

The Atlantic Monthly, Volume 08, No. 45, July, 1861 eBook

The Atlantic Monthly, Volume 08, No. 45, July, 1861

The following sections of this BookRags Literature Study Guide is offprint from Gale's For Students Series: Presenting Analysis, Context, and Criticism on Commonly Studied Works: Introduction, Author Biography, Plot Summary, Characters, Themes, Style, Historical Context, Critical Overview, Criticism and Critical Essays, Media Adaptations, Topics for Further Study, Compare & Contrast, What Do I Read Next?, For Further Study, and Sources.

(c)1998-2002; (c)2002 by Gale. Gale is an imprint of The Gale Group, Inc., a division of Thomson Learning, Inc. Gale and Design and Thomson Learning are trademarks used herein under license.

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Encyclopedia of Popular Fiction: "Social Concerns", "Thematic Overview", "Techniques", "Literary Precedents", "Key Questions", "Related Titles", "Adaptations", "Related Web Sites". (c)1994-2005, by Walton Beacham.

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Guide to Literature for Young Adults: "About the Author", "Overview", "Setting", "Literary Qualities", "Social Sensitivity", "Topics for Discussion", "Ideas for Reports and Papers". (c)1994-2005, by Walton Beacham.

All other sections in this Literature Study Guide are owned and copyrighted by BookRags, Inc.

Contents

The Atlantic Monthly, Volume 08, No. 45, July, 1861 eBook.....	1
Contents.....	2
Table of Contents.....	9
Page 1.....	10
Page 2.....	12
Page 3.....	14
Page 4.....	16
Page 5.....	18
Page 6.....	20
Page 7.....	22
Page 8.....	24
Page 9.....	25
Page 10.....	26
Page 11.....	28
Page 12.....	30
Page 13.....	32
Page 14.....	34
Page 15.....	36
Page 16.....	37
Page 17.....	38
Page 18.....	39
Page 19.....	40
Page 20.....	41
Page 21.....	42
Page 22.....	43

Page 23.....	44
Page 24.....	46
Page 25.....	47
Page 26.....	48
Page 27.....	50
Page 28.....	51
Page 29.....	52
Page 30.....	53
Page 31.....	54
Page 32.....	55
Page 33.....	56
Page 34.....	57
Page 35.....	59
Page 36.....	60
Page 37.....	61
Page 38.....	62
Page 39.....	63
Page 40.....	64
Page 41.....	65
Page 42.....	66
Page 43.....	67
Page 44.....	68
Page 45.....	69
Page 46.....	70
Page 47.....	71
Page 48.....	72

Page 49.....	73
Page 50.....	74
Page 51.....	75
Page 52.....	76
Page 53.....	77
Page 54.....	78
Page 55.....	79
Page 56.....	80
Page 57.....	81
Page 58.....	82
Page 59.....	83
Page 60.....	84
Page 61.....	85
Page 62.....	86
Page 63.....	87
Page 64.....	88
Page 65.....	89
Page 66.....	90
Page 67.....	92
Page 68.....	93
Page 69.....	94
Page 70.....	95
Page 71.....	96
Page 72.....	97
Page 73.....	98
Page 74.....	99

Page 75.....	101
Page 76.....	102
Page 77.....	104
Page 78.....	105
Page 79.....	107
Page 80.....	108
Page 81.....	109
Page 82.....	111
Page 83.....	113
Page 84.....	115
Page 85.....	116
Page 86.....	117
Page 87.....	118
Page 88.....	120
Page 89.....	121
Page 90.....	123
Page 91.....	125
Page 92.....	126
Page 93.....	127
Page 94.....	129
Page 95.....	131
Page 96.....	133
Page 97.....	135
Page 98.....	136
Page 99.....	137
Page 100.....	138

Page 101.....	140
Page 102.....	141
Page 103.....	142
Page 104.....	143
Page 105.....	144
Page 106.....	145
Page 107.....	146
Page 108.....	147
Page 109.....	148
Page 110.....	149
Page 111.....	150
Page 112.....	151
Page 113.....	152
Page 114.....	153
Page 115.....	154
Page 116.....	155
Page 117.....	156
Page 118.....	157
Page 119.....	158
Page 120.....	159
Page 121.....	160
Page 122.....	161
Page 123.....	162
Page 124.....	163
Page 125.....	164
Page 126.....	165

