary occupants of a permanent abode called human life, which is improved or injured by occupancy,



according to the style of tenant, have a natural dislike to those who, if they live the life of the race as well as of the individual, will leave lasting injurious effects upon the abode spoken of, which is to be occupied by countless future generations. This is the final cause of the underlying brute instinct which we have in common with the herds.

—The gingerbread-rabbit expression was coming on so fast, that I thought I must try again.—It's a pity that families are kept up, where there are such hereditary infirmities. Still, let us treat this poor man fairly, and not call him names. Do you know what his name is?



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I know what the rest of 'em call him,—said the young fellow.—They call him Little Boston. There's no harm in that, is there?

It is an honorable term,—I replied.—But why Little *Boston*, in a place where most are Bostonians?

Because nobody else is quite so Boston all over as he is,—said the young fellow.

“L.B. Ob. 1692.”—Little Boston let him be, when we talk about him. The ring he wears labels him well enough. There is stuff in the little man, or he wouldn't stick so manfully by this crooked, crotchety old town. Give him a chance.—You will drop the Sculpin, won't you?—I said to the young fellow.

Drop him?—he answered,—I ha'n't took him up yet.

No, no,—the term,—I said,—the term. Don't call him so any more, if you please. Call him Little Boston, if you like.

All right,—said the young fellow.—I wouldn't be hard on the poor little——

The word he used was objectionable in point of significance and of grammar. It was a frequent termination of certain adjectives among the Romans,—as of those designating a person following the sea, or given to rural pursuits. It is classed by custom among the profane words; why, it is hard to say,—but it is largely used in the street by those who speak of their fellows in pity or in wrath.

I never heard the young fellow apply the name of the odious pretended fish to the little man from that day forward.

——Here we are, then, at our boarding-house. First, myself, the Professor, a little way from the head of the table, on the right, looking down, where the Autocrat used to sit. At the further end sits the Landlady. At the head of the table, just now, the Koh-i-noor, or the gentleman with the *diamond*. Opposite me is a Venerable Gentleman with a bland countenance, who as yet has spoken little. The Divinity-Student is my neighbor on the right,—and further down, that Young Fellow of whom I have repeatedly spoken. The Landlady's Daughter sits near the Koh-i-noor, as I said. The Poor Relation near the Landlady. At the right upper corner is a fresh-looking youth of whose name and history I have as yet learned nothing. Next the further left-hand corner, looking down the table, sits the deformed person. The chair at his side, occupying that corner, is empty. I need not specially mention the other boarders, with the exception of Benjamin Franklin, the landlady's son, who sits near his mother. We are a tolerably assorted set,—difference enough and likeness enough; but still it seems to me there is something wanting. The Landlady's Daughter is the *prima donna* in the way of feminine attractions. I am not quite satisfied with this young lady. She wears more “jewelry,” as certain young ladies



call their trinkets, than I care to see on a person in her position. Her voice is strident, her laugh too much like a giggle, and she has that foolish way of dancing and bobbing like a quill-float with a "minnum" biting the hook below it, which one sees and weeps over sometimes in persons of more pretensions. I can't help hoping we shall put something into that empty chair yet which will add the missing string to our social harp. I hear talk of a rare Miss who is expected. Something in the school-girl way, I believe. We shall see.



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—My friend who calls himself *The Autocrat* has given me a caution which I am going to repeat, with my comment upon it, for the benefit of all concerned.

Professor,—said he, one day,—don't you think your brain will run dry before a year's out, if you don't get the pump to help the cow? Let me tell you what happened to me once. I put a little money into a bank, and bought a checkbook, so that I might draw it as I wanted, in sums to suit. Things went on nicely for a time; scratching with a pen was as easy as rubbing Aladdin's Lamp; and my blank check-book seemed to be a dictionary of possibilities, in which I could find all the synonymes of happiness, and realize any one of them on the spot. A check came back to me at last with these two words on it,—*No funds*. My checkbook was a volume of waste-paper.

Now, Professor,—said he,—I have drawn something out of your bank, you know; and just so sure as you keep drawing out your soul's currency without making new deposits, the next thing will be, *No funds*,—and then where will you be, my boy? These little bits of paper mean your gold and your silver and your copper, Professor; and you will certainly break up and go to pieces, if you don't hold on to your metallic basis.

There is something in that,—said I.—Only I rather think life can coin thought somewhat faster than I can count it off in words. What if one shall go round and dry up with soft napkins all the dew that falls of a June evening on the leaves of his garden? Shall there be no more dew on those leaves thereafter? Marry, yea,—many drops, large and round and full of moonlight as those thou shalt have absterged!

Here am I, the Professor,—a man who has lived long enough to have plucked the flowers of life and come to the berries,—which are not always sad-colored, but sometimes golden-hued as the crocus of April, or rosy-cheeked as the damask of June; a man who staggered against books as a baby, and will totter against them, if he lives to decrepitude; with a brain as full of tingling thoughts, such as they are, as a limb which we call "asleep," because it is so particularly awake, is of pricking points; presenting a key-board of nerve-pulps, not as yet tanned or ossified, to the finger-touch of all outward agencies; knowing something of the filmy threads of this web of life in which we insects buzz awhile, waiting for the gray old spider to come along; contented enough with daily realities, but twirling on his finger the key of a private Bedlam of ideals; in knowledge feeding with the fox oftener than with the stork,—loving better the breadth of a fertilizing inundation than the depth of a narrow artesian well; finding nothing too small for his contemplation in the markings of the *grammatophora subtilissima*, and nothing too large in the movement of the solar system towards the star Lambda of the constellation Hercules;—and the question is, whether there is anything left for me, the Professor, to suck out of creation, after my lively friend has had his straw in the bunghole of the Universe!



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A man's mental reactions with the atmosphere of life must go on, whether he will or no, as between his blood and the air he breathes. As to catching the residuum of the process, or what we call *thought*,—the gaseous ashes of burned-out *thinking*,—the excretion of mental respiration,—that will depend on many things, as, on having a favorable intellectual temperature about one, and a fitting receptacle.—I sow more thought-seeds in twenty-four hours' travel over the desert-sand, along which my lonely consciousness paces day and night, than I shall throw into soil where it will germinate, in a year. All sorts of bodily and mental perturbations come between us and the due projection of our thought. The pulse-like "fits of easy and difficult transmission" seem to reach even the transparent medium through which our souls are seen. We know our humanity by its often intercepted rays, as we tell a revolving light from a star or meteor by its constantly recurring obscuration.

An illustrious scholar once told me, that, in the first lecture he ever delivered, he spoke but half his allotted time, and felt as if he had told all he knew. Braham came forward once to sing one of his most famous and familiar songs, and for his life could not recall the first line of it;—he told his mishap to the audience, and they screamed it at him in a chorus of a thousand voices. Milton could not write to suit himself, except from the autumnal to the vernal equinox. One in the clothing-business, who, there is reason to suspect, may have inherited, by descent, the great poet's impressible temperament, let a customer slip through his fingers one day without fitting him with a new garment. "Ah!" said he to a friend of mine, who was standing by, "if it hadn't been for that confounded headache of mine this morning, I'd have had a coat on that man, in spite of himself, before he left the store." A passing throb, only,—but it deranged the nice mechanism required to persuade the accidental human being, *x*, into a given piece of broadcloth, *a*.

We must take care not to confound this frequent difficulty of transmission of our ideas with want of ideas. I suppose that a man's mind does in time form a neutral salt with the elements in the universe for which it has special elective affinities. In fact, I look upon a library as a kind of mental chemist's shop, filled with the crystals of all forms and hues which have come from the union of individual thought with local circumstances or universal principles.

When a man has worked out his special affinities in this way, there is an end of his genius as a real solvent. No more effervescence and hissing tumult as he pours his sharp thought on the world's biting alkaline unbeliefs! No more corrosion of the old monumental tablets covered with lies! No more taking up of dull earths, and turning them, first into clear solutions, and then into lustrous prisms!



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I, the Professor, am very much like other men. I shall not find out when I have used up my affinities. What a blessed thing it is, that Nature, when she invented, manufactured, and patented her authors, contrived to make critics out of the chips that were left! Painful as the task is, they never fail to warn the author, in the most impressive manner, of the probabilities of failure in what he has undertaken. Sad as the necessity is to their delicate sensibilities, they never hesitate to advertise him of the decline of his powers, and to press upon him the propriety of retiring before he sinks into imbecility. Trusting to their kind offices, I shall endeavor to fulfil——

*Bridget enters and begins clearing the table.*

The following poem is my (the Professor's) only contribution to the great department of Ocean-Cable literature. As all the poets of this country will be engaged for the next six weeks in writing for the premium offered by the Crystal-Palace Company for the Barns Centenary, (so called, according to our Benjamin Franklin, because there will be nary a cent for any of us,) poetry will be very scarce and dear. Consumers may, consequently, be glad to take the present article, which, by the aid of a Latin tutor and a Professor of Chemistry, will be found intelligible to the educated classes.

DE SAUTY.

AN ELECTRO-CHEMICAL ECLOGUE.

*Professor. Blue-Nose.*

PROFESSOR.

Tell me, O Provincial! speak, Ceruleo-Nasal!  
Lives there one De Sauty extant now among you  
Whispering Boanerges, son of silent thunder,  
Holding talk with nations?

Is there a De Sauty ambulant on Tellus,  
Bifid-cleft like mortals, dormant in nightcap,  
Having sight, smell, hearing, food-receiving feature  
Three times daily patent?

Breathes there such a being, O Ceruleo-Nasal?  
Or is he a *mythus*,—ancient word for “humbug,”—  
Such as Livy told about the wolf that wetnursed  
Romulus and Remus?

Was he born of woman, this alleged De Sauty?  
Or a living product of galvanic action,



Like the *acarus* bred in Crosse's flint-solution?  
Speak, thou Cyano-Rhinal!

BLUE-NOSE.

Many things thou askest, jackknife-bearing stranger,  
Much-conjecturing mortal, pork-and-treacle-waster!  
Pretermitt thy whittling, wheel thine ear-flap toward me,  
Thou shalt hear them answered.

When the charge galvanic tingled through the cable,  
At the polar focus of the wire electric  
Suddenly appeared a white-faced man among us.  
Called himself "DE SAUTY."

As the small opossum held in pouch maternal  
Grasps the nutrient organ whence the term *mammalia*,  
So the unknown stranger held the wire electric,  
Sucking in the current.

When the current strengthened, bloomed the pale-faced stranger,—  
Took no drink nor victual, yet grew fat and rosy,—  
And from time to time, in sharp articulation,  
Said, "*All right!* DE SAUTY."



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From the lonely station passed the utterance, spreading  
Through the pines and hemlocks to the groves of steeples,  
Till the land was filled with loud reverberations  
Of "*All right!* DE SAUTY."

When the current slackened, drooped the mystic stranger,—  
Faded, faded, faded, as the shocks grew weaker,—  
Wasted to a shadow, with a hartshorn odor  
Of disintegration.

Drops of deliquescence glistened on his forehead,  
Whitened round his feet the dust of efflorescence,  
Till one Monday morning, when the flow suspended,  
There was no De Sauty.

Nothing but a cloud of elements organic,  
C.O.H.N. Ferrum, Chor. Flu. Sil. Potassa,  
Calc. Sod. Phosph. Mag. Sulphur, Mang.(?) Alumin.(?) Cuprum,(?)  
Such as man is made of.

Born of stream galvanic, with it he had perished!  
There is no De Sauty now there is no current!  
Give us a new cable, then again we'll hear him  
Cry, "*All right!* DE SAUTY."

\* \* \* \* \*

THE MINISTER'S WOOING.

[Continued.]

## CHAPTER IV.

THEOLOGICAL TEA.

At the call of her mother, Mary hurried into the "best room," with a strange discomposure of spirit she had never felt before. From childhood, her love for James had been so deep, equable, and intense, that it had never disturbed her with thrills and yearnings; it had grown up in sisterly calmness, and, quietly expanding, had taken possession of her whole nature, without her once dreaming of its power. But this last interview seemed to have struck some great nerve of her being,—and calm as she usually was, from habit, principle, and good health, she shivered and trembled, as she heard his retreating footsteps, and saw the orchard-grass fly back from under his feet. It was as if each step trod on a nerve,—as if the very sound of the rustling grass was stirring something living



and sensitive in her soul. And, strangest of all, a vague impression of guilt hovered over her. *Had* she done anything wrong? She did not ask him there; she had not spoken love to him; no, she had only talked to him of his soul, and how she would give hers for his,—oh, so willingly!—and that was not love; it was only what Dr. H. said Christians must always feel.

“Child, what *have* you been doing?” said Aunt Katy, who sat in full flowing chintz petticoat and spotless dimity shortgown, with her company knitting-work in her hands; “your cheeks are as red as peonies. Have you been crying? What’s the matter?”

“There is the Deacon’s wife, mother,” said Mary, turning confusedly, and darting to the entry-door.

Enter Mrs. Twitchel,—a soft, pillowy little elderly lady, whose whole air and dress reminded one of a sack of feathers tied in the middle with a string. A large, comfortable pocket, hung upon the side, disclosed her knitting-work ready for operation; and she zealously cleansed herself with a checked handkerchief from the dust which had accumulated during her ride in the old “one-hoss shay,” answering the hospitable salutation of Katy Scudder in that plaintive, motherly voice which belongs to certain nice old ladies, who appear to live in a state of mild chronic compassion for the sins and sorrows of this mortal life generally.



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“Why, yes, Miss Scudder, I’m pretty tol’able. I keep goin’, and goin’. That’s my way. I’s a-tellin’ the Deacon, this-mornin’, I didn’t see how I *was* to come here this afternoon; but then I *did* want to see Miss Scudder and talk a little about that precious sermon, Sunday. How is the Doctor? blessed man! Well, his reward must be great in heaven, if not on earth, as I was a-tellin’ the Deacon; and he says to me, says he, ‘Polly, we mustn’t be man-worshippers.’ There, dear,” (*to Mary*,) “don’t trouble yourself about my bonnet; it a’n’t my Sunday one, but I thought ’twould do. Says I to Cerinthy Ann, ‘Miss Scudder won’t mind, ’cause her heart’s set on better things.’ I always like to drop a word in season to Cerinthy Ann, ’cause she’s clean took up with vanity and dress. Oh, dear! oh, dear me! so different from your blessed daughter, Miss Scudder! Well, it’s a great blessin’ to be called in one’s youth, like Samuel and Timothy; but then we doesn’t know the Lord’s ways. Sometimes I gets clean discouraged with my children,—but then ag’in I don’t know; none on us does. Cerinthy Ann is one of the most master hands to turn off work; she takes hold and goes along like a woman, and nobody never knows when that gal finds the time to do all she does do; and I don’t know nothin’ what I *should* do without her. Deacon was saying, if ever she was called, she’d be a Martha, and not a Mary; but then she’s dreadful opposed to the doctrines. Oh, dear me! oh, dear me! Somehow they seem to rile her all up; and she was a-tellin’ me yesterday, when she was a-hangin’ out clothes, that she never should get reconciled to Decrees and ’Lection, ’cause she can’t see, if things is certain, how folks is to help ’emselves. Says I, ‘Cerinthy Ann, folks a’n’t to help ’emselves; they’s to submit unconditional.’ And she jest slammed down the clothes-basket and went into the house.”

When Mrs. Twitchel began to talk, it flowed a steady stream, as when one turns a faucet, that never ceases running till some hand turns it back again; and the occasion that cut the flood short at present was the entrance of Mrs. Brown.

Mr. Simeon Brown was a thriving shipowner of Newport, who lived in a large house, owned several negro-servants and a span of horses, and affected some state and style in his worldly appearance. A passion for metaphysical Orthodoxy had drawn Simeon to the congregation of Dr. H., and his wife of course stood by right in a high place there. She was a tall, angular, somewhat hard-favored body, dressed in a style rather above the simple habits of her neighbors, and her whole air spoke the great woman, who in right of her thousands expected to have her say in all that was going on in the world, whether she understood it or not.

On her entrance, mild little Mrs. Twitchel fled from the cushioned rocking-chair, and stood with the quivering air of one who feels she has no business to be anywhere in the world, until Mrs. Brown’s bonnet was taken and she was seated, when Mrs. Twitchel subsided into a corner and rattled her knitting-needles to conceal her emotion.



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New England has been called the land of equality; but what land upon earth is wholly so? Even the mites in a bit of cheese, naturalists say, have great tumblings and strivings about position and rank; he who has ten pounds will always be a nobleman to him who has but one, let him strive as manfully as he may; and therefore let us forgive meek little Mrs. Twitchel for melting into nothing in her own eyes when Mrs. Brown came in, and let us forgive Mrs. Brown that she sat down in the rocking-chair with an easy grandeur, as one who thought it her duty to be affable and meant to be. It was, however, rather difficult for Mrs. Brown, with her money, house, negroes, and all, to patronize Mrs. Katy Scudder, who was one of those women whose natures seem to sit on thrones, and who dispense patronage and favor by an inborn right and aptitude, whatever be their social advantages. It was one of Mrs. Brown's trials of life, this secret, strange quality in her neighbor, who stood apparently so far below her in worldly goods. Even the quiet, positive style of Mrs. Katy's knitting made her nervous; it was an implication of independence of her sway; and though on the present occasion every customary courtesy was bestowed, she still felt, as she always did when Mrs. Katy's guest, a secret uneasiness. She mentally contrasted the neat little parlor, with its white sanded floor and muslin curtains, with her own grand front-room, which boasted the then uncommon luxuries of Turkey carpet and Persian rug, and wondered if Mrs. Katy did really feel as cool and easy in receiving her as she appeared.

You must not understand that this was what Mrs. Brown *supposed* herself to be thinking about; oh, no! by no means! All the little, mean work of our nature is generally done in a small dark closet just a little back of the subject we are talking about, on which subject we suppose ourselves of course to be thinking;—of course we are thinking of it; how else could we talk about it?