Page 127.....	166
Page 128.....	167
Page 129.....	168
Page 130.....	169
Page 131.....	170
Page 132.....	171
Page 133.....	172
Page 134.....	173
Page 135.....	174
Page 136.....	175
Page 137.....	176
Page 138.....	177
Page 139.....	178
Page 140.....	179
Page 141.....	180
Page 142.....	181
Page 143.....	183
Page 144.....	185
Page 145.....	187
Page 146.....	188
Page 147.....	189
Page 148.....	191
Page 149.....	193
Page 150.....	195
Page 151.....	197
Page 152.....	199

Page 153.....	200
Page 154.....	202
Page 155.....	203
Page 156.....	204
Page 157.....	205
Page 158.....	207
Page 159.....	208
Page 160.....	210
Page 161.....	211
Page 162.....	212
Page 163.....	213
Page 164.....	214
Page 165.....	215
Page 166.....	217

Table of Contents

Section	Page
Start of eBook	1
AGNES OF SORRENTO.	1
CHAPTER VII.	1
CHAPTER VIII.	11
SUN-PAINTING AND SUN-SCULPTURE;	15
THE LONDON WORKING-MEN'S COLLEGE.	36
EMANCIPATION IN RUSSIA.	49
THE HAUNTED SHANTY.	74
GREEK LINES.	96
THE ORDEAL BY BATTLE.	112
THE UNITED STATES AND EUROPE.	122
WASHINGTON AS A CAMP.	136
THE FOLLOWING IS THE OATH.	140
CAMP CAMERON.	142
JOURNAL OF A DAY AT CAMP CAMERON, BY PRIVATE W., COMPANY I.	144
OUR ADVANCE INTO VIRGINIA.	147
ACROSS THE LONG BRIDGE.	148
ARLINGTON HEIGHTS.	151
FAREWELL TO THE SEVENTH.	153
BETWEEN SPRING AND SUMMER.	153
ELLSWORTH.	154
REVIEWS AND LITERARY NOTICES.	162
RECENT AMERICAN PUBLICATIONS	165

Page 1

AGNES OF SORRENTO.

CHAPTER VII.

The day at the convent.

The Mother Theresa sat in a sort of withdrawing-room, the roof of which rose in arches, starred with blue and gold like that of the cloister, and the sides were frescoed with scenes from the life of the Virgin. Over every door, and in convenient places between the paintings, tests of Holy Writ were illuminated in blue and scarlet and gold, with a richness and fancifulness of outline, as if every sacred letter had blossomed into a mystical flower. The Abbess herself, with two of her nuns, was busily embroidering a new altar-cloth, with a lavish profusion of adornment; and, from time to time, their voices rose in the musical tones of an ancient Latin hymn. The words were full of that quaint and mystical pietism with which the fashion of the times clothed the expression of devotional feeling:—

“Jesu, corona virginum,
Quem mater illa concepit,
Quae sola virgo parturit,
Haec vota clemens accipe.

“Qui pascis inter lilia
Septus choreis virginum,
Sponsus decoris gloria
Sponsisque reddens praemia.

“Quocunque pergis, virgines
Sequuntur atque laudibus
Post te canentes cursitant
Hymnosque dulces personant[A].”

[Footnote A:

“Jesus, crown of virgin spirits,
Whom a virgin mother bore,
Graciously accept our praises
While thy footsteps we adore.

“Thee among the lilies feeding
Choirs of virgins walk beside,
Bridegroom crowned with glorious beauty
Giving beauty to thy bride.

“Where thou goest still they follow
Singing, singing as they move,
All those souls forever virgin
Wedded only to thy love.”]

This little canticle was, in truth, very different from the hymns to Venus which used to resound in the temple which the convent had displaced. The voices which sang were of a deep, plaintive contralto, much resembling the richness of a tenor, and as they moved in modulated waves of chanting sound the effect was soothing and dreamy. Agnes stopped at the door to listen.

“Stop, dear Jocunda,” she said to the old woman, who was about to push her way abruptly into the room, “wait till it is over.”

Jocunda, who was quite matter-of-fact in her ideas of religion, made a little movement of impatience, but was recalled to herself by observing the devout absorption with which Agnes, with clasped hands and downcast head, was mentally joining in the hymn with a solemn brightness in her young face.

“If she hasn’t got a vocation, nobody ever had one,” said Jocunda, mentally. “Deary me, I wish I had more of one myself!”