The subject in discussion, and what Mrs. Brown supposed to be in her own thoughts, was the last Sunday's sermon on the doctrine of entire Disinterested Benevolence, in which good Doctor H. had proclaimed to the citizens of Newport their duty of being so wholly absorbed in the general good of the universe as even to acquiesce in their own final and eternal destruction, if the greater good of the whole might thereby be accomplished.

"Well, now, dear me!" said Mrs. Twitchel, while her knitting-needles trotted contentedly to the mournful tone of her voice,—*"I was tellin' the Deacon, if we only could get there! Sometimes I think I get a little way,—but then ag'in I don't know; but the Deacon he's quite down,—he don't see no evidences in himself. Sometimes he says he don't feel as if he ought to keep his place in the church,—but then ag'in he don't know. He keeps a-turnin' and turnin' on't over in his mind, and a-tryin' himself this way and that way; and he says he don't see nothin' but what's selfish, no way.*



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“Member one night last winter, after the Deacon got warm in bed, there come a rap at the door; and who should it be but old Beulah Ward, wantin’ to see the Deacon?—’twas her boy she sent, and he said Beulah was sick and hadn’t no more wood nor candles. Now I know’d the Deacon had carried that crittur half a cord of wood, if he had one stick, since Thanksgivin’, and I’d sent her two o’ my best moulds of candles,—nice ones that Cerinthy Ann run when we killed a crittur; but nothin’ would do but the Deacon must get right out his warm bed and dress himself, and hitch up his team to carry over some wood to Beulah. Says I, ‘Father, you know you’ll be down with the rheumatis for this; besides, Beulah is real aggravatin’. I know she trades off what we send her to the store for rum, and you never get no thanks. She ’xpects, ’cause we has done for her, we always must; and more we do, more we may do.’ And says he to me, says he, ‘That’s jest the way we sarves the Lord, Polly; and what if He shouldn’t hear us when we call on Him in our troubles?’ So I shet up; and the next day he was down with the rheumatis. And Cerinthy Ann, says she, ‘Well, father, *now* I hope you’ll own you have got *some* disinterested benevolence,’ says she; and the Deacon he thought it over a spell, and then he says, ‘I’m ’fraid it’s all selfish. I’m jest a-makin’ a righteousness of it.’ And Cerinthy Ann she come out, declarin’ that the best folks never had no comfort in religion; and for her part she didn’t mean to trouble her head about it, but have jest as good a time as she could while she’s young, ’cause if she was ’lected to be saved she should be, and if she wa’n’t she couldn’t help it, any how.”

“Mr. Brown says he came onto Dr. H.’s ground years ago,” said Mrs. Brown, giving a nervous twitch to her yarn, and speaking in a sharp, hard, didactic voice, which made little Mrs. Twitchel give a gentle quiver, and look humble and apologetic. “Mr. Brown’s a master thinker; there’s nothing pleases that man better than a hard doctrine; he says you can’t get ’em too hard for him. He don’t find any difficulty in bringing his mind up; he just reasons it out all plain; and he says, people have no need to be in the dark; and that’s *my* opinion. ‘If folks know they ought to come up to anything, *why don’t they?*’ he says; and I say so too.”

“Mr. Scudder used to say that it took great afflictions to bring his mind to that place,” said Mrs. Katy. “He used to say that an old paper-maker told him once, that paper that was shaken only one way in the making would tear across the other, and the best paper had to be shaken every way; and so he said we couldn’t tell, till we had been turned and shaken and tried every way, where we should tear.”

Mrs. Twitchel responded to this sentiment with a gentle series of groans, such as were her general expression of approbation, swaying herself backward and forward; while Mrs. Brown gave a sort of toss and snort, and said that for her part she always thought people knew what they did know,—but she guessed she was mistaken.



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The conversation was here interrupted by the civilities attendant on the reception of Mrs. Jones,—a broad, buxom, hearty soul, who had come on horseback from a farm about three miles distant.

Smiling with rosy content, she presented Mrs. Katy a small pot of golden butter,—the result of her forenoon's churning.

There are some people so evidently broadly and heartily of this world, that their coming into a room always materializes the conversation. We wish to be understood that we mean no disparaging reflection on such persons;—they are as necessary to make up a world as cabbages to make up a garden; the great healthy principles of cheerfulness and animal life seem to exist in them in the gross; they are wedges and ingots of solid, contented vitality. Certain kinds of virtues and Christian graces thrive in such people as the first crop of corn does in the bottom-lands of the Ohio. Mrs. Jones was a church-member, a regular church-goer, and planted her comely person plump in front of Dr. H. every Sunday, and listened to his searching and discriminating sermons with broad, honest smiles of satisfaction. Those keen distinctions as to motives, those awful warnings and urgent exhortations, which made poor Deacon Twitchel weep, she listened to with great, round, satisfied eyes, making to all, and after all, the same remark,—that it was good, and she liked it, and the Doctor was a good man; and on the present occasion, she announced her pot of butter as one fruit of her reflections after the last discourse.

“You see,” she said, “as I was a-settin’ in the spring-house, this mornin’, a-workin’ my butter, I says to Dinah,—‘I’m goin’ to carry a pot of this down to Miss Scudder for the Doctor,—I got so much good out of his Sunday’s sermon. And Dinah she says to me, says she,—‘Laws, Miss Jones. I thought you was asleep, for sartin!’ But I wasn’t; only I forgot to take any caraway-seed in the mornin’, and so I kinder missed it; you know it ‘livens one up. But I never lost myself so but what I kinder heerd him goin’ on, on, sort o’ like,—and it sounded *all* sort o’ *good*; and so I thought of the Doctor to-day.”

“Well, I’m sure,” said Aunt Katy, “this will be a treat; we all know about your butter, Mrs. Jones. I sha’n’t think of putting any of mine on table to-night, I’m sure.”

“Law, now don’t!” said Mrs. Jones. “Why, you re’lly make me ashamed, Miss Scudder. To be sure, folks does like our butter, and it always fetches a pretty good price,—*he’s* very proud on’t. I tell him he oughtn’t to be,—we oughtn’t to be proud of anything.”

And now Mrs. Katy, giving a look at the old clock, told Mary it was time to set the tea-table; and forthwith there was a gentle movement of expectancy. The little mahogany tea-table opened its brown wings, and from a drawer came forth the snowy damask covering. It was etiquette, on such occasions, to compliment every article of the establishment successively, as it appeared; so the Deacon’s wife began at the table-cloth.



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“Well, I do declare, Miss Scudder beats us all in her table-cloths,” she said, taking up a corner of the damask, admiringly; and Mrs. Jones forthwith jumped up and seized the other corner.

“Why, this ’ere must have come from the Old Country. It’s ’most the beautiflest thing I ever did see.”

“It’s my own spinning,” replied Mrs. Katy, with conscious dignity. “There was an Irish weaver came to Newport the year before I was married, who wove beautifully,—just the Old-Country patterns,—and I’d been spinning some uncommonly fine flax then. I remember Mr. Scudder used to read to me while I was spinning,”—and Aunt Katy looked afar, as one whose thoughts are in the past, and dropped out the last words with a little sigh, unconsciously, as to herself.

“Well, now, I must say,” said Mrs. Jones, “this goes quite beyond me. I thought I could spin some; but I sha’n’t never dare to show mine.”

“I’m sure, Mrs. Jones, your towels that you had out bleaching, this spring, were wonderful,” said Aunt Katy. “But I don’t pretend to do much now,” she continued, straightening her trim figure. “I’m getting old, you know; we must let the young folks take up these things. Mary spins better now than I ever did. Mary, hand out those napkins.”

And so Mary’s napkins passed from hand to hand.

“Well, well,” said Mrs. Twitchel to Mary, “it’s easy to see that *your* linen-chest will be pretty full by the time *he* comes along; won’t it, Miss Jones?”—and Mrs. Twitchel looked pleasantly facetious, as elderly ladies generally do, when suggesting such possibilities to younger ones.

Mary was vexed to feel the blood boil up in her cheeks in a most unexpected and provoking way at the suggestion; whereat Mrs. Twitchel nodded knowingly at Mrs. Jones, and whispered something in a mysterious aside, to which plump Mrs. Jones answered,—“Why, do tell! now I never!”

“It’s strange,” said Mrs. Twitchel, taking up her parable again, in such a plaintive tone that all knew something pathetic was coming, “what mistakes some folks will make, a-fetchin’ up girls. Now there’s your Mary, Miss Scudder,—why, there a’n’t nothin’ she can’t do; but law, I was down to Miss Skinner’s, last week, a-watchin’ with her, and re’lly it ’most broke my heart to see her. Her mother was a most amazin’ smart woman; but she brought Suky up, for all the world, as if she’d been a wax doll, to be kept in the drawer,—and sure enough, she was a pretty cretur,—and now she’s married, what is she? She ha’n’t no more idee how to take hold than nothin’. The poor child means well enough, and she works so hard she most kills herself; but then she is in the suds from



mornin' till night,—she's one the sort whose work's never done,—and poor George Skinner's clean discouraged.”

“There's everything in *knowing how*,” said Mrs. Katy. “Nobody ought to be always working; it's a bad sign. I tell Mary,—'Always do up your work in the forenoon.'—Girls must learn that. I never work afternoons, after my dinner-dishes are got away; I never did and never would.”



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“Nor I, neither,” chimed in Mrs. Jones and Mrs. Twitchel,—both anxious to show themselves clear on this leading point of New England house-keeping.

“There’s another thing I always tell Mary,” said Mrs. Katy, impressively. “Never say there isn’t time for a thing that ought to be done. If a thing is *necessary*, why, life is long enough to find a place for it. That’s my doctrine. When anybody tells me they *can’t find* time for this or that, I don’t think much of ’em. I think they don’t know how to work,—that’s all.”

Here Mrs. Twitchel looked up from her knitting, with an apologetic giggle, at Mrs. Brown.

“Law, now, there’s Miss Brown, she don’t know nothin’ about it, ’cause she’s got her servants to every turn. I s’pose she thinks it queer to hear us talkin’ about our work. Miss Brown must have her time all to herself. I was tellin’ the Deacon the other day that she was a privileged woman.”

“I’m sure, those that have servants find work enough following ’em ’round,” said Mrs. Brown,—who, like all other human beings, resented the implication of not having as many trials in life as her neighbors. “As to getting the work done up in the forenoon, that’s a thing I never can teach ’em; they’d rather not. Chloe likes to keep her work ’round, and do it by snacks, any time, day or night, when the notion takes her.”

“And it was just for that reason I never would have one of those creatures ’round,” said Mrs. Katy. “Mr. Scudder was principled against buying negroes,—but if he had *not* been, I should not have wanted any of *their* work. I know what’s to be done, and most help is no help to me. I want people to stand out of my way and let me get done. I’ve tried keeping a girl once or twice, and I never worked so hard in my life. When Mary and I do all ourselves, we can calculate everything to a minute; and we get our time to sew and read and spin and visit, and live just as we want to.”

Here, again, Mrs. Brown looked uneasy. To what use was it that she was rich and owned servants, when this Mordecai in her gate utterly despised her prosperity? In her secret heart she thought Mrs. Katy must be envious, and rather comforted herself on this view of the subject,—sweetly unconscious of any inconsistency in the feeling with her views of utter self-abnegation just announced.

Meanwhile the tea-table had been silently gathering on its snowy plateau the delicate china, the golden butter, the loaf of faultless cake, a plate of crullers or wonders, as a sort of sweet fried cake was commonly called,—tea-rusks, light as a puff, and shining on top with a varnish of egg,—jellies of apple and quince quivering in amber clearness,—whitest and purest honey in the comb,—in short, everything that could go to the getting-up of a most faultless tea.



“I don’t see,” said Mrs. Jones, resuming the gentle paeans of the occasion, “how Miss Scudder’s loaf-cake always comes out jest so. It don’t rise neither to one side nor t’other, but jest even all ’round; and it a’n’t white one side and burnt the other, but jest a good brown all over; and it don’t have no heavy streak in it.”



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“Jest what Cerinthy Ann was sayin’, the other day,” said Mrs. Twitchel. “She says she can’t never be sure how hers is a-comin’ out. Do what she can, it will be either too much or too little; but Miss Scudder’s is always jest so. ‘Law,’ says I, ‘Cerinthy Ann, it’s *faculty*,—that’s it;—them that has it has it, and them that hasn’t—why, they’ve got to work hard, and not do half so well, neither.”

Mrs. Katy took all these praises as matter of course. Since she was thirteen years old, she had never put her hand to anything that she had not been held to do better than other folks, and therefore she accepted her praises with the quiet repose and serenity of assured reputation; though, of course, she used the usual polite disclaimers of “Oh, it’s nothing, nothing at all; I’m sure I don’t know how I do it, and was not aware it was so good,”—and so on. All which things are proper for gentlewomen to observe in like cases, in every walk of life.

“Do you think the Deacon will be along soon?” said Mrs. Katy, when Mary, returning from the kitchen, announced the important fact, that the tea-kettle was boiling.

“Why, yes,” said Mrs. Twitchel. “I’m a-lookin’ for him every minute. He told me, that he and the men should be plantin’ up to the eight-acre lot, but he’d keep the colt up there to come down on; and so I laid him out a clean shirt, and says, ‘Now, Father, you be sure and be there by five, so that Miss Scudder may know when to put her tea a-drawin’.’ —There he is, I believe,” she added, as a horse’s tramp was heard without, and, after a few moments, the desired Deacon entered.

He was a gentle, soft-spoken man, low, sinewy, thin, with black hair showing lines and patches of silver. His keen, thoughtful, dark eye marked the nervous and melancholic temperament. A mild and pensive humility of manner seemed to brood over him, like the shadow of a cloud. Everything in his dress, air, and motions indicated punctilious exactness and accuracy, at times rising to the point of nervous anxiety.

Immediately after the bustle of his entrance had subsided, Mr. Simeon Brown followed. He was a tall, lank individual, with high cheek-bones, thin, sharp features, small, keen, hard eyes, and large hands and feet.

Simeon was, as we have before remarked, a keen theologian, and had the scent of a hound for a metaphysical distinction. True, he was a man of business, being a thriving trader to the coast of Africa, whence he imported negroes for the American market; and no man was held to understand that branch of traffic better,—he having, in his earlier days, commanded ships in the business, and thus learned it from the root. In his private life, Simeon was severe and dictatorial. He was one of that class of people who, of a freezing day, will plant themselves directly between you and the fire, and there stand and argue to prove that selfishness is the root of all moral evil. Simeon said he



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always had thought so; and his neighbors sometimes supposed that nobody could enjoy better experimental advantages for understanding the subject. He was one of those men who suppose themselves submissive to the Divine will, to the uttermost extent demanded by the extreme theology of that day, simply because they have no nerves to feel, no imagination to conceive what endless happiness or suffering is, and who deal therefore with the great question of the salvation or damnation of myriads as a problem of theological algebra, to be worked out by their inevitable  $x, y, z$ .

But we must not spend too much time with our analysis of character, for matters at the tea-table are drawing to a crisis. Mrs. Jones has announced that she does not think "*he*" can come this afternoon, by which significant mode of expression she conveyed the dutiful idea that there was for her but one male person in the world. And now Mrs. Katy says, "Mary, dear, knock at the Doctor's door and tell him that tea is ready."

The Doctor was sitting in his shady study, in the room on the other side of the little entry. The windows were dark and fragrant with the shade and perfume of blossoming lilacs, whose tremulous shadow, mingled with spots of afternoon sunlight, danced on the scattered papers of a great writing-table covered with pamphlets and heavily-bound volumes of theology, where the Doctor was sitting.

A man of gigantic proportions, over six feet in height, and built every way with an amplitude corresponding to his height, sitting bent over his writing, so absorbed that he did not hear the gentle sound of Mary's entrance.

"Doctor," said the maiden, gently, "tea is ready."

No motion, no sound, except the quick racing of the pen over the paper.

"Doctor! Doctor!"—a little louder, and with another step into the apartment,—"tea is ready."

The Doctor stretched his head forward to a paper which lay before him, and responded in a low, murmuring voice, as reading something.

"Firstly,—if underived virtue be peculiar to the Deity, can it be the duty of a creature to have it?"

Here a little waxen hand came with a very gentle tap on his huge shoulder, and "Doctor, tea is ready," penetrated drowsily to the nerve of his ear, as a sound heard in sleep. He rose suddenly with a start, opened a pair of great blue eyes, which shone abstractedly under the dome of a capacious and lofty forehead, and fixed them on the maiden, who by this time was looking up rather archly, and yet with an attitude of the most profound respect, while her venerated friend was assembling together his earthly faculties.



“Tea is ready, if you please. Mother wished me to call you.”

“Oh!—ah!—yes!—indeed!” he said, looking confusedly about, and starting for the door, in his study-gown.

“If you please, Sir,” said Mary, standing in his way, “would you not like to put on your coat and wig?”



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The Doctor gave a hurried glance at his study-gown, put his hand to his head, which, in place of the ample curls of his full-bottomed wig, was decked only with a very ordinary cap, and seemed to come at once to a full comprehension. He smiled a kind of conscious, benignant smile, which adorned his high cheek-bones and hard features as sunshine adorns the side of a rock, and said, kindly, "Ah, well, child, I understand now; I'll be out in a moment."

And Mary, sure that he was now on the right track, went back to the tearoom with the announcement that the Doctor was coming.

In a few moments he entered, majestic and proper, in all the dignity of full-bottomed, powdered wig, full, flowing coat, with ample cuffs, silver knee- and shoe-buckles, as became the gravity and majesty of the minister of those days.

He saluted all the company with a benignity which had a touch of the majestic, and also of the rustic in it; for at heart the Doctor was a bashful man,—that is, he had somewhere in his mental camp that treacherous fellow whom John Bunyan anathematizes under the name of Shame. The company rose on his entrance; the men bowed and the women curtsied, and all remained standing while he addressed to each with punctilious decorum those inquiries in regard to health and well-being which preface a social interview. Then, at a dignified sign from Mrs. Katy, he advanced to the table, and, all following his example, stood, while, with one hand uplifted, he went through a devotional exercise which, for length, more resembled a prayer than a grace,—after which the company were seated.