When the strain died away, and was succeeded by a conversation on the respective merits of two kinds of gold embroidering-thread, Agnes and Jocunda entered the apartment. Agnes went forward and kissed the hand of the Mother reverentially.

Page 2

Sister Theresa we have before described as tall, pale, and sad-eyed,—a moonlight style of person, wanting in all those elements of warm color and physical solidity which give the impression of a real vital human existence. The strongest affection she had ever known had been that which had been excited by the childish beauty and graces of Agnes, and she folded her in her arms and kissed her forehead with a warmth that had in it the semblance of maternity.

“Grandmamma has given me a day to spend with you, dear mother,” said Agnes.

“Welcome, dear little child!” said Mother Theresa. “Your spiritual home always stands open to you.”

“I have something to speak to you of in particular, my mother,” said Agnes, blushing deeply.

“Indeed!” said the Mother Theresa, a slight movement of curiosity arising in her mind as she signed to the two nuns to leave the apartment.

“My mother,” said Agnes, “yesterday evening, as grandmamma and I were sitting at the gate, selling oranges, a young cavalier came up and bought oranges of me, and he kissed my forehead and asked me to pray for him, and gave me this ring for the shrine of Saint Agnes.”

“Kissed your forehead!” said Jocunda, “here’s a pretty go! it isn’t like you, Agnes, to let him.”

“He did it before I knew,” said Agnes. “Grandmamma reproved him, and then he seemed to repent, and gave this ring for the shrine of Saint Agnes.”

“And a pretty one it is, too,” said Jocunda. “We haven’t a prettier in all our treasury. Not even the great emerald the Queen gave is better in its way than this.”

“And he asked you to pray for him?” said Mother Theresa.

“Yes, mother dear; he looked right into my eyes and made me look into his, and made me promise;—and I knew that holy virgins never refused their prayers to any one that asked, and so I followed their example.”

“I’ll warrant me he was only mocking at you for a poor little fool,” said Jocunda; “the gallants of our day don’t believe much in prayers.”

“Perhaps so, Jocunda,” said Agnes, gravely; “but if that be the case, he needs prayers all the more.”

“Yes,” said Mother Theresa. “Remember the story of the blessed Saint Dorothea,—how a wicked young nobleman mocked at her, when she was going to execution, and said, ‘Dorothea, Dorothea, I will believe, when you shall send me down some of the fruits and flowers of Paradise’; and she, full of faith, said, ‘To-day I will send them’; and, wonderful to tell, that very day, at evening, an angel came to the young man with a basket of citrons and roses, and said, ‘Dorothea sends thee these, wherefore believe.’ See what grace a pure maiden can bring to a thoughtless young man,—for this young man was converted and became a champion of the faith.”

“That was in the old times,” said Jocunda, skeptically. “I don’t believe setting the lamb to pray for the wolf will do much in our day. Prithee, child, what manner of man was this gallant?”

Page 3

"He was beautiful as an angel," said Agnes, "only it was not a good beauty. He looked proud and sad, both,—like one who is not at ease in his heart. Indeed, I feel very sorry for him; his eyes made a kind of trouble in my mind, that reminds me to pray for him often."

"And I will join my prayers to yours, dear daughter," said the Mother Theresa; "I long to have you with us, that we may pray together every day;—say, do you think your grandmamma will spare you to us wholly before long?"

"Grandmamma will not hear of it yet," said Agnes; "and she loves me so, it would break her heart, if I should leave her, and she could not be happy here;—but, mother, you have told me we could carry an altar always in our hearts, and adore in secret. When it is God's will I should come to you, He will incline her heart."

"Between you and me, little one," said Jocunda, "I think there will soon be a third person who will have something to say in the case."

"Whom do you mean?" said Agnes.

"A husband," said Jocunda; "I suppose your grandmother has one picked out for you. You are neither humpbacked nor cross-eyed, that you shouldn't have one as well as other girls."

"I don't want one, Jocunda; and I have promised to Saint Agnes to come here, if she will only get grandmother to consent."

"Bless you, my daughter!" said Mother Theresa; "only persevere and the way will be opened."

"Well, well," said Jocunda, "we'll see. Come, little one, if you wouldn't have your flowers wilt, we must go back and look after them."

Reverently kissing the hand of the Abbess, Agnes withdrew with her old friend, and crossed again to the garden to attend to her flowers.

"Well now, childie," said Jocunda, "you can sit here and weave your garlands, while I go and look after the conserves of raisins and citrons that Sister Cattarina is making. She is stupid at anything but her prayers, is Cattarina. Our Lady be gracious to me! I think I got my vocation from Saint Martha, and if it wasn't for me, I don't know what would become of things in the Convent. Why, since I came here, our conserves, done up in fig-leaf packages, have had quite a run at Court, and our gracious Queen herself was good enough to send an order for a hundred of them last week. I could have laughed to see how puzzled the Mother Theresa looked;—much she knows about conserves! I suppose she thinks Gabriel brings them straight down from Paradise, done up in leaves of the tree of life. Old Jocunda knows what goes to their making up; she's good for

something, if she is old and twisted; many a scrubby old olive bears fat berries," said the old portress, chuckling.

"Oh, dear Jocunda," said Agnes, "why must you go this minute? I want to talk with you about so many things!"

"Bless the sweet child! it does want its old Jocunda, does it?" said the old woman, in the tone with which one caresses a baby. "Well, well, it should, then! Just wait a minute, till I go and see that our holy Saint Cattarina hasn't fallen a-praying over the conserving-pan. I'll be back in a moment."

Page 4

So saying, she hobbled off briskly, and Agnes, sitting down on the fragment sculptured with dancing nymphs, began abstractedly pulling her flowers towards her, shaking from them the dew of the fountain.

Unconsciously to herself, as she sat there, her head drooped into the attitude of the marble nymph, and her sweet features assumed the same expression of plaintive and dreamy thoughtfulness; her heavy dark lashes lay on her pure waxen cheeks like the dark fringe of some tropical flower. Her form, in its drooping outlines, scarcely yet showed the full development of womanhood, which after-years might unfold into the ripe fulness of her countrywomen. Her whole attitude and manner were those of an exquisitely sensitive and highly organized being, just struggling into the life of some mysterious new inner birth,—into the sense of powers of feeling and being hitherto unknown even to herself.

“Ah,” she softly sighed to herself, “how little I am! how little I can do! Could I convert one soul! Ah, holy Dorothea, send down the roses of heaven into his soul, that he also may believe!”

“Well, my little beauty, you have not finished even one garland,” said the voice of old Jocunda, bustling up behind her. “Praise to Saint Martha, the conserves are doing well, and so I catch a minute for my little heart.”

So saying, she sat down with her spindle and flax by Agnes, for an afternoon gossip.

“Dear Jocunda, I have heard you tell stories about spirits that haunt lonesome places. Did you ever hear about any in the gorge?”

“Why, bless the child, yes,—spirits are always pacing up and down in lonely places. Father Anselmo told me that; and he had seen a priest once that had seen that in the Holy Scriptures themselves,—so it must be true.”

“Well, did you ever hear of their making the most beautiful music?”

“Haven’t I?” said Jocunda,—“to be sure I have,—singing enough to draw the very heart out of your body,—it’s an old trick they have. Why, I want to know if you never heard about the King of Amalfi’s son coming home from fighting for the Holy Sepulchre? Why, there’s rocks not far out from this very town where the Sirens live; and if the King’s son hadn’t had a holy bishop on board, who slept every night with a piece of the true cross under his pillow, the green ladies would have sung him straight into perdition. They are very fair-spoken at first, and sing so that a man gets perfectly drunk with their music, and longs to fly to them; but they suck him down at last under water, and strangle him, and that’s the end of him.”

“You never told me about this before, Jocunda.”

“Haven’t I, child? Well, I will now. You see, this good bishop, he dreamed three times that they would sail past those rocks, and he was told to give all the sailors holy wax from an altar-candle to stop their ears, so that they shouldn’t hear the music. Well, the King’s son said he wanted to hear the music, so he wouldn’t have his ears stopped; but he told ’em to tie him to the mast, so that he could hear it, but not to mind a word he said, if he begged ’em ever so hard to untie him.

Page 5

“Well, you see they did it; and the old bishop, he had his ears sealed up tight, and so did all the men; but the young man stood tied to the mast, and when they sailed past he was like a demented creature. He called out that it was his lady who was singing, and he wanted to go to her,—and his mother, who they all knew was a blessed saint in paradise years before; and he commanded them to untie him, and pulled and strained on his cords to get free; but they only tied him the tighter, and so they got him past,—for, thanks to the holy wax, the sailors never heard a word, and so they kept their senses. So they all got safe home; but the young prince was so sick and pining that he had to be exorcised and prayed for seven times seven days before they could get the music out of his head.”