"Well, Doctor," said Mr. Brown, who, as a householder of substance, felt a conscious right to be first to open conversation with the minister, "people are beginning to make a noise about your views. I was talking with Deacon Timmins the other day down on the wharf, and he said Dr. Stiles said that it was entirely new doctrine,—entirely so,—and for his part he wanted the good old ways."

"They say so, do they?" said the Doctor, kindling up from an abstraction into which he seemed to be gradually subsiding. "Well, let them. I had rather publish *new* divinity than any other, and the more of it the better,—*if it be but true*. I should think it hardly worth while to write, if I had nothing *new* to say."

"Well," said Deacon Twitchel,—his meek face flushing with awe of his minister,—  
"Doctor, there's all sorts of things said about you. Now the other day I was at the mill with a load of corn, and while I was a-waitin', Amariah Wadsworth came along with his'n; and so while we were waitin', he says to me, 'Why, they say your minister is gettin' to be an Armenian'; and he went on a-tellin' how old Ma'am Badger told him that you interpreted some parts of Paul's Epistles clear on the Armenian side. You know Ma'am Badger's a master-hand at doctrines, and she's 'most an uncommon Calvinist."



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“That does not frighten me at all,” said the sturdy Doctor. “Supposing I do interpret some texts like the Arminians. Can’t Arminians have anything right about them? Who wouldn’t rather go with the Arminians when they are *right*, than with the Calvinists when they are wrong?”

“That’s it,—you’ve hit it, Doctor,” said Simeon Brown. “That’s what I always say. I say, ‘Don’t he *prove* it? and how are you going to answer him?’ That gravels ’em.”

“Well,” said Deacon Twitchel, “Brother Seth, you know Brother Seth,—he says you deny depravity. He’s all for imputation of Adam’s sin, you know; and I have long talks with Seth about it every time he comes to see me; and he says, that, if we did not sin in Adam, it’s givin’ up the whole ground altogether; and then he insists you’re clean wrong about the unregenerate doings.”

“Not at all,—not in the least,” said the Doctor, promptly.

“I wish Seth could talk with you sometime, Doctor. Along in the spring, he was down helpin’ me to lay stone fence,—it was when we was fencin’ off the south pastur’ lot,—and we talked pretty nigh all day; and it re’lly did seem to me that the longer we talked, the sotter Seth grew. He’s a master-hand at readin’; and when he heard that your remarks on Dr. Mayhew had come out, Seth tackled up o’ purpose and come up to Newport to get them, and spent all his time, last winter, studyin’ on it and makin’ his remarks; and I tell you, Sir, he’s a tight fellow to argue with. Why, that day, what with layin’ stone wall and what with arguin’ with Seth, I come home quite beat out,—Miss Twitchel will remember.”

“That he was!” said his helpmeet. “I ’member, when he came home, says I, ‘Father, you seem clean used up’; and I stirred ’round lively like, to get him his tea. But he jest went into the bedroom and laid down afore supper; and I says to Cerinthy Ann, ‘That’s a thing I ha’n’t seen your father do since he was took with the typhus.’ And Cerinthy Ann, she said she knew ’twa’n’t anything but them old doctrines,—that it was always so when Uncle Seth come down. And after tea Father was kinder chirked up a little, and he and Seth set by the fire, and was a-beginnin’ it ag’in, and I jest spoke out and said,—‘Now, Seth, these ’ere things doesn’t hurt you; but the Deacon is weakly, and if he gets his mind riled after supper, he don’t sleep none all night. So,’ says I, ‘you’d better jest let matters stop where they be; ’cause,’ says I, ‘’twon’t make no difference, for to-night, which on ye’s got the right on’t;—reckon the Lord ’ll go on his own way without you; and we shall find out, by’m-by, what that is.’”

“Mr. Scudder used to think a great deal on these points,” said Mrs. Katy, “and the last time he was home he wrote out his views. I haven’t ever shown them to you, Doctor; but I should be pleased to know what you think of them.”

“Mr. Scudder was a good man, with a clear head,” said the Doctor; “and I should be much pleased to see anything that he wrote.”



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A flush of gratified feeling passed over Mrs. Katy's face;—for one flower laid on the shrine which we keep in our hearts for the dead is worth more than any gift to our living selves.

We will not now pursue our party further, lest you, Reader, get more theological tea than you can drink. We will not recount the numerous nice points raised by Mr. Simeon Brown and adjusted by the Doctor,—and how Simeon invariably declared, that that was the way in which he disposed of them himself, and how he had thought it out ten years ago.

We will not relate, either, too minutely, how Mary changed color and grew pale and red in quick succession, when Mr. Simeon Brown incidentally remarked, that the “Monsoon” was going to set sail that very afternoon, for her three-years' voyage. Nobody noticed it in the busy amenities,—the sudden welling and ebbing of that one poor little heart-fountain.

So we go,—so little knowing what we touch and what touches us as we talk! We drop out a common piece of news,—“Mr. So-and-so is dead,—Miss Such-a-one is married,—such a ship has sailed,”—and lo, on our right hand or our left, some heart has sunk under the news silently,—gone down in the great ocean of Fate, without even a bubble rising to tell its drowning pang. And this—God help us!—is what we call living!

## CHAPTER V.

### THE LETTER.

Mary returned to the quietude of her room. The red of twilight had faded, and the silver moon, round and fair, was rising behind the thick boughs of the apple-trees. She sat down in the window, thoughtful and sad, and listened to the crickets, whose ignorant jollity often sounds as mournfully to us mortals as ours may to superior beings. There the little hoarse, black wretches were scraping and creaking, as if life and death were invented solely for their pleasure, and the world were created only to give them a good time in it. Now and then a little wind shivered among the boughs, and brought down a shower of white petals which shimmered in the slant beams of the moonlight; and now a ray touched some tall head of grass, and forthwith it blossomed into silver, and stirred itself with a quiet joy, like a new-born saint just awaking in paradise. And ever and anon came on the still air the soft eternal pulsations of the distant sea, sound mournfulest, most mysterious, of all the harpings of Nature. It was the sea,—the deep, eternal sea,—the treacherous, soft, dreadful, inexplicable sea; and *he* was perhaps at this moment being borne away on it,—away, away,—to what sorrows, to what temptations, to what dangers, she knew not. She looked along the old, familiar, beaten path by which he came, by which he went, and thought, “What if he never should come back?” There was

a little path through the orchard out to a small elevation in the pasture-lot behind, whence the sea was distinctly visible, and Mary had often used her low-silled window



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as a door when she wanted to pass out thither; so now she stepped out, and, gathering her skirts back from the dewy grass, walked thoughtfully along the path and gained the hill. Newport harbor lay stretched out in the distance, with the rising moon casting a long, wavering track of silver upon it; and vessels, like silver-winged moths, were turning and shifting slowly to and fro upon it, and one stately ship in full sail passing fairly out under her white canvas, graceful as some grand, snowy bird. Mary's beating heart told her that *there* was passing away from her one who carried a portion of her existence with him. She sat down under a lonely tree that stood there, and, resting her elbow on her knee, followed the ship with silent prayers, as it passed, like a graceful, cloudy dream, out of her sight.

Then she thoughtfully retraced her way to her chamber; and as she was entering, observed in the now clearer moonlight what she had not seen before,—something white, like a letter, lying on the floor. Immediately she struck a light, and there, sure enough, it was,—a letter in James's handsome, dashing hand; and the little puss, before she knew what she was about, actually kissed it, with a fervor which would much have astonished the writer, could he at that moment have been clairvoyant. But Mary felt as one who finds, in the emptiness after a friend's death, an unexpected message or memento; and all alone in the white, calm stillness of her little room her heart took sudden possession of her. She opened the letter with trembling hands, and read what of course we shall let you read. We got it out of a bundle of old, smoky, yellow letters, years after all the parties concerned were gone on the eternal journey beyond earth.

“MY DEAR MARY,—

“I cannot leave you so. I have about two hundred things to say to you, and it's a shame I could not have had longer to see you; but blessed be ink and paper! I am writing and seeing to fifty things besides; so you mustn't wonder if my letter has rather a confused appearance.

“I have been thinking that perhaps I gave you a wrong impression of myself, this afternoon. I am going to speak to you from my heart, as if I were confessing on my death-bed. Well, then, I do not confess to being what is commonly called a bad young man. I should be willing that men of the world generally, even strict ones, should look my life through and know all about it. It is only in your presence, Mary, that I feel that I am bad and low and shallow and mean, because you represent to me a sphere higher and holier than any in which I have ever moved, and stir up a sort of sighing and longing in my heart to come towards it. In all countries, in all temptations, Mary, your image has stood between me and low, gross vice. When I have been with fellows roaring drunken, beastly songs,—suddenly I have seemed to see you as you used to sit beside me in the singing-school, and your voice has been



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like an angel's in my ear, and I have got up and gone out sick and disgusted. Your face has risen up calm and white and still, between the faces of poor lost creatures who know no better way of life than to tempt us to sin. And sometimes, Mary, when I have seen girls that, had they been cared for by good pious mothers, might have been like you, I have felt as if I could cry for them. Poor women are abused all the world over; and it's no wonder they turn round and revenge themselves on us.

"No, I have not been bad, Mary, as the world calls badness. I have been kept by you. But do you remember you told me once, that, when the snow first fell and lay so dazzling and pure and soft, all about, you always felt as if the spreads and window-curtains that seemed white before were dirty? Well, it's just like that with me. Your presence makes me feel that I am not pure,—that I am low and unworthy,—not worthy to touch the hem of your garment. Your good Dr. H. spent a whole half-day, the other Sunday, trying to tell us about the beauty of holiness; and he cut, and pared, and peeled, and sliced, and told us what it wasn't, and what was *like* it, and wasn't; and then he built up an exact definition, and fortified and bricked it up all round; and I thought to myself that he'd better tell 'em to look at Mary Scudder, and they'd understand all about it. That was what I was thinking when you talked to me for looking at you in church instead of looking towards the pulpit. It really made me laugh in myself to see what a good little ignorant, unconscious way you had of looking up at the Doctor, as if he knew more about that than you did.

"And now as to your Doctor that you think so much of, I like him for certain things, in certain ways. He is a great, grand, large pattern of a man,—a man who isn't afraid to think, and to speak anything he does think; but then I do believe, if he would take a voyage round the world in the fore-castle of a whaler, he would know more about what to say to people than he does now; it would certainly give him several new points to be considered. Much of his preaching about men is as like live men as Chinese pictures of trees and rocks and gardens,—no nearer the reality than that. All I can say is, 'It isn't so; and you'd know it, Sir, if you knew men.' He has got what they call a *system*—just so many bricks put together just so; but it is too narrow to take in all I see in my wanderings round this world of ours. Nobody that has a soul, and goes round the world as I do, can help feeling it at times, and thinking, as he sees all the races of men and their ways, who made them, and what they were made for. To doubt the existence of a God seems to me like a want of common sense. There is a Maker and a Ruler, doubtless; but then, Mary, all this invisible world of religion is unreal to me. I can see we must be good, somehow,—that if we are not, we shall not be happy here or hereafter. As to all



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the metaphysics of your good Doctor, you can't tell how they tire me. I'm not the sort of person that they can touch. I must have real things,—real people; abstractions are nothing to me. Then I think that he systematically contradicts on one Sunday what he preaches on another. One Sunday he tells us that God is the immediate efficient Author of every act of will; the next he tells us that we are entire free agents. I see no sense in it, and can't take the trouble to put it together. But then he and you have something in you that I call religion,—something that makes you *good*. When I see a man working away on an entirely honest, unworldly, disinterested pattern, as he does, and when I see you, Mary, as I said before, I should like at least to *be* as you are, whether I could believe as you do or not.

“How could you so care for me, and waste on one so unworthy of you such love? Oh, Mary, some better man must win you; I never shall and never can;—but then you must not quite forget me; you must be my friend, my saint. If, through your prayers, your Bible, your friendship, you can bring me to your state, I am willing to be brought there, —nay, desirous. God has put the key of my soul into your hands.

“So, dear Mary, good-bye! Pray still for your naughty, loving

“COUSIN JAMES.”

Mary read this letter, and re-read it, with more pain than pleasure. To feel the immortality of a beloved soul hanging upon us, to feel that its only communications with Heaven must be through us, is the most solemn and touching thought that can pervade a mind. It was without one particle of gratified vanity, with even a throb of pain, that she read such exalted praises of herself from one blind to the glories of a far higher loveliness.

Yet was she at that moment, unknown to herself, one of the great company scattered through earth who are priests unto God,—ministering between the Divine One, who has unveiled himself unto them, and those who as yet stand in the outer courts of the great sanctuary of truth and holiness. Many a heart, wrung, pierced, bleeding with the sins and sorrows of earth, longing to depart, stands in this mournful and beautiful ministry, but stands unconscious of the glory of the work in which it waits and suffers. God's kings and priests are crowned with thorns, walking the earth with bleeding feet, and comprehending not the work they are performing.

Mary took from a drawer a small pocket-book, from which dropped a lock of black hair, —a glossy curl, which seemed to have a sort of wicked, wilful life in every shining ring, just as she had often seen it shake naughtily on the owner's head. She felt a strange tenderness towards the little wilful thing, and, as she leaned over it, made in her heart a thousand fond apologies for every fault and error.

She was standing thus when Mrs. Scudder entered the room to see if her daughter had yet retired.



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“What are you doing there, Mary?” she said, as her eye fell on the letter. “What is it you are reading?”

Mary felt herself grow pale; it was the first time in her whole life that her mother had asked her a question that she was not from the heart ready to answer. Her loyalty to her only parent had gone on even-handed with that she gave to her God; she felt, somehow, that the revelations of that afternoon had opened a gulf between them, and the consciousness overpowered her.

Mrs. Scudder was astonished at her evident embarrassment, her trembling, and paleness. She was a woman of prompt, imperative temperament, and the slightest hesitation in rendering to her a full, outspoken confidence had never before occurred in their intercourse. Her child was the core of her heart, the apple of her eye, and intense love is always near neighbor to anger; there was, therefore, an involuntary flash from her eye and a heightening of her color, as she said,—“Mary, are you concealing anything from your mother?”

In that moment, Mary had grown calm again. The wonted serene, balanced nature had found its habitual poise, and she looked up innocently, though with tears in her large, blue eyes, and said,—“No, mother,—I have nothing that I do not mean to tell you fully. This letter came from James Marvyn; he came here to see me this afternoon.”

“Here?—when? I did not see him.”

“After dinner. I was sitting here in the window, and suddenly he came up behind me through the orchard-path.”

Mrs. Katy sat down with a flushed cheek and a discomposed air; but Mary seemed actually to bear her down by the candid clearness of the large, blue eye which she turned on her, as she stood perfectly collected, with her deadly pale face and a brilliant spot burning on each cheek.

“James came to say good-bye. He complained that he had not had a chance to see me alone since he came home.”

“And what should he want to see you alone for?” said Mrs. Scudder, in a dry, disturbed tone.

“Mother,—everybody has things at times which they would like to say to some one person alone,” said Mary.

“Well, tell me what he said.”

“I will try. In the first place, he said that he always had been free, all his life, to run in and out of our house, and to wait on me like a brother.”



“Hum!” said Mrs. Scudder; “but he isn’t your brother, for all that.”

“Well, then, he wanted to know why you were so cold to him, and why you never let him walk with me from meetings or see me alone, as we often used to. And I told him why,—that we were not children now, and that you thought it was not best; and then I talked with him about religion, and tried to persuade him to attend to the concerns of his soul; and I never felt so much hope for him as I do now.”

Aunt Katy looked skeptical, and remarked,—“If he really felt a disposition for religious instruction, Dr. H. could guide him much better than you could.”



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“Yes,—so I told him, and I tried to persuade him to talk with Dr. H.; but he was very unwilling. He said, I could have more influence over him than anybody else,—that nobody could do him any good but me.”

“Yes, yes,—I understand all that,” said Aunt Katy,—“I have heard young men say *that* before, and I know just what it amounts to.”

“But, mother, I do think James was moved very much, this afternoon. I never heard him speak so seriously; he seemed really in earnest, and he asked me to give him my Bible.”

“Couldn’t he read any Bible but yours?”

“Why, naturally, you know, mother, he would like my Bible better, because it would put him in mind of me. He promised faithfully to read it all through.”

“And then, it seems, he wrote you a letter.”

“Yes, mother.”

Mary shrank from showing this letter, from the natural sense of honor which makes us feel it indelicate to expose to an unsympathizing eye the confidential outpourings of another heart; and then she felt quite sure that there was no such intercessor for James in her mother’s heart as in her own. But over all this reluctance rose the determined force of duty; and she handed the letter in silence to her mother.

Mrs. Scudder took it, laid it deliberately in her lap, and then began searching in the pocket of her chintz petticoat for her spectacles. These being found, she wiped them, accurately adjusted them, opened the letter and spread it on her lap, brushing out its folds and straightening it, that she might read with the greater ease. After this she read it carefully and deliberately; and all this while there was such a stillness, that the sound of the tall varnished clock in the best room could be heard through the half-opened door.

After reading it with the most tiresome, torturing slowness, she rose, and laying it on the table under Mary’s eye, and pressing down her finger on two lines in the letter, said, “Mary, have you told James that you loved him?”

“Yes, mother, always. I always loved him, and he always knew it.”

“But, Mary, this that he speaks of is something different. What has passed between”—

“Why, mother, he was saying that we who were Christians drew to ourselves and did not care for the salvation of our friends; and then I told him how I had always prayed for him, and how I should be willing even to give up my hopes in heaven, if he might be saved.”



“Child,—what do you mean?”

“I mean, if only one of us two could go to heaven, I had rather it should be him than me,” said Mary.

“Oh, child! child!” said Mrs. Scudder, with a sort of groan,—“has it gone with you so far as this? Poor child!—after all my care, you *are* in love with this boy,—your heart is set on him.”