“Why,” said Agnes, “do those Sirens sing there yet?”

“Well, that was a hundred years ago. They say the old bishop, he prayed ’em down; for he went out a little after on purpose, and gave ’em a precious lot of holy water; most likely he got ’em pretty well under, though my husband’s brother says he’s heard ’em singing in a small way, like frogs in spring-time; but he gave ’em a pretty wide berth. You see, these spirits are what’s left of old heathen times, when, Lord bless us! the earth was just as full of ’em as a bit of old cheese is of mites. Now a Christian body, if they take reasonable care, can walk quit of ’em; and if they have any haunts in lonesome and doleful places, if one puts up a cross or a shrine, they know they have to go.”

“I am thinking,” said Agnes, “it would be a blessed work to put up some shrines to Saint Agnes and our good Lord in the gorge, and I’ll promise to keep the lamps burning and the flowers in order.”

“Bless the child!” said Jocunda, “that is a pious and Christian thought.”

“I have an uncle in Florence who is a father in the holy convent of San Marco, who paints and works in stone,—not for money, but for the glory of God; and when he comes this way I will speak to him about it,” said Agnes. “About this time in the spring he always visits us.”

“That’s mighty well thought of,” said Jocunda. “And now, tell me, little lamb, have you any idea who this grand cavalier may be that gave you the ring?”

“No,” said Agnes, pausing a moment over the garland of flowers she was weaving,—“only Giulietta told me that he was brother to the King. Giulietta said everybody knew him.”

“I’m not so sure of that,” said Jocunda. “Giulietta always thinks she knows more than she does.”

“Whatever he may be, his worldly state is nothing to me,” said Agnes. “I know him only in my prayers.”

“Ay, ay,” muttered the old woman to herself, looking obliquely out of the corner of her eye at the girl, who was busily sorting her flowers; “perhaps he will be seeking some other acquaintance.”

“You haven’t seen him since?” said Jocunda.

Page 6

"Seen him? Why, dear Jocunda, it was only last evening"—

"True enough. Well, child, don't think too much of him. Men are dreadful creatures,—in these times especially; they snap up a pretty girl as a fox does a chicken, and no questions asked."

"I don't think he looked wicked, Jocunda; he had a proud, sorrowful look. I don't know what could make a rich, handsome young man sorrowful; but I feel in my heart that he is not happy. Mother Theresa says that those who can do nothing but pray may convert princes without knowing it."

"May be it is so," said Jocunda, in the same tone in which thrifty professors of religion often assent to the same sort of truths in our days. "I've seen a good deal of that sort of cattle in my day; and one would think, by their actions, that praying souls must be scarce where they came from."

Agnes abstractedly stooped and began plucking handfuls of lycopodium, which was growing green and feathery on one side of the marble frieze on which she was sitting; in so doing, a fragment of white marble, which had been overgrown in the luxuriant green, appeared to view. It was that frequent object in the Italian soil,—a portion of an old Roman tombstone. Agnes bent over, intent on the mystic "*Dis Manibus*" in old Roman letters.

"Lord bless the child! I've seen thousands of them," said Jocunda; "it's some old heathen's grave, that's been in hell these hundred years."

"In hell?" said Agnes, with a distressful accent.

"Of course," said Jocunda. "Where should they be? Serves 'em right, too; they were a vile old set."

"Oh, Jocunda, it's dreadful to think of, that they should have been in hell all this time."

"And no nearer the end than when they began," said Jocunda.

Agnes gave a shivering sigh, and, looking up into the golden sky that was pouring such floods of splendor through the orange-trees and jasmines, thought, How could it be that the world could possibly be going on so sweet and fair over such an abyss?

"Oh, Jocunda!" she said, "it does seem *too* dreadful to believe! How could they help being heathen,—being born so,—and never hearing of the true Church?"

"Sure enough," said Jocunda, spinning away energetically, "but that's no business of mine; my business is to save *my* soul, and that's what I came here for. The dear saints know I found it dull enough at first, for I'd been used to jaunting round with my old man

and the boys; but what with marketing and preserving, and one thing and another, I get on better now, praise to Saint Agnes!"

The large, dark eyes of Agnes were fixed abstractedly on the old woman as she spoke, slowly dilating, with a sad, mysterious expression, which sometimes came over them.

"Ah! how can the saints themselves be happy?" she said. "One might be willing to wear sackcloth and sleep on the ground, one might suffer ever so many years and years, if only one might save some of them."

Page 7

"Well, it does seem hard," said Jocunda; "but what's the use of thinking of it? Old Father Anselmo told us in one of his sermons that the Lord wills that his saints should come to rejoice in the punishment of all heathens and heretics; and he told us about a great saint once, who took it into his head to be distressed because one of the old heathen whose books he was fond of reading had gone to hell,—and he fasted and prayed, and wouldn't take no for an answer, till he got him out."

"He did, then?" said Agnes, clasping her hands in an ecstasy.

"Yes; but the good Lord told him never to try it again,—and He struck him dumb, as a kind of hint, you know. Why, Father Anselmo said that even getting souls out of purgatory was no easy matter. He told us of one holy nun who spent nine years fasting and praying for the soul of her prince, who was killed in a duel, and then she saw in a vision that he was only raised the least little bit out of the fire,—and she offered up her life as a sacrifice to the Lord to deliver him, but, after all, when she died he wasn't quite delivered. Such things made me think that a poor old sinner like me would never get out at all, if I didn't set about it in earnest,—though it a'n't all nuns that save their souls either. I remember in Pisa I saw a great picture of the Judgment-Day in the Campo Santo, and there were lots of abbesses, and nuns, and monks, and bishops too, that the devils were clearing off into the fire."

"Oh, Jocunda, how dreadful that fire must be!"

"Yes," said Jocunda. "Father Anselmo said hell-fire wasn't like any kind of fire we have here,—made to warm us and cook our food,—but a kind made especially to torment body and soul, and not made for anything else. I remember a story he told us about that. You see, there was an old duchess that lived in a grand old castle,—and a proud, wicked old thing enough; and her son brought home a handsome young bride to the castle, and the old duchess was jealous of her,—'cause, you see, she hated to give up her place in the house, and the old family-jewels, and all the splendid things,—and so one time, when the poor young thing was all dressed up in a set of the old family-lace, what does the old hag do but set fire to it!"

"How horrible!" said Agnes.

"Yes; and when the young thing ran screaming in her agony, the old hag stopped her and tore off a pearl rosary that she was wearing, for fear it should be spoiled by the fire."

"Holy Mother! can such things be possible?" said Agnes.

"Well, you see, she got her pay for it. That rosary was of famous old pearls that had been in the family a hundred years; but from that moment the good Lord struck it with a curse, and filled it white-hot with hell-fire, so that, if anybody held it a few minutes in

their hand, it would burn to the bone. The old sinner made believe that she was in great affliction for the death of her daughter-in-law,

Page 8

and that it was all an accident, and the poor young man went raving mad,—but that awful rosary the old hag couldn't get rid of. She couldn't give it away,—she couldn't sell it,—but back it would come every night, and lie right over her heart, all white-hot with the fire that burned in it. She gave it to a convent, and she sold it to a merchant, but back it came; and she locked it up in the heaviest chests, and she buried it down in the lowest vaults, but it always came back in the night, till she was worn to a skeleton; and at last the old thing died without confession or sacrament, and went where she belonged. She was found lying dead in her bed one morning, and the rosary was gone; but when they came to lay her out, they found the marks of it burned to the bone into her breast. Father Anselmo used to tell us this, to show us a little what hell-fire was like."

"Oh, please, Jocunda, don't let us talk about it any more," said Agnes.

Old Jocunda, with her tough, vigorous organization and unceremonious habits of expression, could not conceive the exquisite pain with which this whole conversation had vibrated on the sensitive being at her right hand,—that what merely awoke her hard-corded nerves to a dull vibration of not unpleasant excitement was shivering and tearing the tenderer chords of poor little Psyche beside her.

Ages before, beneath those very skies that smiled so sweetly over her,—amid the bloom of lemon and citron, and the perfume of jasmine and rose, the gentlest of old Italian souls had dreamed and wondered what might be the unknown future of the dead, and, learning his lesson from the glorious skies and gorgeous shores which witnessed how magnificent a Being had given existence to man, had recorded his hopes of man's future in the words—*Aut beatus, aut nihil*; but, singular to tell, the religion which brought with it all human tenderness and pities,—the hospital for the sick, the refuge for the orphan, the enfranchisement of the slave,—this religion brought also the news of the eternal, hopeless, living torture of the great majority of mankind, past and present. Tender spirits, like those of Dante, carried this awful mystery as a secret and unexplained anguish; saints wrestled with God and wept over it; but still the awful fact remained, spite of Church and sacrament, that the gospel was in effect, to the majority of the human race, not the glad tidings of salvation, but the sentence of immitigable doom.