“Mother, I am not. I never expect to see him much,—never expect to marry him or anybody else;—only he seems to me to have so much more life and soul and spirit than most people,—I think him so noble and grand,—that is, that he *could* be, if he were all he ought to be,—that, somehow, I never think of myself in thinking of him, and his salvation seems worth more than mine;—men can do so much more!—they can live such splendid lives!—oh, a real noble man is so glorious!”



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“And you would like to see him well married, would you not?” said Mrs. Scudder, sending, with a true woman’s aim, this keen arrow into the midst of the cloud of enthusiasm which enveloped her daughter. “I think,” she added, “that Jane Spencer would make him an excellent wife.”

Mary was astonished at a strange, new pain that shot through her at these words. She drew in her breath and turned herself uneasily, as one who had literally felt a keen dividing blade piercing between soul and spirit. Till this moment, she had never been conscious of herself; but the shaft had torn the veil. She covered her face with her hands; the hot blood flushed scarlet over neck and brow; at last, with a beseeching look, she threw herself into her mother’s arms.

“Oh, mother, mother, I am selfish, after all!”

Mrs. Scudder folded her silently to her heart, and said, “My daughter, this is not at all what I wished it to be; I see how it is;—but then you have been a good child; I don’t blame you. We can’t always help ourselves. We don’t always really know how we do feel. I didn’t know, for a long while, that I loved your father. I thought I was only curious about him, because he had a strange way of treating me, different from other men; but, one day, I remember, Julian Simons told me that it was reported that his mother was making a match for him with Susan Emery, and I was astonished to find how I felt. I saw him that evening, and the moment he looked at me I saw it wasn’t true; all at once I knew something I never knew before,—and that was, that I should be very unhappy, if he loved any one else better than me. But then, my child, your father was a different man from James;—he was as much better than I was as you are than James. I was a foolish, thoughtless young thing then. I never should have been anything at all, but for him. Somehow, when I loved him, I grew more serious, and then he always guided and led me. Mary, your father was a wonderful man; he was one of the sort that the world knows not of;—sometime I must show you his letters. I always hoped, my daughter, that you would marry such a man.”

“Don’t speak of marrying, mother. I never shall marry.”

“You certainly should not, unless you can marry in the Lord. Remember the words, ‘Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?’”

“Mother, James is not an infidel.”

“He certainly is an *unbeliever*, Mary, by his own confession;—but then God is a Sovereign and hath mercy on whom He will. You do right to pray for him; but if he does not come out on the Lord’s side, you must not let your heart mislead you. He is going to



be gone three years, and you must try to think as little of him as possible;—put your mind upon your duties, like a good girl, and God will bless you. Don't believe too much in your power over him;—young men, when they in love, will promise anything, and really think they mean it; but nothing is a saving change, except what is wrought in them by sovereign grace.”



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“But, mother, does not God use the love we have to each other as a means of doing us good? Did you not say that it was by your love to father that you first were led to think seriously?”

“That is true, my child,” said Mrs. Scudder, who, like many of the rest of the world, was surprised to meet her own words walking out on a track where she had not expected them, but was yet too true of soul to cut their acquaintance because they were not going the way of her wishes. “Yes, all that is true; but yet, Mary, when one has but one little ewe lamb in the world, one is jealous of it. I would give all the world, if you had never seen James. It is dreadful enough for a woman to love anybody as you can, but it is more to love a man of unsettled character and no religion. But then the Lord appoints all our goings; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps;—I leave you, my child, in His hands.” And, with one solemn and long embrace, the mother and daughter parted for the night.

It is impossible to write a story of New England life and manners for a thoughtless, shallow-minded person. If we represent things as they are, their intensity, their depth, their unworldly gravity and earnestness, must inevitably repel lighter spirits, as the reverse pole of the magnet drives off sticks and straws.

In no other country were the soul and the spiritual life ever such intense realities, and everything contemplated so much (to use a current New England phrase) “in reference to eternity.” Mrs. Scudder was a strong, clear-headed, practical woman. No one had a clearer estimate of the material and outward life, or could more minutely manage its smallest item; but then a tremendous, eternal future had so weighed down and compacted the fibres of her very soul, that all earthly things were but as dust in comparison to it. That her child should be one elected to walk in white, to reign with Christ when earth was a forgotten dream, was her one absorbing wish; and she looked on all the events of life only with reference to this. The way of life was narrow, the chances in favor of any child of Adam infinitely small; the best, the most seemingly pure and fair, was by nature a child of wrath, and could be saved only by a sovereign decree, by which it should be plucked as a brand from the burning. Therefore it was, that, weighing all things in one balance, there was the sincerity of her whole being in the dread which she felt at the thought of her daughter’s marriage with an unbeliever.

Mrs. Scudder, after retiring to her room, took her Bible, in preparation for her habitual nightly exercise of devotion, before going to rest. She read and reread a chapter, scarce thinking what she was reading,—aroused herself,—and then sat with the book in her hand in deep thought. James Marvyn was her cousin’s son, and she had a strong feeling of respect and family attachment for his father. She had, too, a real kindness for the young man, whom she regarded as a well-meaning, wilful youngster; but that *he* should touch her saint, her Mary, that he should take from her the daughter who was her all, really embittered her heart towards him.



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"After all," she said to herself, "there are three years,—three years in which there will be no letters, or perhaps only one or two,—and a great deal may be done in three years, if one is wise";—and she felt within herself an arousing of all the shrewd womanly and motherly tact of her nature to meet this new emergency.

[To be continued.]

\* \* \* \* \*

WHITE'S SHAKSPEARE[1]

(FIRST NOTICE.)

It may be doubted whether any language be rich enough to maintain more than one truly great poet,—and whether there be more than one period, and that very short, in the life of a language, when such a phenomenon as a great poet is possible. It may be reckoned one of the rarest pieces of good-luck that ever fell to the share of a race, that (as was true of Shakspeare) its most rhythmic genius, its acutest intellect, its profoundest imagination, and its healthiest understanding should have been combined in one man, and that he should have arrived at the full development of his powers at the moment when the material in which he was to work—that wonderful composite called English, the best result of the confusion of tongues—was in its freshest perfection. The English-speaking nations should build a monument to the misguided enthusiasts of the Plain of Shinar; for, as the mixture of many bloods seems to have made them the most vigorous of modern races, so has the mingling of divers speeches given them a language which is perhaps the noblest vehicle of poetic thought that ever existed.

Had Shakspeare been born fifty years earlier, he would have been cramped by a book-language, not yet flexible enough for the demands of rhythmic emotion, not yet sufficiently popularized for the natural and familiar expression of supreme thought, not yet so rich in metaphysical phrase as to render possible that ideal representation of the great passions which is the aim and end of Art, not yet subdued by practice and general consent to a definiteness of accentuation essential to ease and congruity of metrical arrangement. Had he been born fifty years later, his ripened manhood would have found itself in an England absorbed and angry with the solution of political and religious problems, from which his whole nature was averse, instead of in that Elizabethan social system, ordered and planetary in its functions and degrees as the angelic hierarchy of the Areopagite, where his contemplative eye could crowd itself with various and brilliant pictures, and whence his impartial brain—one lobe of which seems to have been Normanly refined and the other Saxonly sagacious—could draw its morals of courtly and worldly wisdom, its lessons of prudence and magnanimity. In estimating Shakspeare, it should never be forgotten, that, like Goethe, he was essentially observer and artist, and incapable of partisanship. The passions, actions, sentiments, whose character and results he delighted to watch



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and to reproduce, are those of man in society as it existed; and it no more occurred to him to question the right of that society to exist than to criticize the divine ordination of the seasons. His business was with men as they were, not with man as he ought to be, —with the human soul as it is shaped or twisted into character by the complex experience of life, not in its abstract essence, as something to be saved or lost. During the first half of the seventeenth century, the centre of intellectual interest was rather in the other world than in this, rather in the region of thought and principle and conscience than in actual life. It was a generation in which the poet was, and felt himself, out of place. Sir Thomas Browne, our most imaginative mind since Shakspeare, found breathing-room, for a time, among the "*O altitudines!*" of religious speculation, but soon descended to occupy himself with the exactitudes of science. Jeremy Taylor, who half a century earlier would have been Fletcher's rival, compels his clipped fancy to the conventional discipline of prose, (Maid Marian turned nun,) and waters his poetic wine with doctrinal eloquence. Milton is saved from making total shipwreck of his large-utteranced genius on the desolate Noman's Land of a religious epic only by the lucky help of Satan and his colleagues, with whom, as foiled rebels and republicans, he cannot conceal his sympathy. As purely poet, Shakspeare would have come too late, had his lot fallen in that generation. In mind and temperament too exoteric for a mystic, his imagination could not have at once illustrated the influence of his epoch and escaped from it, like that of Browne; the equilibrium of his judgment, essential to him as an artist, but equally removed from propagandism, whether as enthusiast or logician, would have unfitted him for the pulpit; and his intellectual being was too sensitive to the wonder and beauty of outward life and Nature to have found satisfaction, as Milton's could, (and perhaps only by reason of his blindness,) in a world peopled by purely imaginary figures. We might fancy his becoming a great statesman, but he lacked the social position which could have opened that career to him. What we mean, when we say Shakspeare, is something inconceivable either during the reign of Henry the Eighth or the Commonwealth, and which would have been impossible after the Restoration.

All favorable stars seem to have been in conjunction at his nativity. The Reformation had passed the period of its vinous fermentation, and its clarified results remained as an element of intellectual impulse and exhilaration; there were signs yet of the acetous and putrefactive stages which were to follow in the victory and decline of Puritanism. Old forms of belief and worship still lingered, all the more touching to Fancy, perhaps, that they were homeless and attainted: the light of skeptic day was baffled by depths of forest where superstitious shapes still



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cowered, creatures of immemorial wonder, the raw material of Imagination. The invention of printing, without yet vulgarizing letters, had made the thought and history of the entire past contemporaneous; while a crowd of translators put every man who could read in inspiring contact with the select souls of all the centuries. A new world was thus opened to intellectual adventure at the very time when the keel of Columbus had turned the first daring furrow of discovery in that unmeasured ocean which still girt the known earth with a beckoning horizon of hope and conjecture, which was still fed by rivers that flowed down out of primeval silences, and which still washed the shores of Dreamland. Under a wise, cultivated, and firm-handed monarch also, the national feeling of England grew rapidly more homogeneous and intense, the rather as the womanhood of the sovereign stimulated a more chivalric loyalty,—while the new religion, of which she was the defender, helped to make England morally, as it was geographically, insular to the continent of Europe.

If circumstances could ever make a great national poet, here were all the elements mingled at melting-heat in the alembic, and the lucky moment of projection was clearly come. If a great national poet could ever avail himself of circumstances, this was the occasion,—and, fortunately, Shakspeare was equal to it. Above all, we esteem it lucky that he found words ready to his use, original and untarnished,—types of thought whose sharp edges were unworn by repeated impressions. In reading Hakluyt's Voyages, we are almost startled now and then to find that even common sailors could not tell the story of their wanderings without rising to an almost Odyssean strain, and habitually used a diction that we should be glad to buy back from desuetude at any cost. Those who look upon language only as anatomists of its structure, or who regard it as only a means of conveying abstract truth from mind to mind, as if it were so many algebraic formulae, are apt to overlook the fact that its being alive is all that gives it poetic value. We do not mean what is technically called a living language,—the contrivance, hollow as a speaking-trumpet, by which breathing and moving bipeds, even now, sailing o'er life's solemn main, are enabled to hail each other and make known their mutual shortness of mental stores,—but one that is still hot from the hearts and brains of a people, not hardened yet, but moltenly ductile to new shapes of sharp and clear relief in the moulds of new thought. So soon as a language has become literary, so soon as there is a gap between the speech of books and that of life, the language becomes, so far as poetry is concerned, almost as dead as Latin, and (as in writing Latin verses) a mind in itself essentially original becomes in the use of such a medium of utterance unconsciously reminiscential and reflective, lunar and not solar, in expression and even in thought. For words and thoughts have a much more intimate and genetic



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relation, one with the other, than most men have any notion of; and it is one thing to use our mother-tongue as if it belonged to us, and another to be the puppets of an overmastering vocabulary. "Ye know not," says Ascham, "what hurt ye do to Learning, that care not for Words, but for Matter, and so make a Divorce betwixt the Tongue and the Heart." *Lingua Toscana in bocca Romana* is the Italian proverb; and that of poets should be, *The tongue of the people in the mouth of the scholar*. We intend here no assent to the early theory, or, at any rate, practice, of Wordsworth, who confounded plebeian modes of thought with rustic forms of phrase, and then atoned for his blunder by absconding into a diction more Latinized than that of any poet of his century.

Shakspeare was doubly fortunate. Saxon by the father and Norman by the mother, he was a representative Englishman. A country-boy, he learned first the rough and ready English of his rustic mates, who knew how to make nice verbs and adjectives curtsy to their needs. Going up to London, he acquired the *lingua aulica* precisely at the happiest moment, just as it was becoming, in the strictest sense of the word, *modern*,—just as it had recruited itself, by fresh impressments from the Latin and Latinized languages, with new words to express the new ideas of an enlarging intelligence which printing and translation were fast making cosmopolitan, words which, in proportion to their novelty, and to the fact that the mother-tongue and the foreign had not yet wholly mingled, must have been used with a more exact appreciation of their meaning.[2] It was in London, and chiefly by means of the stage, that a thorough amalgamation of the Saxon, Norman, and scholarly elements of English was brought about. Already, Puttenham, in his "Arte of English Poesy," declares that the practice of the capital and the country within sixty miles of it was the standard of correct diction, the *jus et norma loquendi*. Already Spenser had almost recreated English poetry,—and it is interesting to observe, that, scholar as he was, the archaic words which he was at first over-fond of introducing are often provincialisms of purely English original. Already Marlowe had brought the English unrhymed pentameter (which had hitherto justified but half its name, by being always blank and never verse) to a perfection of melody, harmony, and variety which has never been surpassed. Shakspeare, then, found a language already to a certain extent *established*, but not yet fetlocked by dictionary- and grammar-mongers,—a versification harmonized, but which had not yet exhausted all its modulations, or been set in the stocks by critics who deal judgment on refractory feet, that will dance to Orphean measures of which their judges are insensible. That the language was established is proved by its comparative uniformity as used by the dramatists, who wrote for mixed audiences, as well as by Ben Jonson's



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satire upon Marston's neologisms; that it at the same time admitted foreign words to the rights of citizenship on easier terms than now is in good measure equally true. What was of greater import, no arbitrary line had been drawn between high words and low; vulgar then meant simply what was common; poetry had not been alienated from the people by the establishment of an Upper House of vocables, alone entitled to move in the stately ceremonials of verse, and privileged from arrest while they forever keep the promise of meaning to the ear and break it to the sense. The hot conception of the poet had no time to cool while he was debating the comparative respectability of this phrase or that; but he snatched what word his instinct prompted, and saw no indiscretion in making a king speak as his country-nurse might have taught him.[3] It was Waller who first learned in France that to talk in rhyme alone comported with the state of royalty. In the time of Shakspeare, the living tongue resembled that tree which Father Hue saw in Tartary, whose leaves were languaged,—and every hidden root of thought, every subtilest fibre of feeling, was mated by new shoots and leafage of expression, fed from those unseen sources in the common earth of human nature.

The Cabalists had a notion, that whoever found out the mystic word for anything attained to absolute mastery over that thing. The reverse of this is certainly true of poetic expression; for he who is thoroughly possessed of his thought, who imaginatively conceives an idea or image, becomes master of the word that shall most amply and fitly utter it. Heminge and Condell tell us, accordingly, that there was scarce a blot in the manuscripts they received from Shakspeare; and this is the natural corollary from the fact that such an imagination as his is as unparalleled as the force, variety, and beauty of the phrase in which it embodied itself.[4] We believe that Shakspeare, like all other great poets, instinctively used the dialect which he found current, and that his words are not more wrested from their ordinary meaning than followed necessarily from the unwonted weight of thought or stress of passion they were called on to support. He needed not to mask familiar thoughts in the weeds of unfamiliar phraseology; for the life that was in his mind could transfuse the language of every day with an intelligent vivacity, that makes it seem lambent with fiery purpose, and at each new reading a new creation. He could say with Dante, that “no word had ever forced him to say what he would not, though he had forced many a word to say what *it* would not,”—but only in the sense, that the mighty magic of his imagination had conjured out of it its uttermost secret of power or pathos. He himself says, in one of his sonnets,—

“Why is my verse so barren of new pride,  
So far from alteration and quick change?  
Why, with the time, do I not glance aside  
To new-found methods and to compounds strange?  
Why write I still all one, ever the same,  
And keep invention in a noted weed  
That every word doth almost tell my name?”



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When we say that Shakspeare used the current language of his day, we mean only that he habitually employed such language as was universally comprehensible,—that he was not run away with by the hobby of any theory as to the fitness of this or that component of English for expressing certain thoughts or feelings. That the artistic value of a choice and noble diction was quite as well understood in his day as in ours is evident from the praises bestowed by his contemporaries on Drayton, and by the epithet “well-languaged” applied to Daniel, whose poetic style is as modern as that of Tennyson; but the endless absurdities about the comparative merits of Saxon and Norman-French, vented by persons incapable of distinguishing one tongue from the other, were as yet unheard of. The influence of the Normans in Romanizing our language has been vastly overrated. We find a principle of *caste* established in certain cases by the relation of producer and consumer,—in others by the superior social standing of the conquering race. Thus, *ox*, *sheep*, *calf*, *swine*, indicate the thing produced; *beef*, *mutton*, *veal*, *pork*, the thing consumed.[5] It is the same with the names of the various grains, and the product of the cheaper kinds when ground,—as *oat-meal*, *barley-meal*, *rye-meal*; while the generic term for the crop becomes *grain*, and the meal of the variety used by the higher classes is turned into *flour*. To *bury* remains Saxon, because both high and low must be hidden under ground at last; but as only the rich and noble could afford any pomp in that sad office, we get the word *funeral* from the Norman. So also the serf went into a Saxon *grave*, the lord into a Norman *tomb*. All the parts of armor are naturally named from the French; the weapons of the people, as *sword*, *bow*, and the like, continued Saxon. So *feather* is Saxon; but as soon as it changes into a *plume* for the knight, it turns Norman,—and Latin when it is cut into a *pen* for the *clerk*. *Book* is Saxon; but a number of books collected together, as could be done only by the rich, makes a *library*. *Darling* would be murmured over many a *cradle* in Saxon *huts*; but *minion* came into the language down the back stairs of the Norman *palace*. In the same way, terms of law are Norman, and of the Church, Latin. These are familiar examples. But hasty generalizers are apt to overlook the fact, that the Saxon was never, to any great extent, a literary language. Accordingly, it held its own very well in the names of common things, but failed to answer the demands of complex ideas derived from them. The author of “Piers Ploughman” wrote for the people, Chaucer for the court. We open at random and count the Latin[6] words in ten verses of the “Vision” and ten of Chaucer’s “Romaunt of the Rose,” (a translation from the French,) and find the proportion to be seven in the former and five in the latter.