The present traveller in Italy sees with disgust the dim and faded frescoes in which this doom is portrayed in all its varied refinements of torture; and the vivid Italian mind ran riot in these lurid fields, and every monk who wanted to move his audience was in his small way a Dante. The poet and the artist give only the highest form of the ideas of their day, and he who cannot read the "Inferno" with firm nerves may ask what the same representations were likely to have been in the grasp of coarse and common minds.

Page 9

The first teachers of Christianity in Italy read the Gospels by the light of those fiendish fires which consumed their fellows. Daily made familiar with the scorching, the searing, the racking, the devilish ingenuities of torture, they transferred them to the future hell of the torturers. The sentiment within us which asserts eternal justice and retribution was stimulated to a kind of madness by that first baptism of fire and blood, and expanded the simple and grave warnings of the gospel into a lurid poetry of physical torture. Hence, while Christianity brought multiplied forms of mercy into the world, it failed for many centuries to humanize the savage forms of justice; and rack and wheel, fire and fagot were the modes by which human justice aspired to a faint imitation of what divine justice was supposed to extend through eternity.

But it is remarkable always to observe the power of individual minds to draw out of the popular religious ideas of their country only those elements which suit themselves, and to drop others from their thought. As a bee can extract pure honey from the blossoms of some plants whose leaves are poisonous, so some souls can nourish themselves only with the holier and more ethereal parts of popular belief.

Agnes had hitherto dwelt only on the cheering and the joyous features of her faith; her mind loved to muse on the legends of saints and angels and the glories of paradise, which, with a secret buoyancy, she hoped to be the lot of every one she saw. The mind of the Mother Theresa was of the same elevated cast, and the terrors on which Jocunda dwelt with such homely force of language seldom made a part of her instructions.

Agnes tried to dismiss these gloomy images from her mind, and, after arranging her garlands, went to decorate the shrine and altar,—a cheerful labor of love, in which she delighted.

To the mind of the really spiritual Christian of those ages the air of this lower world was not as it is to us, in spite of our nominal faith in the Bible, a blank, empty space from which all spiritual sympathy and life have fled, but, like the atmosphere with which Raphael has surrounded the Sistine Madonna, it was full of sympathizing faces, a great “cloud of witnesses.” The holy dead were not gone from earth; the Church visible and invisible were in close, loving, and constant sympathy,—still loving, praying, and watching together, though with a veil between.

It was at first with no idolatrous intention that the prayers of the holy dead were invoked in acts of worship. Their prayers were asked simply because they were felt to be as really present with their former friends and as truly sympathetic as if no veil of silence had fallen between. In time this simple belief had its intemperate and idolatrous exaggerations,—the Italian soil always seeming to have a fiery and volcanic forcing power, by which religious ideas overblossomed themselves, and grew wild and ragged with too much enthusiasm; and, as so often happens with friends on earth, these too much loved and revered invisible friends became eclipsing screens instead of transmitting mediums of God’s light to the soul.

Page 10

Yet we can see in the hymns of Savonarola, who perfectly represented the attitude of the highest Christian of those times, how perfect might be the love and veneration for departed saints without lapsing into idolatry, and with what an atmosphere of warmth and glory the true belief of the unity of the Church, visible and invisible, could inspire an elevated soul amid the discouragements of an unbelieving and gainsaying world.

Our little Agnes, therefore, when she had spread all her garlands out, seemed really to feel as if the girlish figure that smiled in sacred white from the altar-piece was a dear friend who smiled upon her, and was watching to lead her up the path to heaven.

Pleasantly passed the hours of that day to the girl, and when at evening old Elsie called for her, she wondered that the day had gone so fast.

Old Elsie returned with no inconsiderable triumph from her stand. The cavalier had been several times during the day past her stall, and once, stopping in a careless way to buy fruit, commented on the absence of her young charge. This gave Elsie the highest possible idea of her own sagacity and shrewdness, and of the promptitude with which she had taken her measures, so that she was in as good spirits as people commonly are who think they have performed some stroke of generalship.