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The organs of the Saxon have always been unwilling and stiff in learning languages. He acquired only about as many British words as we have Indian ones, and we believe that more French and Latin was introduced through the pen and the eye than through the tongue and the ear. For obvious reasons, the question is one that must be settled by reference to prose-writers, and not poets; and it is, we think, pretty well settled that more words of Latin original were brought into the language in the century between 1550 and 1650 than in the whole period before or since,—and for the simple reason, that they were absolutely needful to express new modes and combinations of thought. [7] The language has gained immensely by the infusion, in richness of synonyme and in the power of expressing nice shades of thought and feeling, but more than all in light-footed polysyllables that trip singing to the music of verse. There are certain cases, it is true, where the vulgar Saxon word is refined, and the refined Latin vulgar, in poetry,—as in *sweat* and *perspiration*; but there are vastly more in which the Latin bears the bell. Perhaps there might be a question between the old English *again-rising* and *resurrection*; but there can be no doubt that *conscience* is better than *inwit*, and *remorse* than *again-bite*. Should we translate the title of Wordsworth's famous ode, "Intimations of Immortality," into "Hints of Deathlessness," it would hiss like an angry gander. If, instead of Shakspeare's

"Age cannot wither her,  
Nor custom stale her infinite variety,"

we should say, "her boundless manifoldness," the sentiment would suffer in exact proportion with the music. What homebred English could ape the high Roman fashion of such togated words as

"The multitudinous sea incarnadine,"—

where the huddling epithet implies the tempest-tossed soul of the speaker, and at the same time pictures the wallowing waste of ocean more vividly than the famous phrase of AEschylus does its rippling sunshine? Again, *sailor* is less poetical than *mariner*, as Campbell felt, when he wrote,

"Ye mariners of England,"

and Coleridge, when he preferred

"It was an ancient mariner"

to

"It was an elderly seaman";

for it is as much the charm of poetry that it suggest a certain remoteness and strangeness as familiarity; and it is essential not only that we feel at once the meaning



of the words in themselves, but also their melodic meaning in relation to each other, and to the sympathetic variety of the verse. A word once vulgarized can never be rehabilitated. We might say now a *buxom* lass, or that a chambermaid was *buxom*, but we could not use the term, as Milton did, in its original sense of *bowsome*,—that is, *lithe, gracefully bending*.<sup>[8]</sup>



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But the secret of force in writing lies not in the pedigree of nouns and adjectives and verbs, but in having something that you believe in to say, and making the parts of speech vividly conscious of it. It is when expression becomes an act of memory, instead of an unconscious necessity, that diction takes the place of warm and hearty speech. It is not safe to attribute special virtues (as Bosworth, for example, does to the Saxon) to words of whatever derivation, at least in poetry. Because Lear's "oak-cleaving thunderbolts," and "the all-dreaded thunder-stone" in "Cymbeline" are so fine, we would not give up Wilton's Virgilian "fulmined over Greece," where the verb in English conveys at once the idea of flash and reverberation, but avoids that of riving and shattering. In the experiments made for casting the great bell for the Westminster Tower, it was found that the superstition which attributed the remarkable sweetness and purity of tone in certain old bells to the larger mixture of silver in their composition had no foundation in fact. It was the cunning proportion in which the ordinary metals were balanced against each other, the perfection of form, and the nice gradations of thickness, that wrought the miracle. And it is precisely so with the language of poetry. The genius of the poet will tell him what word to use (else what use in his being poet at all?); and even then, unless the proportion and form, whether of parts or whole, be all that Art requires and the most sensitive taste finds satisfaction in, he will have failed to make what shall vibrate through all its parts with a silvery unison,—in other words, a poem.

We think the component parts of English were in the latter years of Elizabeth thus exquisitely proportioned one to the other. Yet Bacon had no faith in his mother-tongue, translating the works on which his fame was to rest into what he called "the universal language," and affirming that "English would bankrupt all our books." He was deemed a master of it, nevertheless; and it is curious that Ben Jonson applies to him in prose the same commendation which he gave Shakspeare in verse, saying, that he "performed that in our tongue which may be compared or preferred either to *insolent Greece or haughty Rome*"; and he adds this pregnant sentence:—"In short, within his view and about his time were all the wits born that could honor a language or help study. Now things daily fall: wits grow downwards, eloquence grows backwards." Ben had good reason for what he said of the wits. Not to speak of science, of Galileo and Kepler, the sixteenth century was a spendthrift of literary genius. An attack of immortality in a family might have been looked for then as scarlet-fever would be now. Montaigne, Tasso, and Cervantes were born within the same fourteen years; and in England, while Spenser was still delving over the *propria que maribus*, and Raleigh launching paper navies, Shakspeare was stretching his baby hands



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for the moon, and the little Bacon, chewing on his coral, had discovered that impenetrability was one quality of matter. It almost takes one's breath away to think that "Hamlet" and the "Novum Organon" were at the risk of teething and measles at the same time. But Ben was right also in thinking that eloquence had grown backwards. He lived long enough to see the language of verse become in a measure traditional and conventional. It was becoming so, partly from the necessary order of events, partly because the most natural and intense expression of feeling had been in so many ways satisfied and exhausted,—but chiefly because there was no man left to whom, as to Shakspeare, perfect conception gave perfection of phrase. Dante, among modern poets, his only rival in condensed force, says, "Optimis conceptionibus optima loquela conveniet; sed optimae conceptiones non possunt esse nisi ubi scientia et ingenium est;... et sic non omnibus versificantibus optima loquela convenit, cum plerique sine scientia et ingenio versificantur." [9]

Shakspeare must have been quite as well aware of the provincialism of English as Bacon was; but he knew that great poetry, being universal in its appeal to human nature, can make any language classic, and that the men whose appreciation is immortality will mine through any dialect to get at an original soul. He had as much confidence in his homebred speech as Bacon had want of it, and exclaims,—

"Not marble nor the gilded monuments  
Of princes shall outlive this powerful rhyme."

He must have been perfectly conscious of his genius, and of the great trust which he imposed upon his native tongue as embodier and perpetuator of it. As he has avoided obscurities in his sonnets, he would do so *a fortiori* in his plays, both for the purpose of immediate effect on the stage and of future appreciation. Clear thinking makes clear writing, and he who has shown himself so eminently capable of it in one case is not to be supposed to abdicate intentionally in others. The difficult passages in the plays, then, are to be regarded either as corruptions, or else as phenomena in the natural history of Imagination, whose study will enable us to arrive at a clearer theory and better understanding of it.

While we believe that our language had two periods of culmination in poetic beauty,—one of nature, simplicity, and truth, in the ballads, which deal only with narrative and feeling,—another of Art, (or Nature as it is ideally reproduced through the imagination,) of stately amplitude, of passionate intensity and elevation, in Spenser and the greater dramatists,—and that Shakspeare made use of the latter as he found it, we by no means intend to say that he did not enrich it, or that any inferior man could have dipped the same words out of the great poet's inkstand. But he enriched it only by the natural expansion and exhilaration of which it was conscious, in yielding to the mastery of a genius that could turn and wind it like a fiery Pegasus, making it feel its life in every

limb. He enriched it through that exquisite sense of music, (never approached but by Marlowe,) to which it seemed to be eagerly obedient, as if every word said to him,

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*"Bid me discourse, I will enchant thine ear,"—*

as if every latent harmony revealed itself to him as the gold to Brahma, when he walked over the earth where it was hidden, crying, "Here am I, Lord! do with me what thou wilt!" That he used language with that intimate possession of its meaning possible only to the most vivid thought is doubtless true; but that he wantonly strained it from its ordinary sense, that he found it too poor for his necessities, and accordingly coined new phrases, or that, from haste or carelessness, he violated any of its received proprieties, we do not believe. We have said that it was fortunate for him that he came upon an age when our language was at its best; but it was fortunate also for us, because our costliest poetic phrase is put beyond reach of decay in the gleaming precipitate in which it united itself with his thought.

We do not, therefore, agree with Mr. Matthew Arnold, that the extravagance of thought and diction which characterizes much of our modern poetry is traceable to the influence of Shakspeare. We see in it only the futile effort of misguided persons to torture out of language the secret of that inspiration which should be in themselves. We do not find the extravagances in Shakspeare himself. We never saw a line in any modern poet that reminded us of him, and will venture to assert that it is only poets of the second class that find successful imitators. And the reason seems to us a very plain one. The genius of the great poet seeks repose in the expression of itself, and finds it at last in style, which is the establishment of a perfect mutual understanding between the worker and his material.[10] The secondary intellect, on the other hand, seeks for excitement in expression, and stimulates itself into mannerism, which is the wilful obtrusion of self, as style is its unconscious abnegation. No poet of the first class has ever left a school, because his imagination is incommunicable; while, just as surely as the thermometer tells of the neighborhood of an iceberg, you may detect the presence of a genius of the second class in any generation by the influence of his mannerism, for that, being an artificial thing, is capable of reproduction. Dante, Shakspeare, Goethe, left no heirs either to the form or mode of their expression; while Milton, Sterne, and Wordsworth left behind them whole regiments uniformed with all their external characteristics. We do not mean that great poetic geniuses may not have influenced thought, (though we think it would be difficult to show how Shakspeare had done so, directly and wilfully,) but that they have not infected contemporaries or followers with mannerism.



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That the propositions we have endeavored to establish have a direct bearing in various ways upon the qualifications of whoever undertakes to edit the works of Shakspeare will, we think, be apparent to those who consider the matter. The hold which Shakspeare has acquired and maintained upon minds so many and so various, in so many vital respects utterly unsympathetic and even incapable of sympathy with his own, is one of the most noteworthy phenomena in the history of literature. That he has had the most inadequate of editors, that, as his own Falstaff was the cause of the wit, so he has been the cause of the foolishness that was in other men, (as where Malone ventured to discourse upon his metres, and Dr. Johnson on his imagination,) must be apparent to every one,—and also that his genius and its manifestations are so various, that there is no commentator but has been able to illustrate him from his own peculiar point of view or from the results of his own favorite studies. But to show that he was a good common-lawyer, that he understood the theory of colors, that he was an accurate botanist, a master of the science of medicine, especially in its relation to mental disease, a profound metaphysician, and of great experience and insight in politics,—all these, while they may very well form the staple of separate treatises, and prove, that, whatever the extent of his learning, the range and accuracy of his knowledge were beyond precedent or later parallel, are really outside the province of an editor.

That Shakspeare did not edit his own works must be attributed, we suspect, to his premature death. That he should not have intended it is inconceivable. That the “Tempest” was his latest work we have no doubt; and perhaps it is not considering too nicely to conjecture a profound personal meaning in it. Is it over-fanciful to think that in the master Prospero we have the type of Imagination? in Ariel, of the wonder-working and winged Fantasy? in Caliban, of the half-animal but serviceable Understanding, tormented by Fancy and the unwilling slave of Imagination? and that there is something of self-consciousness in the breaking of Prospero’s wand and burying his book,—a sort of sad prophecy, based on self-knowledge of the nature of that man who, after such thaumaturgy, could go down to Stratford and live there for years, only collecting his dividends from the Globe Theatre, lending money on mortgage, and leaning over his gate to chat and bandy quips with neighbors? His thought had entered into every phase of human life and thought, had embodied all of them in living creations;—had he found all empty, and come at last to the belief that genius and its works were as phantasmagoric as the rest, and that fame was as idle as the rumor of the pit? However this may be, his works have come down to us in a condition of manifest and admitted corruption in some portions, while in others there is an obscurity which may be attributed either to an idiosyncratic



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use of words and condensation of phrase, to a depth of intuition for a proper coalescence with which ordinary language is inadequate, to a concentration of passion in a focus that consumes the lighter links which bind together the clauses of a sentence or of a process of reasoning in common parlance, or to a sense of music which mingles music and meaning without essentially confounding them. We should demand for a perfect editor, then, first, a thorough glossological knowledge of the English contemporary with Shakspeare; second, enough logical acuteness of mind and metaphysical training to enable him to follow recondite processes of thought; third, such a conviction of the supremacy of his author as always to prefer his thought to any theory of his own; fourth, a feeling for music, and so much knowledge of the practice of other poets as to understand that Shakspeare's versification differs from theirs as often in kind as in degree; fifth, an acquaintance with the world as well as with books; and last, what is, perhaps, of more importance than all, so great a familiarity with the working of the imaginative faculty in general, and of its peculiar operation in the mind of Shakspeare, as will prevent his thinking a passage dark with excess of light, and enable him to understand folly that the Gothic Shakspeare often superimposed upon the slender column of a single word, that seems to twist under it, but does not,—like the quaint shafts in cloisters,—a weight of meaning which the modern architects of sentences would consider wholly unjustifiable by correct principle.

It would be unreasonable to expect a union of all these qualifications in a single man, but we think that Mr. White combines them in larger proportion than any editor with whose labors we are acquainted. He has an acuteness in tracing the finer fibres of thought worthy of the keenest lawyer on the scent of a devious trail of circumstantial evidence; he has a sincere desire to illustrate his author rather than himself; he is a man of the world, as well as a scholar; he comprehends the mastery of imagination, and that it is the essential element as well of poetry as of profound thinking; a critic of music, he appreciates the importance of rhythm as the higher mystery of versification. The sum of his qualifications is large, and his work is honorable to American letters.

Though our own studies have led us to somewhat intimate acquaintance with Elizabethan literature, it is with some diffidence that we bring the criticism of *dilettanti* to bear upon the labors of five years of serious investigation. We fortify ourselves, however, with Dr. Johnson's dictum on the subject of Criticism:—"Why, no, Sir; this is not just reasoning. You *may* abuse a tragedy, though you cannot make one. You may scold a carpenter who has made a bad table, though *you* cannot make a table; it is not your trade to make tables." Not that we intend to abuse Mr. White's edition of Shakspeare, but we shall speak of what seem to us its merits and defects with the frankness which alone justifies criticism.



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We have spoken of Mr. White's remarkable qualifications. We shall now state shortly what seem to us his faults. We think his very acumen sometimes misleads him into fancying a meaning where none exists, or at least none answerable to the clarity and precision of Shakspeare's intellect; that he is too hasty in his conclusions as to the pronunciation of words and the accuracy of rhymes in Shakspeare's day, and that he has been seduced into them by what we cannot help thinking a mistaken theory as to certain words, as *moth* and *nothing*, for example; that he shows, here and there, a glimpse of Americanism, especially misplaced in an edition of the poet whose works do more than anything else, perhaps, to maintain the sympathy of the English race; and that his prejudice against the famous corrected folio of 1632 leads him to speak slightly of Mr. Colier, to whom all lovers of our early literature are indebted, and who alone, in the controversy excited in England by the publication of his anonymous corrector's emendations, showed, under the most shameful provocation, the temper of a gentleman and the self-respect of a scholar. But after all these deductions, we remain of the opinion that Mr. White has given us the best edition hitherto published, and we do not like him the less for an occasional crotchet. For though Shakspeare himself seemed to think with regret that the dirge of the hobby-horse had been sung, yet, as we ourselves have given evidence, it is impossible for any one to write on this subject without taking an occasional airing on one or more of those imaginary steeds that stand at livery with no risk of eating off their own heads. We shall take up the subject again in our next number, and by extracts justify both our commendation and our criticisms of Mr. White.

[Footnote 1: *The Works of William Shakspeare*. Edited, etc., by RICHARD GRANT WHITE. Vols. II., III., IV, and V. Boston: Little, Brown, & Co. 1858.]

[Footnote 2: As where Ben Jonson is able to say,—“Men may securely sin, but safely never.”]

[Footnote 3: “Vulgarem locutionem appellamus eam qua infantes adsuefiunt ab adsistentibus cum primitus distinguere voces incipiunt: vel, quod brevius dici potest, vulgarem locutionem asserimus *quam sine omni regula, nutricem imitantes, accepimus*.” Dante, *de Vulg. Eloquio*, Lib. I. cap. i.]

[Footnote 4: Gray, himself a painful corrector, told Nicholls that “nothing was done so well as at the first concoction,”—adding, as a reason, “We think in words.” Ben Jonson said, it was a pity Shakspeare had not blotted more, for that he sometimes wrote nonsense,—and cited in proof of it the verse

“Caesar did never wrong but with just cause.”

The last four words do not appear in the passage as it now stands, and Professor Craik suggests that they were stricken out in consequence of Jonson's criticism. This is very probable; but we suspect that the pen that blotted them was in the hand of Master



Hemingway or his colleague. The moral confusion in the idea was surely admirably characteristic of the general who had just accomplished a successful *coup d'état*, the condemnation of which he would fancy that he read in the face of every honest man he met, and which he would therefore be forever indirectly palliating.]



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[Footnote 5: Scott, in *Ivanhoe*.]

[Footnote 6: We use the word *Latin* here to express words derived either mediately or immediately from that language.]

[Footnote 7: The prose of Chaucer (1390) and of Sir Thomas Malory (translating from the French, 1470) is less Latinized than that of Bacon, Browne, Taylor, or Milton. The glossary to Spenser's *Shepherd's Calendar* (1579) explains words of Teutonic and Romanic root in about equal proportions. The parallel but independent development of Scotch is not to be forgotten.]

[Footnote 8: We believe that for the last two centuries the Latin radicals of English have been more familiar and homelike to those who use them than the Teutonic. Even so accomplished a person as Professor Craik, in his *English of Shakspeare*, derives *head*, through the German *haupt*, from the Latin *caput*! We trust that its genealogy is nobler, and that it is of kin with *coelum tueri*, rather than with the Greek [Greek: *kephalae*], if Suidas be right in tracing the origin of that to a word meaning *vacuity*. Mr. Craik suggests, also, that *quick* and *wicked* may be etymologically identical, *because* he fancies a relationship between *busy* and the German *boese*, though *wicked* is evidently the participial form of A.S. *wacan*, (German *weichen*,) *to bend, to yield*, meaning *one who has given way to temptation*, while *quick* seems as clearly related to *wegan*, meaning *to move*, a different word, even if radically the same. In the *London Literary Gazette* for Nov. 13, 1858, we find an extract from Miss Millington's *Heraldry in History, Poetry, and Romance*, in which, speaking of the motto of the Prince of Wales,—*De par Houmout ich diene*,—she says, "The precise meaning of the former word [*Houmout*] has not, I think, been ascertained." The word is plainly the German *Hochmuth*, and the whole would read, *De par (Aus) Hochmuth ich diene*,—"Out of magnanimity I serve." So entirely lost is the Saxon meaning of the word *knave*, (A.S. *cnava*, German *knabe*,) that the name *navvie*, assumed by railway-laborers, has been transmogrified into *navigator*. We believe that more people could tell why the month of July was so called than could explain the origin of the names for our days of the week, and that it is oftener the Saxon than the French words in Chaucer that puzzle the modern reader.]

[Footnote 9: *De Vulgari Eloquio*, Lib. II. cap. i. *ad finem*. We quote this treatise as Dante's, because the thoughts seem manifestly his; though we believe that in its present form it is an abridgment by some transcriber, who sometimes copies textually, and sometimes substitutes his own language for that of the original.]

[Footnote 10: Pheidias said of one of his pupils that he had an inspired thumb, because the modelling-clay yielded to its careless sweep a grace of curve which it refused to the utmost pains of others.]



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### REVIEWS AND LITERARY NOTICES.

*A History of Philip the Second, King of Spain.* By WILLIAM H. PRESCOTT. Vol. III. Boston: Phillips, Sampson, & Co. 1858.

A cordial welcome from many quarters will greet this third instalment of a work which promises, when completed, to be the most valuable contribution to European history ever made by an American scholar. This will in part be owing to the importance of the subject, which, though professing to be the history of a single country and a single reign, is in fact the great program of the politics of Christendom, and of more than Christendom, during a period when the struggles of rival powers and of hostile principles and creeds kept the world in agitation and prolonged suspense,—when Romanism and Reform, the Crescent and the Cross, despotic power and constitutional freedom, were contending for mastery, and no government or nation could stand wholly aloof from a contest in which the fate, not of empires alone, but of civilization, was involved. Spain, during that period, was the bulwark of the Church against the attacks of the Reformers, and the bulwark of Christendom against the attacks of the Moslem. The power of Spain towered high above that of every other monarchy; and this power was wielded with absolute authority by the king. The Spanish nation was united and animated by an intense, unwavering devotion to the ancient faith, which was entwined with all the roots of the national life,—which was Spanish, in fact, far more than it was Italian; and of this spirit Philip the Second was the fitting representative, not merely from his position, but from his education, his intellect, and his character. Therefore it is that the historian of this single country and this single reign, standing upon a central eminence, must survey and depict the whole vast field of which we have spoken.

The materials for such a survey are abundant. But down to a very recent period, the most valuable and authentic portion of them—letters of the actors, records, written not from hearsay, but from personal knowledge, documents of various kinds, private and official, that fill up the hiatuses, correct the conjectures, establish the credibility, and give a fresh meaning to the relations of the earlier writers—were neglected or concealed, inaccessible, unexplored, all but unknown. Now these hidden sources have been revealed. A flood of light streams back upon that bygone age, filling every obscure nook, making legible and plain what before could neither be read nor understood. Or rather, the effect is such as when distant objects, seen dimly and confusedly with the naked eye, are brought within the range of a powerful telescope, which dissolves the seeming masses, and enables us to scrutinize each separate form.



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Glance for a moment through this instrument, so adjusted as to bear upon a figure not undeserving of a closer study. Night has fallen on the bleak and sombre scenery of the Sierra Guadarrama. The gray outlines of the Escorial are scarcely distinguishable from those of the dusky hills amid which it stands. No light is thrown forth from its eleven thousand windows, save in this retreating angle formed by the junction of the palace with the convent, or—to speak according to the architect's symbolical design—of the “handle” with the “gridiron.” The apartment from which this feeble ray emerges is of small size,—not more than sixteen feet square,—but having on two sides arched recesses that somewhat increase its capacity. One of these alcoves contains a bed, and a door opening into an adjoining oratory, which has immediate communication with the chancel of the great church, so that an occupant of the bed might, if supported in a sitting posture, have a view of the high altar and witness the elevation of the host. This alcove is decked with many little images of saints, which, with a few small pictures, of rare beauty,—the subjects all of a religious character,—and two cabinets of a curious, agate-colored marble, a product of the New World,—are the only ornaments that relieve the extreme simplicity of the apartment, with its plain white walls and floor of brick. The other alcove is occupied by a writing-table, where sits, intent on the employment that consumes by far the greater portion of his time, the potent monarch of Spain, the “most pious and most prudent” Philip the Second. A drowsy secretary, who waits for the completion of the document which he is to copy, is his only attendant.

Does it not seem strange that ambassadors and nuncios should become confused and lose all recollection of the addresses they had committed to memory, in the presence of a prince whose exterior so ill accords with the grandeur of his titles and the vastness of his power? His form is below the middle height and very slender, the limbs having even an attenuated look. The whole appearance is that of a man of delicate and even feeble organization. The blonde complexion, the pale blue eyes, and the light sandy hue—save where they are prematurely touched with gray—of the hair, moustache, and short, pointed beard, all indicate the Flemish origin of one who would fain be regarded as “wholly a Spaniard.” The protruding under-jaw is another proof of his descent from the Burgundian rulers of the Netherlands. The expression of the countenance, as we find on a closer inspection, is not so easy to define. There is no variable play of light and shade upon the features, no settled look of joy or sorrow, no trace of anger or of weariness. Is it because the subject with which his pen is busied is too unimportant to call forth any emotion in the writer? It may be a mere matter of routine, connected with the regular business of his household or the ordinary affairs of state. But if it be an answer



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to the dispatch from Flanders giving information of the outburst of iconoclasm and rebellion, or a subtly-conceived plan for the secret execution of Montigny or the assassination of Escovedo, or an order for the imprisonment—or the death—of the heir-apparent to the throne, you shall perceive nothing in that face, unruffled as a mask, by which to conjecture the sentiment or purpose of the mind. As little will he in the presence of others exhibit any signs of agitation on the reception of extraordinary news, or the occurrence of some great event. The fleet which he sent out under his brother, John of Austria, in conjunction with the Papal and Venetian armaments, to decide by a single blow the long struggle with the Infidel,—all Europe awaiting the issue with trembling anxiety and suspense,—has won a memorable and unexpected victory, and destroyed forever the *prestige* of the Moslem power. An official, bursting with the intelligence, carries it to the king, who is hearing a service in his private chapel. Without the slightest change of countenance, Philip desires the priest, whose ear the thrilling whisper has reached, and who stands open-mouthed, prepared to burst forth at once into the *Te Deum*, to proceed with the service; that ended, he orders appropriate thanks to be offered up.

As in triumph, so in disaster. The *armada*, which had been baptized “Invincible,” is destroyed. The great navy collected from many states, equipped at the cost of an enormous treasure, manned with the choicest troops of Spain and her subject dominions, lies scattered and wrecked along the English shores, which it was sent forth to conquer. Again the sympathies of Europe are excited to the highest pitch. Protestantism triumphs; Catholicism despairs. He who had most at stake alone preserves his calmness, on hearing that all is lost. He neither frowns upon his unfortunate generals nor murmurs against Providence. Again he orders thanks to be offered up, for those who have been rescued from the general ruin,—for those, also, who in this holy enterprise have lost their lives and joined eternal glory.

Neither does any private grief—the death of children, of a parent, or of a wife—move him either to real or simulated agitation.[1] Nor will intense physical suffering overpower this habitual stoicism. He has seen unmoved the agony of many victims. He will himself endure the like without any outward manifestation of pain. In yonder bed he will one day suffer tortures surpassing those to which he has so often consigned the heretic and the apostate Morisco; there he will expire amid horrors that scarce ever before encompassed a death-bed;—but no groan will reveal the weakness of the flesh; the soul, triumphant over nature, will bear aloft her colors to the last, and plant them on the breach through which she passes into the unknown eternity.



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But while we have been thus discoursing, the king has finished his long dispatch, and now hands it to the secretary. The latter, having vainly struggled with his sleepiness, has at length begun to nod. Hearing his name pronounced, he starts to his feet, takes the document, which is not yet dry, to sand it, and, desirous to show by his alertness that he has been all the time wide awake, empties over it—the contents of the inkstand! Awkward individual!—there he stands, dumfounded and aghast. His master quietly resumes his seat, procures fresh materials, and, though it is long past midnight, begins his task anew with that incomparable patience which is “his virtue.”

The perfect equanimity on all occasions, which was the trait in Philip’s character that most impressed such of his contemporaries as were neither his adherents nor his enemies,—for example, the Venetian envoys at his court,—was not produced by a single stroke of Nature’s pencil, but had a three-fold origin. In the education which, from his earliest years, had prepared him for the business of reigning, the *alpha*, and the *omega* of every lesson had been the word “dissimulation.” *Qui nescit dissimulare, nescit regnare*. By this maxim it was not intended—at least, openly or cynically—to impress on youthful royalty the duty and propriety of lying. All it professed to inculcate was the necessity of wearing an habitual veil before the mind, through which no thought or feeling should ever be discernible. Every politician, in the sixteenth century, had learned that lesson. William of Orange, the best and purest statesman of the age, was the greatest of all masters in the art of dissimulation. In vain might Granvelle strive to pry into that bosom, to learn whether its designs were friendly or hostile to the plans of tyranny. Not till it was extorted by events could the secret be discovered.

In the second place, Philip, as a Spaniard, and one whose manners were to furnish a model for the Spanish court, had, of course, been trained to that demeanor which was regarded in Spain as the distinctive mark of high breeding. “All the nobles of this court,” writes an Italian contemporary, “though amazingly ignorant and unlettered, maintain a certain haughty tranquillity of manner which they term *sosiego*.” Foreigners found it difficult to define a quality which differed as much from the composure and self-possession everywhere characteristic of the gentleman as Spartan endurance or Stoical apathy from ordinary fortitude or self-control. It was a glacier-like repose, incrusting a mountain of pride. The beams, that gilded, might not thaw it; the storm did but harden and extend it. It yielded only to the inner fires of arrogance and passion, bursting through, at times, with irrepressible fury.



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These occasional outbreaks were never witnessed in Philip.[2] He was exempted from them by the third element which we proposed to notice, and which, as nature takes precedence of habit, ought perhaps to have been the first. A Spaniard by birth and education, a Spaniard in his sympathies and in his tastes, he had inherited, nevertheless, some of the peculiarities, intellectual as well as moral, of the other race to which by his origin, and, as we have already said, by his physical characteristics, he belonged. He had none of the more pleasing qualities of the Netherlander; but he had the sluggish temper, the slow but laborious mind. "He is phlegmatic as well from natural disposition as from will," remarks an Italian contemporary. "This king," says another Venetian minister, "is absolutely free from every kind of passion." The word "passion" is here used in a strict, if not the most correct sense. Philip could, perhaps, love; that he could hate is what no one has ever ventured to dispute; but never did either feeling, strong, persistent, indestructible, though it might be, rise in turbulent waves around his soul. In religion he was a bigot,—not a fanatic. "The tranquillity of my dominions and the security of my crown," he said, "rest on an unqualified submission in all essential points to the authority of the Holy See." In the same deliberate and impressive style, not in that of a wild and reckless frenzy, is his famous saying, "Better not to reign at all than to reign over heretics." His course in all matters of government was in conformity with the only chart by which he had been taught to steer. He boasted that he was no innovator,—that he did but tread in the footsteps of his father. Nor, though he ever kept his object steadily in view, did he press towards it with undue haste. He was content that time should smooth away the difficulties in his path. "Time and myself against any other two" was not the maxim of a man who looked to effect great changes or who felt himself in danger of being driven from his course by the gusts of passion.

To a person of this character it mattered little, as far as the essentials of existence were concerned, whether his life were passed upon a throne or at an attorney's desk. In the latter situation, his fondness for using the pen would well have qualified him for the drudgery, his admirable patience would have been sufficiently exercised, and the mischief he was able to do would have been on a more contracted scale. On the throne, his labors, as his admirers tell us, were those of "a poor clerk earning his bread," while his recreations were those of a Jeronymite monk. His intercourse with mankind was limited to the narrowest range of which his position would allow. Even with his ministers he preferred to communicate in writing. When he went abroad, it was in a carriage so constructed as to screen him entirely from view, and to shut out the world from his observation. He always entered Madrid after nightfall, and reached his palace by streets that were the least frequented. He had an equally strong aversion to bodily exercise. Such was his love of quiet and seclusion, that it was commonly believed he waited only for a favorable opportunity to follow the example of his father, resign his power and withdraw to a convent.[3]



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In the volume before us are two chapters devoted to the character and personal habits of Philip, a picture of his court, his method of transacting business, his chief advisers, the machinery of his government, and his relations with his subjects. As usually happens, it is in details of a personal and biographical kind that the author's investigations have been the most productive of new discoveries. It is a question with some minds, whether such details are properly admitted into history. The new luminary of moral and political science, the Verulam of the nineteenth century, Mr. Henry Buckle, tells us that biography forms no part of history, that individual character has little or no effect in determining the course of the world's affairs, and that the historian's proper business is to exhibit those general laws, discoverable, by a strictly scientific process of investigation, which act with controlling power upon human conduct and govern the destinies of our race. We readily admit that the discovery of such laws would exceed in importance every other having relation to man's present sphere of existence; and we heartily wish that Mr. Buckle had made as near an approach to the discovery as he confidently believes himself to have done. But even had he, instead of crude theories, unwarranted assumptions, and a most lively but fallacious train of reasoning, presented us with a grand and solid philosophical work, a true *Novum Organon*, he would still have left the department of literature which he has so violently assailed in full possession of its present field. Our curiosity in regard to the character and habits of the men who have played conspicuous parts on the stage of history would have been not a whit diminished. The interest which men feel in the study of human character is, perhaps, the most common feeling that induces them to read at all. It is to gratify that feeling that the great majority of books are written. The mutual influences of mind upon mind—not the influences of climate, food, the "aspects of Nature," thunder-storms, earthquakes, and statistics—form, and will ever form, the great staple of literature. Mr. Buckle's own book would not have been half so entertaining as it is, if he had not, with the most natural inconsistency, plentifully besprinkled his pages with biographical details, some of which are not incorrect. Lord Macaulay, whom Mr. Buckle is unable to eulogize with sufficient vehemence without a ludicrous as well as irreverent application of Scriptural language, is of all writers the most profuse in the description of individual peculiarities, neatly doing up each separate man in a separate parcel with an appropriate label, and dismissing half his personages, like "ticket-of-leave men," with a "character," and nothing more.



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In truth, while the office of the speculative philosopher is to explore the principles that have the widest operation in the revolutions of society, the office of the historian is to represent society as it actually exists at any given period in all its various phenomena. The *science* of history has been first invented—at least, he tells us so—by Mr. Buckle. The *art* of history is older than Herodotus, older than Moses, older than printed language. It is based, like every other art, on certain truths, general and special, principles and facts; its process, like that of every other art, is the Imagination, the creative principle of genius, using these truths as its rules and its materials, working by them and upon them, applying and idealizing them. That there is such a thing as historical art has also, we know, been disputed. It is one of the exceedingly strong convictions—he will not allow us to call them opinions—entertained by the distinguished author of “Modern Painters,” and expressed by him in a lecture delivered at Edinburgh, that past ages are to be studied only in the records which they have themselves left,—letters, contemporary memoirs, and the like sources. Works built upon these he calls “restorations,” weak and servile copies, from which the spirit of the original has fled. He accordingly advises every one who would make himself really acquainted with the manners and events of a former period to go at once to the fountain-head and learn what that period said for itself in its own dialect and style. It might be sufficient mildly to warn any person who thinks of adopting this advice, that, unless the field of his intended researches be very limited, or the amount of time which he proposes to devote to the study very great, the result can scarcely be of a satisfactory nature. But there is another answer to Mr. Ruskin, which has more force when addressed to one so renowned as a critic and exponent of Art. The eye of Genius seizes what escapes ordinary observation. The province of Art is to *reveal* Nature, to elucidate her obscurities, to present her, not otherwise than as she *is*, but more truthfully and more completely than she *appears* to the common eye. Of what use were landscape-painting, if it did not teach us how to look for beauty in the real landscape? Who has not seen in a good portrait an expression which he then for the first time recognized as that which best represented the character of the original? When we applaud the personations of a great actor, we exclaim, as the highest praise, “How true to Nature!” We must, therefore, have seen before the look and gesture, and heard the tone, which we thus acknowledge as appropriate to the passion and the scene. And yet they had never stamped themselves upon our minds, when witnessed in actual life, from which the actor himself had copied them, with half that force and vividness which they receive from his delineation. In like manner,



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the historian—one to whom history is a genuine vocation—applies to the facts with which he has to deal, to the evidence which he has to sift, to the relations which he has to peruse, a faculty which shall detect a meaning where the common reader would find none,—which shall conceive a whole picture, a complete view, where another would see but fragments,—which shall combine and reproduce in one distinct and living image the relics of a past age, which lie broken, scattered, and buried beneath the mounds of time. Such a work has Niebuhr performed for early Roman history, and Michelet for the confused epochs of mediaeval France. The spirit, instead of escaping in the process, was for the first time made visible. The historian did not merely anatomize the body of the Past, but with magic power summoned up its ghost.

It cannot be said that the claims of history have ever been disallowed by the reading public. There is, indeed, no class of literature so secure of receiving the attention which it demands. While the novelist modestly confines himself to a brace of spare duodecimos, and, if his story be somewhat extended, endeavors to conceal its length in the smallness of the print, the historian unblushingly presents himself with three, six, a dozen, nay, if he be a Frenchman or a German, with forty huge tomes, and is more often taken to task for his omissions than censured for the fulness of his narrative. It is respectable to buy his volumes, and respectable to read them. We don't put them away in corners, but give them the most conspicuous places on our shelves. Strange to say, that kind of reading to which we were once driven as to a task, which our fathers thought must be useful because it was so dull, has of late outstripped every other branch in its attractiveness to the mass. Nobody yawns over Carlyle; people set upon Macaulay as if quite unconscious that they were about to be led into the labyrinths of Whig and Tory politics; and gentlemen whirled along in railway-cars bend over the pages of Prescott, and pronounce them as fascinating as any romance. Stranger still, these modern historians excel their predecessors as much in learning and depth of research as in dramatic power, artistic arrangement and construction, and beauty and picturesqueness of style. Compare the meagre array of references in the foot-notes of Watson's "History of Philip the Second" with the multitude of authorities cited by Mr. Prescott. It may be doubted, whether any printed book, however rare or little known, which could throw the least glimmer of light upon his subject, has been overlooked or neglected by the last-mentioned author; while thousands of manuscript pages, gathered from libraries and collections in almost every part of Europe, have furnished him with some of his most curious particulars and enabled him to clear up the mystery that shrouded many portions of the subject.



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We shall not attempt to determine the exact place that ought to be assigned in an illustrious brotherhood to our American historian. The country is justly proud of him, as one whose name is a household word in many lands,—who has done more, perhaps, than any other of her living writers, with the exception of Washington Irving, to obtain for a still youthful literature the regard and attention of the world,—who has helped to accomplish the prediction of Horace Walpole, that there would one day be “a Thucydides at Boston and a Xenophon at New York”; a prediction which seemed so fanciful, at the time it was made, (less than two years before the declaration of Independence,) that the prophet was fain to link its fulfilment with the contemporaneous visit of a South American traveller to the deserted ruins of London.[4] His writings have won favor with hosts of readers, and they have received the homage of learned and profound inquirers, like Humboldt and Guizot. They have merits that are recognizable at a glance, and they have also merits that will bear the closest examination. They occupy a field in which they have no compeers. They are the products of a fertile soil and of laborious cultivation. The mere literary critic, accustomed to dwell with even more attention on the form than on the substance of a work, commends above all the admirable skill shown in the selection and grouping of the incidents, the facile hand with which an obscure and entangled theme is divested of its embarrassments, the frequent brilliancy and picturesqueness of the narrative, the judicious mixture of anecdote and reflection, and the harmony and clearness of the style. These are the qualities which make Mr. Prescott’s histories, with all their solid learning and minute research, as pleasant reading as the airiest of novels. And yet not these alone. A charm is felt in many a sentence that has a deeper origin than in the intellect. No egotism obtrudes itself upon our notice; but the subtile outflow of a generous and candid spirit, of a genial and singularly healthy nature, wins for the author a secure place in the affections of his readers.

The third volume of the “History of Philip the Second” is, we think, superior to its predecessors. It contains, perhaps, no single scene equal in elaborate and careful painting to the death of Count Egmont. It has no chapter devoted to the elucidation of the darker passages in Philip’s personal history, like that which in a former volume traced to a still doubtful end the unhappy career of Don Carlos, or such as will doubtless, in a future volume, shed new light on that of Antonio Perez. But there is a more continuous interest, arising from a greater unity of subject. With the exception of the two chapters already referred to, the narrative is taken up with the contest waged by the Spaniards against those Moslem foes whom they hated with the hereditary hate of centuries, the mingled hate that had grown out of diversity of



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religion, an alien blood, and long arrears of vengeance. When that contest was waged upon the sea or on a foreign soil, it was at least mitigated by the ordinary rules of warfare. But on Spanish soil it knew no restraint, no limitation but the complete effacement of the Moorish population. The story of the Morisco Rebellion, which we remember to have first read with absorbed attention in Dunham's meagre sketch, is here related with a fulness of detail that exhausts the subject, and leaves the mind informed both of causes and results. Yet the march of the narrative is rapid and unchecked, from the first outbreak of the revolt, when Aben-Farax, with a handful of followers, facing the darkness of night and the blinding snow, penetrated into the streets of Granada, shouting the cry so long unheard in air that had once been so familiar with its sound, "There is no God but Allah, and Mahomet is the prophet of God!"—through all the strange and terrible vicissitudes of the deadly struggle that ensued, the frightful massacres, the wild *guerrilla* battles, the fiery onslaughts of the Spanish chivalry, the stealthy surprises of the Moorish mountaineers,—down to the complete suppression of the insurrection, the removal of the defeated race, the overthrow and death of Aben-Aboo, "the little king of the Alpujarras," and the ghastly triumph in which his dead body, clothed in the robes of royalty and supported upright on a horse, was led into the capital where his ancestors had once reigned in peaceful splendor, after which the head was cut off and set up in a cage above the wall, "the face turned towards his native hills, which he had loved so well."

On such a theme, and in such localities, Mr. Prescott is more at home than any other writer, American or European. His imagination, kindled by long familiar associations, burns with a steady flame. The characters are portrayed with a free and vigorous pencil, the contrast between the Orientalism of the Spanish Arab and the sterner features of the Spanish Goth being always strongly marked. The scenery, painted with as much fidelity as truth, is sometimes brought before the eye by minute description, and sometimes, with still happier effect, by incidental touches,—an epithet or a simile, as appropriate as it is suggestive. As we follow the route of Mundejar's army, the "frosty peaks" of the Sierra Nevada are seen "glistening in the sun like palisades of silver"; while terraces, scooped out along the rocky mountain-side, are covered with "bright patches of variegated culture, that hang like a garland round the gaunt Sierra." At their removal from Granada, the remnant of what had once been a race of conquerors bid a last farewell to their ancient homes just as "the morning light has broken on the *red* towers of the Alhambra"; and scattered over the country in small and isolated masses, the presence of the exiles is "sure to be revealed by the minute and elaborate culture of the soil,—as the secret course of the mountain-stream is betrayed by the brighter green of the meadow."



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We had marked for quotation an admirable passage, in which our author passes judgment on the policy of the Spanish government, its cruelty and its mistakes. But want of space compels us here to take leave of a book which we have not pretended to analyze, but to which we have rendered sincere, though inadequate, praise.

[Footnote 1: "Sempre apparisce d'un volto e d'una temperatura medesima; la qual cosa a chi, considerato gli accidenti che gli sono occorsi delle morti dei figliuoli e delle mogli, ha fatto credere che fusse crudele." *Relaz. Anon.* (1588.)]

[Footnote 2: None of the anecdotes in which Philip is represented as giving way to violent bursts of anger will bear examination. Take, for example, the story of his pent-up wrath having exploded against the Prince of Orange, when he was quitting the Netherlands in 1559. The Prince, it is said, who had accompanied him to the ship, endeavored to convince him that the opposition to his measures, of which he complained, had sprung from the Estates; on which the king, seizing William's sleeve, and shaking it vehemently, exclaimed, "No, not the Estates, but you,—you,—you!"—*No los Estados, ma vos,—vos,—vos!*—using, say the original relator and the repeaters of the story, a form of address, the second person plural, which in the Spanish language is expressive of contempt. Now it is true that *vos*, applied to an equal, would have been a solecism; but it is also true that it was the *invariable* form employed by the sovereign, even when addressing a grandee or a prince of the Church. (See the *Papiers d'Etat de Granvelle, passim.*) Moreover, the correspondence of the time shows clearly that neither Philip nor Granvelle had as yet conceived any deep suspicion of the Prince of Orange, much less had any of the parties been so imprudent as to throw off the usual mask. The story is first told by Auberi, a writer of the seventeenth century, who had it from his father, to whom it had been told by an anonymous eye-witness!]

[Footnote 3: *Relazione di Pigafetta.*]

[Footnote 4: Walpole to Mason, Nov. 24, 1774.]

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*The Courtship of Miles Standish.* By HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW. Boston: Ticknor & Fields. 1858.

The introduction and acclimatization of the *hexameter* upon English soil has been an affair of more than two centuries. The attempt was first systematically made during the reign of Elizabeth, but the metre remained a feeble exotic that scarcely burgeoned under glass. Gabriel Harvey,—a kind of Don Adriano de Armado,—whose chief claim to remembrance is, that he was the friend of Spenser, boasts that he was the first to whom the notion of transplantation occurred. In his "Foure Letters," (1592,) he says, "If I never deserve anye better remembraunce, let mee rather be Epitaphed, the Inventour of the English Hexameter, whome learned M. Stanihurst imitated in his Virgill,



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and excellent Sir Phillip Sidney disdained not to follow in his Arcadia and elsewhere.” This claim of invention, however, seems to have been an afterthought with Harvey, for, in the letters which passed between him and Spenser in 1579, he speaks of himself more modestly as only a collaborator with Sidney and others in the good work. The Earl of Surrey is said to have been the first who wrote thus in English. The most successful person, however, was William Webb, who translated two of Virgil’s Eclogues with a good deal of spirit and harmony. Ascham, in his “Schoolmaster,” (1570,) had already suggested the adoption of the ancient hexameter by English poets; but Ascham (as afterwards Puttenham in his “Art of Poesie”) thought the number of monosyllabic words in English an insuperable objection to verses in which there was a large proportion of dactyles, and recommended, therefore, that a trial should be made with iambics. Spenser, at Harvey’s instance, seems to have tried his hand at the new kind of verse. He says,—“I like your late Englishe Hexameters so exceedingly well, that I also enure my penne sometimes in that kinde.... For the onely or chiefest hardnesse, whych seemeth, is in the Accente, which sometime gapeth, and, as it were, yawneeth ilfauouredly, coming shorte of that it should, and sometime exceeding the measure of the Number, as in *Carpenter*; the middle sillable being vused shorte in Speache, when it shall be read long in Verse, seemeth like a lame Gosling that draweth one legge after hir: and *Heaven*, being used shorte as one sillable, when it is in Verse stretched out with a *Diastole*, is like a lame dogge that holdes up one legge. But it is to be wonne with Custome, and rough words must be subdued with Vse. For why a God’s name may not we, as else the Greekes, have the kingdome of our owne Language, and measure our Accenttes by the Sounde, reserving the Quantitie to the Verse?” The amiable Edmonde seems to be smiling in his sleeve as he writes this sentence. He instinctively saw the absurdity of attempting to subdue English to misunderstood laws of Latin quantities, which would, for example, make the vowel in *debt* long, in the teeth of use and wont.

We give a specimen of the hexameters which satisfied so entirely the ear of Master Gabriel Harvey,—an ear that must have been long by position, in virtue of its place on his head.

“Not the like *Discourser*, for Tongue and head: to be found out; Not the like *resolute Man*, for great and serious affayres; Not the like *Lynx*, to spie out secretes and priuities of States; *Eyed* like to *Argus*, *Earde* like to *Midas*, *Nosd* like to *Naso*, *Wingd* like to *Mercury*, fitist of a Thousand for to be employed.”

And here are a few from “worthy M. Stanyhurst’s” translation of the “AENEID.”



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“Laocoon storming from Princelis Castel is hastning,  
And a far of beloing: What fond phantastical harebraine  
Madnesse hath enchaunted your wits, you townsmen unhappie?  
Weene you (blind hodipecks) the Greekish nauie returned,  
Or that their presents want craft? is subtil Vlissis  
So soone forgotten? My life for an haulf-pennie (Trojans),” etc.

Mr. Abraham Fraunce translates two verses of Heliodorus thus:—

“Now had fyery Phlegon his dayes reuolution ended,  
And his snoring snowt with salt waues all to bee washed.”

Witty Tom Nash was right enough when he called this kind of stuff, “that drunken, staggering kinde of verse which is all vp hill and downe hill, like the waye betwixt Stamford and Becchfeeld, and goes like a horse plunging through the myre in the deep of winter, now soust up to the saddle, and straight aloft on his tiptoes.” It will be noticed that his prose falls into a kind of tipsy hexameter. The attempt in England at that time failed, but the controversy to which it gave rise was so far useful that it called forth Samuel Daniel’s “Defence of Ryme,” (1603,) one of the noblest pieces of prose in the language. Hall also, in his “Satires,” condemned the heresy in some verses remarkable for their grave beauty and strength.

The revival of the hexameter in modern poetry is due to Johann Heinrich Voss, a man of genius, an admirable metrist, and, Schlegel’s sneer to the contrary notwithstanding, hitherto the best translator of Homer. His “Odyssey,” (1783,) his “Iliad,” (1791,) and his “Luise,” (1795,) were confessedly Goethe’s teachers in this kind of verse. The “Hermann and Dorothea” of the latter (1798) was the first true poem written in modern hexameters. From Germany, Southey imported that and other classic metres into England, and we should be grateful to him, at least, for having given the model for Canning’s “Knifegrinder.” The exotic, however, again refused to take root, and for many years after we have no example of English hexameters. It was universally conceded that the temper of our language was unfriendly to them.

It remained for a man of true poetic genius to make them not only tolerated, but popular. Longfellow’s translation of “The Children of the Lord’s Supper” may have softened prejudice somewhat, but “Evangeline,” (1847,) though incumbered with too many descriptive irrelevancies, was so full of beauty, pathos, and melody, that it made converts by thousands to the hitherto ridiculed measure. More than this, it made Longfellow at once the most popular of contemporary English poets, Clough’s “Bothie”—a poem whose singular merit has hitherto failed of the wide appreciation it deserves—followed not long after; and Kingsley’s “Andromeda” is yet damp from the press.



While we acknowledge that the victory thus won by “Evangeline” is a striking proof of the genius of the author, we confess that we have never been able to overcome the feeling that the new metre is a dangerous and deceitful one. It is too easy to write, and too uniform for true pleasure in reading. Its ease sometimes leads Mr. Longfellow into prose,—as in the verse



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“Combed and wattled gules and all the rest of the blazon,”—

and into a prosaic phraseology which has now and then infected his style in other metres, as where he says

“Spectral gleam their snow-white *dresses*,”—

using a word as essentially unpoetic as *surtout* or *pea-jacket*. We think one great danger of the hexameter is, that it gradually accustoms the poet to be content with a certain regular recurrence of accented sounds, to the neglect of the poetic value of language and intensity of phrase.

But while we frankly avow our infidelity as regards the metre, we as frankly confess our admiration of the high qualities of “Miles Standish.” In construction we think it superior to “Evangeline”; the narrative is more straightforward, and the characters are defined with a firmer touch. It is a poem of wonderful picturesqueness, tenderness, and simplicity, and the situations are all conceived with the truest artistic feeling. Nothing can be better, to our thinking, than the picture of Standish and Alden in the opening scene, tinged as it is with a delicate humor, which the contrast between the thoughts and characters of the two heightens almost to pathos. The pictures of Priscilla spinning, and the bridal procession, are also masterly. We feel charmed to see such exquisite imaginations conjured out of the little old familiar anecdote of John Alden’s vicarious wooing. We are astonished, like the fisherman in the Arabian tale, that so much genius could be contained in so small and leaden a casket. Those who cannot associate sentiment with the fair Priscilla’s maiden name of Mullins may be consoled by hearing that it is only a corruption of the Huguenot Desmoulins,—as Barnum is of the Norman Vernon.

Indifferent poets comfort themselves with the notion that contemporary popularity is no test of merit, and that true poetry must always wait for a new generation to do it justice. The theory is not true in any general sense. With hardly an exception, the poetry that was ever to receive a wide appreciation has received it at once. Popularity in itself is no test of permanent literary fame, but the kind of it is and always has been a very decided one. Mr. Longfellow has been greatly popular because he so greatly deserved it. He has the secret of all the great poets,—the power of expressing universal sentiments simply and naturally. A false standard of criticism has obtained of late, which brings a brick as a sample of the house, a line or two of condensed expression as a gauge of the poem. But it is only the whole poem that is a proof of the poem, and there are twenty fragmentary poems, for one who is capable of simple and sustained beauty. Of this quality Mr. Longfellow has given repeated and striking examples, and those critics are strangely mistaken who think that what he does is easy to be done, because he has the power to make it seem so. We think his chief fault is a too great tendency to moralize, or rather, a distrust of his readers, which leads him to point out the moral which he wishes to be drawn from any special poem. We wish, for example, that the last two

stanzas could be cut off from "The Two Angels," a poem which, without them, is as perfect as anything in the language.



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Many of the pieces in this volume having already shone as captain jewels in Mana's carcanet, need no comment from us; and we should, perhaps, have avoided the delicate responsibility of criticizing one of our most precious contributors, had it not been that we have seen some very unfair attempts to depreciate Mr. Longfellow, and that, as it seemed to us, for qualities which stamp him as a true and original poet. The writer who appeals to more peculiar moods of mind, to more complex or more esoteric motives of emotion, may be a greater favorite with the few; but he whose verse is in sympathy with moods that are human and not personal, with emotions that do not belong to periods in the development of individual minds, but to all men in all years, wins the gratitude and love of whoever can read the language which he makes musical with solace and aspiration. The present volume, while it will confirm Mr. Longfellow's claim to the high rank he has won among lyric poets, deserves attention also as proving him to possess that faculty of epic narration which is rarer than all others in the nineteenth century. In our love of stimulants, and our numbness of taste, which craves the red pepper of a biting vocabulary, we of the present generation are apt to overlook this almost obsolete and unobtrusive quality; but we doubt if, since Chaucer, we have had an example of more purely objective narrative than in "The Courtship of Miles Standish." Apart from its intrinsic beauty, this gives the poem a claim to higher and more thoughtful consideration; and we feel sure that posterity will confirm the verdict of the present in regard to a poet whose reputation is due to no fleeting fancy, but to an instinctive recognition by the public of that which charms now and charms always,—true power and originality, without grimace and distortion; for Apollo, and not Milo, is the artistic type of strength.

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*Thoughts on the Life and Character of Jesus of Nazareth.* By W.H. FURNESS, Minister of the First Congregational Unitarian Church in Philadelphia. Boston: Phillips, Sampson, & Co. 1859.

Here is a book, written, not for "orthodox believers," but for those whom the orthodox creeds have wholly repelled from its subject. It is quite distinct from three other books on the same general theme, by the same author. It has, indeed, some objects in view, at which neither of those books directly aimed.

It will overwhelm with horror such readers as may stumble upon it, who do not know, till they meet it, that there is any view of Jesus Christ but that which is presented in the widely circulated issues of the Tract Society and similar institutions. Our attention has already been called to one very absurd and unjust attack upon it, in a Philadelphia paper, intended to catch the prejudices of such persons. But the views by which we found this attack accompanied, in the same journal, led us to suspect that some political



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prejudice against the author's anti-slavery had more to do with the onslaught than any deeply seated love of Orthodox Christianity. To another class of readers, who have been wholly repelled from any interest in Jesus Christ, by whatever misfortune of temperament or training, the careful study of these "Thoughts" would be of incalculable value. We suppose this class of readers, through the whole extent of our country, to be quite as large as the first class we have named. To a third class, which is probably as large as both the others put together, who are neither repelled nor attracted by the received ecclesiastical statements regarding the Saviour, but are willing to pass, without any real inquiry or any firm opinion, his presence in the world, and his influence at this moment on every event in modern life, the book might also have an immense value, if it could be conceived that any thunder-clap could wake them from that selfish and comfortable indifference as to the central point of all the history, philosophy, life, and religion, in which they live.

We have no intention of entering into a discussion of the remarkable and very clear views presented in this volume. We have only to say that the author does not do himself justice when he asserts that there is no system in its arrangement. It is a systematic work, leading carefully along from point to point in the demonstration attempted. One may read it through in an afternoon, and he will then have a very clear idea of what the author thinks, which does not always happen when one has read a book through. If he be one of the class of readers for whom it was written, he will have, at the very least, a deeper interest in the study of the life of Jesus of Nazareth than he had when he began. He will have read a reply to Dr. Strauss, Mr. Parker, Dr. Feuerbach, and Mr. Hittel, which, he will confess, is written in an appreciative and candid spirit, quite different from that of some of the *ex-cathedra* works of controversy, which have failed to annihilate these writers, although they have taken so arrogant a tone. As we have said, we do not attempt to analyze the argument or the statement of which we thus speak. We have only to say that it is positive, and not negative,—constructive, and not destructive,—reverent, and not flippant,—courteous to opponents, and never denunciatory. These are characteristics of a work of theology of which those can judge who do not affect to be technical theologians. Had we to give our own views of the matters presented in so interesting a form, we should not, of course, attempt to condense our assent or our dissent with the author into these columns; but where we differed or where we agreed, we should gladly recognize his eagerness to be understood, his earnest hope to find the truth, and his sympathy with all persons seeking it,—qualities which we have not always found in our study of theologians by profession.



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In making the suggestion, however, that these "Thoughts" would be of special value to those who have fallen into the habit of disbelieving the Gospels, they hardly know why, we know that there is no more probability that they will read a book with this title than there is that young men should read "Letters to Young Men," or young women should read "Letters to Young Women." We suppose that the unconverted seldom read "Hints to the Unconverted," and that undecided fools never read "Foster on Decision of Character." Recurring, then, to Mr. Everett's story of the Guava jelly, which was recommended to invalids, but would "not materially injure those who are well," we may add to what we have said, that all readers of this volume will find valuable suggestions in it for the enlightenment of the gospel narratives. Theologians who differed fundamentally from Dr. Furness have been eager to express their sense of the value of his "Jesus and his Biographers," as affording some of the most vivid and scenic representations in all literature of that life which he has devoted all his studies to illustrating. It does not fall in the way of this book to attempt many such illustrations; but it is full of hints which all readers will value as lightening up and making fresh their notion of Scripture.

Critically speaking, the most prominent fault in the book is the occasional interpolation of matter not connected directly with its argument. That argument is simply laid out. In the first part is the direct plea of the author for the gospel narrative as a whole, earnestly and effectively sustained. The second part examines Mr. Theodore Parker's arguments against the truth of parts of it. The third book discusses other objections. So far as this is done from the author's leading point of view, the book is coherent and effective. But occasionally there comes in a little piece of fanciful criticism on the text, or a comment on some side-view or transaction, or the suggestion of a probability or a possibility, which remind one of the thin puerilities of the commentators whom Dr. Furness despises more than of the general drift of his own discussion.

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*Vernon Grove; or Hearts as they are.* A Novel. New York: Rudd & Carleton.

This volume makes a pleasant addition to the light reading of the day. It is the more welcome as coming from a new field; for we believe that the veil of secrecy with regard to its authorship has been so far blown aside, that we shall be permitted to say, that, although it is written by a lady of New England birth, it may be most properly claimed as a part of the literature of South Carolina. It is a regular novel, although a short one. It is an interesting story, of marked, but not improbable incidents, involving a very few well-distinguished characters, who fall into situations to display which requires nice analysis of the mind and heart,—developed in graceful

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and flowing narrative, enlivened by natural and spirited conversations. The atmosphere of the book is one of refined taste and high culture. The people in it, with scarce an exception, are people who mean to be good, and who are handsome, polite, accomplished, and rich, or at least surrounded by the conveniences and even luxuries of life. It is a story, too, for the most part, of cultivated enjoyment. There are sufferings and sorrows depicted in it, it is true; without them, it would be no representation of real life, which it does not fail to be. Some tears will undoubtedly be shed over it, but the sufferings and sorrows are such that we feel they are, after all, leading to happiness; and we are not made to dwell upon pictures of unnecessary misery or unavailing misfortune. Let it not be supposed, however, that we are speaking of a namby-pamby tale of the luxuries and successes of what is called "high life," for this book has nothing of that character. We mean only to point out, as far as we may, without entering upon the story itself, that it tells of pleasant people, in pleasant circumstances, among whom it is a pleasure to the reader for a time to be. Many a novel "ends well" that keeps us in a shudder or a "worry" from the beginning to the end. Here we see the enjoyment as we go along. Indeed, a leading characteristic of "Vernon Grove" is the extremely good taste with which it is conceived and written; and so we no more meet with offensive descriptions of vulgar show and luxury than we do with those of squalor or moral turpitude. It is a book marked by a high tone of moral and religious as well as artistic and esthetic culture. Without being made the vehicle of any set theories in philosophy or Art, without (so far as we know) "inculcating" any special moral axiom, it embodies much good teaching and suggestion with regard to music and painting, and many worthy lessons for the mind and heart. This is done, as it should be, by the apparently natural development of the story itself. For, as we have said, the book is really a novel, and will be read as a novel should be, for the story, and not, in the first instance and with deliberation, with the critical desire to find out what lessons it teaches or what sentiments it inspires.

The narrative covers a space of several years, but is so told that we are furnished with details rather than generalities; and particular scenes, events, and conversations are set forth vividly and minutely. The descriptions of natural scenery, and of works of Art, many of which come naturally into the story, show a cultivated and observant eye and a command of judicious language. The characters are well developed, and, with an unimportant exception, there is nothing introduced into the book that is not necessary to the completion of the story. "Vernon Grove" will commend itself to all readers who like works of fiction that are lively and healthy too; and will give its author a high rank among the lady-novelists of our day and country.



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*Arabian Days' Entertainments*. Translated from the German, by HERBERT PELHAM CORTIS. Boston: Phillips, Sampson, & Co. 1858.

In this famous nineteenth century of ours, which prides itself on being practical, and feeds voraciously on facts, and considers itself almost above being amused, we for our part rejoice to greet such a book as this. Our great-great-grandfathers, when they were boys, were happy in having wise and good grandfathers who told them pleasant stories of what never happened,—and who loved well to tell them, because they were truly wise men, and knew what the child's mind relished and fattened upon,—nay, and because, like all truly good men, they themselves indulged a fond, secret, half-belief that these child's stories of theirs were, if the truth could be got at, more than half true. We should be sorry to believe that this good old life of story-telling and story-hearing had utterly gone out. It belonged to an age that only very foolish men and very vulgar men laugh at without blushing.

“We of the nineteenth century” have a certain way of our own, however, of enjoying that most rarely fascinating class of literary productions known as *stories*,—a critical, perhaps over-intellectual, way,—but still sufficing, it is comfortable to know, to keep the story at very near its ancient dignity in the realm of letters. Perhaps it is a true sign of the perfect story, that it ministers at once to these two unsympathizing mental appetites, and pleases completely, not only the man, but his—by this aide—ever-so-great-grandfather, the child.

Everybody thinks first of the “Arabian Nights' Entertainments,” when we fall into such remarks as these,—that marvellous treasure, from which the dreams of little boys have been furnished forth, and the pages of great scholars gemmed with elegant illustration, ever since it was first opened to Western eyes. With this book the title which Mr. Curtis has so happily selected for his translation invites us to compare it; and it is not too much praise to say that it can well stand the comparison,—we mean as a selection of stories fascinating to old and young. As to the matter of translation itself, the versions we have of the “Arabian Nights” are notoriously bad. These stories, which Mr. Curtis has laid all good children and all right-minded grown people under perpetual obligation by thus collecting and presenting to them, are the productions of a single German writer, and, with the exception of three or four separately published in magazines, have, we believe, never before been translated into English. They present some very interesting points of contrast with the ever-famous book of Eastern stories,—such as open some very tempting cross-views of the German and the Eastern mind, which, for want of opportunity, we must pass by now.



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The scenes of most of them are laid in the East,—of a few in Germany; but the robust *method* of the German story-writer is apparent in each. We wish we could quote from one or two which have particularly charmed us; but though this is impossible within any decent limits, we can at least provoke the appetite of readers of all ages by the mere displaying of such titles as these:—"The History of Caliph Stork"; "The Story of the Severed Hand"; "The Story of Little Muck"; "Nosey the Dwarf"; "The Young Englishman"; "The Prophecy of the Silver Florin"; "The Cold Heart," *etc.* What prospects for winter evenings are here! And while we can assure the adult reader that the promise which these titles give of burlesque or humorous description, and bold, romantic narrative, shall be more than kept, it may be well also to say, for the comfort of those whom we hope to see buy the book for their children's sake, that the stories in it are entirely free from certain objections which may be fairly urged against the "Arabian Nights" as reading for young people. The "Arabian Days" have nothing to be ashamed of in the nature of their entertainments.

The translation itself is a performance in a high degree creditable, not only to the German, but to the English, scholarship of Mr. Curtis. We perceive scarcely any of that peculiar stiffness of style which makes so many otherwise excellent translations painful to read,—the stiffness as of one walking in new boots,—the result of dressing the words of one language in the grammatical construction of another. Mr. Curtis gives us the sentiment and wit and fancy and humor and oddity of the German's stories, but in an English way. Indeed, his is manly and graceful English, such as we hope we are not now by any means seeing the last of.

To the right sort of reader, as we consider him, of the "Arabian Days," a word about the pictures (for observe, that the proper name for the illustrations of a story-book is *pictures*) may be fitly spoken.

There are no less than sixteen very nice pictures to this story-book,—well done, even for Mr. Hoppin, artistically, and well conceived for the refreshing of the inner eye of him, her, or *it* that reads. And we must be permitted, also, who have read this book by candle-light, as only such a book should be read, to congratulate the readers who come after us upon the good type and good paper in which the publishers have very properly produced it.

We hope and believe this publication will before long be given as a boon to the rising generation, our second-cousins, across the water. They, however, cannot have it (as we fully intend that certain small bodies, but huge feeders on fiction, among our acquaintance, shall have it) on Christmas morning,—the dear old festival, that, as we write, is already near enough to warm our hearts with anticipation.

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*The Stratford Gallery: or the Shakspeare Sisterhood.* Comprising Forty-five Ideal Portraits, described by HENRIETTA LEE PALMER. Illustrated. New York: D. Appleton & Co.



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This book is what it purports to be,—not a collection of elaborate essays devoted to metaphysical analysis or to conjectural emendations of doubtful lines,—but a series of ideal portraits of the women of Shakspeare's plays. The reader may fancy himself led by an intelligent cicerone who pauses before each picture and with well-chosen words tells enough of the story to present the heroine, and then gives her own conception of the character, with such hints concerning manners and personal peculiarities as a careful study of the play may furnish. The narrations are models of neatness and brevity, yet full enough to give a clear understanding of the situation to any one unacquainted with it. The creations of Shakspeare have a wonderful completeness and vitality; and yet the elements of character are often mingled so subtly that the sharpest critics differ widely in their estimates. Nothing can be more fascinating than to follow closely the great dramatist, picking out from the dialogue a trait of form here, a whim of color there, and at last combining them into an harmonious whole, with the truth of outline, hue, and bearing preserved. Often as this has been done, there is room still for new observers, provided they bring their own eyes to the task, and do not depend upon the dim and warped lenses of the commentators.

It is very rarely that we meet with so fresh, so acute, and so entertaining a student of Shakspeare as the author of this volume. Her observations, whether invariably just or not, are generally taken from a new stand-point. She is led to her conclusions rather by instinct than by reason. She makes no apology for her judgments.

“I have no reason but a woman's reason;  
I think her so because I think her so.”

And it would not be strange, if womanly instinct were to prove oftentimes a truer guide in following the waywardness or the apparent contradictions of a woman's nature than the cold logical processes of merely intellectual men.

To the heroines who are most truly *women* the author's loyalty is pure and intense. Imogen, the “chaste, ardent, devoted, beautiful” wife,—Juliet, whose “ingenuousness and almost infantile simplicity” endear her to all hearts,—Miranda, that most ethereal creation, type of virgin innocence,—Cordelia, with her pure, filial devotion,—are painted with loving, sympathetic tenderness.

Altogether, this is a book which any admirer of the poet may read with pleasure; and especially to those who have not ventured to think wholly for themselves it will prove a most useful and agreeable companion.



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It is a matter of regret that the characters of the greatest of dramatists should not have been embodied by the greatest of painters. But no Michel Angelo, or Raphael, or Correggio, has illustrated these wonderful creations; and the man who is capable of appreciating Miranda, or Ophelia, or Desdemona, finds the ideal heads of the painters, of our day at least, tame, vapid, and unsatisfactory. The heroine, as imaged in his mind, is arrayed in a loveliness which limner never compassed. We cannot promise our readers that the engravings in this beautifully printed and richly bound volume will prove to be exceptions to the usual rule. They are from designs by English artists,—“Eminent Hands,” in the popular phrase; the faces are often quite striking and expressive, and, up to a certain point, characteristic; moreover, they are smoothly finished, and will compare favorably with those in fashionable gift-books. Without being in the least degree examples of a high style of Art in its absolute sense, they answer well the purpose for which they were designed. Indeed, if they were more truly ideal, and, at the same time, more truly human, they would doubtless be far less popular.

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*Ernest Carroll, or Artist-Life in Italy.* A Novel, in Three Parts. Boston; Ticknor & Fields. 1858.

This book is not strictly of the kind which the Germans call the Art-Novel, and yet we know not how else to class it. The author has spun a somewhat improbable story as the thread for his reflections on Art and his reminiscences of artists and travel. We confess that we should have liked it better, had he made his book simply a record of experience and reflection. But there are many admirable things in this little volume, which is evidently the work of a person of refined artistic culture and clear intelligence. Of especial value we reckon the reminiscences of Allston and his methods; and it seems a little singular, since the scene is laid chiefly in Florence and in 1847, that we get nothing more satisfactory than a single anecdote about the elder Greenough, whose life and works and thoroughly emancipated style of thought have done more to honor American Art than those of any other man, except Allston.

We rather regret that the author had not made his book more of a journal, and recorded directly his own impressions, because he shows a decided ability in bringing scenes before the eye of the reader. The sketches of Doney's *Caffe* and the Venetian *improvvisatore* are especially vivid; so is that of the old picture-dealer; though in all we think some of the phrases might have been softened with advantage. We enter our earnest protest also against the Ruskin chapter. The scenes at Graefenberg are fresh, lively, and interesting. The book is also enlivened by many entertaining anecdotes of living American artists and *savans*, which are told with the skill of a practised *raconteur*. We hope to hear from the author again, and in a form which shall enable his knowledge and experience in matters of Art to have freer play than the exigencies of a novel allow them, and in which his abilities in the discussion of aesthetics shall have more scope given them than that of the *obiter dicta* in a story.



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*Hymns of the Ages.* Being Selections from the Lyra Catholica, Apostolica, Germanica, and other Sources, with an Introduction by PROF. F.D. HUNTINGTON. Boston: Phillips, Sampson, & Co. 1859. Square 8vo. pp. 300.

In this exquisitely-printed volume the editors have collected specimens of the devotional poetry of the Christian Church, including translations from the Roman Breviary, as well as from German hymns, with a few from English sources. There has been no attempt, evidently, to conform to the requirements of any creed; the devout Catholic, as well as the Episcopalian Churchman, will find here the favorite aspirations, penitential strains, and ascriptions of praise, which have been consecrated by generations of worshippers. To American readers the collection will be substantially new, since hardly a dozen of the hymns are to be found in the volumes in use in our churches. If it had been the purpose of the editors to gather all the classic religious poetry, to form a sacred anthology, it would have been necessary to print a great number of the hymns in modern collections; and the volume would in that case have lost in novelty what it gained in completeness.

Those who like to go back to the ancient forms of worship for inspiration, who feel the force of association in the lyrics which have come down from almost apostolic times, will find in this book an aid to devotion and religious contemplation. With a little more care in excluding strongly-marked doctrinal stanzas, the "Hymns of the Ages," if less characteristic, would have been more truly *catholic*, and therefore acceptable to a larger portion of the Church Universal.