As the old woman and young girl emerged from the dark-vaulted passage that led them down through the rocks on which the convent stood to the sea at its base, the light of a most glorious sunset burst upon them, in all those strange and magical mysteries of light which any one who has walked that beach of Sorrento at evening will never forget.

Agnes ran along the shore, and amused herself with picking up little morsels of red and black coral, and those fragments of mosaic pavements, blue, red, and green, which the sea is never tired of casting up from the thousands of ancient temples and palaces which have gone to wreck all around these shores.

As she was busy doing this, she suddenly heard the voice of Giulietta behind her.

"So ho, Agnes! where have you been all day?"

"At the Convent," said Agnes, raising herself from her work, and smiling at Giulietta, in her frank, open way.

"Oh, then you really did take the ring to Saint Agnes?"

"To be sure I did," said Agnes.

"Simple child!" said Giulietta, laughing; "that wasn't what he meant you to do with it. He meant it for you,—only your grandmother was by. You never will have any lovers, if she keeps you so tight."

“I can do without,” said Agnes.

“I could tell you something about this one,” said Giulietta.

“You did tell me something yesterday,” said Agnes.

“But I could tell you some more. I know he wants to see you again.”

“What for?” said Agnes.

“Simpleton, he’s in love with you. You never had a lover;—it’s time you had.”

Page 11

"I don't want one, Giulietta. I hope I never shall see him again."

"Oh, nonsense, Agnes! Why, what a girl you are! Why, before I was as old as you I had half-a-dozen lovers."

"Agnes," said the sharp voice of Elsie, coming up from behind, "don't run on ahead of me again;—and you, Mistress Baggage, let my child alone."

"Who's touching your child?" said Giulietta, scornfully. "Can't a body say a civil word to her?"

"I know what you would be after," said Elsie,—“filling her head with talk of all the wild, loose gallants; but she is for no such market, I promise you! Come, Agnes."

So saying, old Elsie drew Agnes rapidly along with her, leaving Giulietta rolling her great black eyes after them with an air of infinite contempt.

"The old kite!" she said; "I declare he shall get speech of the little dove, if only to spite her. Let her try her best, and see if we don't get round her before she knows it. Pietro says his master is certainly wild after her, and I have promised to help him."

Meanwhile, just as old Elsie and Agnes were turning into the orange-orchard which led into the Gorge of Sorrento, they met the cavalier of the evening before.

He stopped, and, removing his cap, saluted them with as much deference as if they had been princesses. Old Elsie frowned, and Agnes blushed deeply;—both hurried forward. Looking back, the old woman saw that he was walking slowly behind them, evidently watching them closely, yet not in a way sufficiently obtrusive to warrant an open rebuff.

CHAPTER VIII.

The cavalier.

Nothing can be more striking, in common Italian life, than the contrast between out-doors and in-doors. Without, all is fragrant and radiant; within, mouldy, dark, and damp. Except in the well-kept palaces of the great, houses in Italy are more like dens than habitations, and a sight of them is a sufficient reason to the mind of any inquirer, why their vivacious and handsome inhabitants spend their life principally in the open air. Nothing could be more perfectly paradisiacal than this evening at Sorrento. The sun had sunk, but left the air full of diffused radiance, which trembled and vibrated over the thousand many-colored waves of the sea. The moon was riding in a broad zone of purple, low in the horizon, her silver forehead somewhat flushed in the general rosiness that seemed to penetrate and suffuse every object. The fishermen, who were drawing



in their nets, gayly singing, seemed to be floating on a violet-and-gold-colored flooring that broke into a thousand gems at every dash of the oar or motion of the boat. The old stone statue of Saint Antonio looked down in the rosy air, itself tinged and brightened by the magical colors which floated round it. And the girls and men of Sorrento gathered in gossiping knots on the old Roman bridge that spanned the gorge, looked idly down into its dusky shadows, talking the while, and playing the time-honored game of flirtation which has gone on in all climes and languages since man and woman began.

Page 12

Conspicuous among them all was Giulietta, her blue-black hair recently braided and polished to a glossy radiance, and all her costume arranged to show her comely proportions to the best advantage,—her great pearl ear-rings shaking as she tossed her head, and showing the flash of the emerald in the middle of them. An Italian peasant-woman may trust Providence for her gown, but ear-rings she attends to herself,—for what is life without them? The great pearl ear-rings of the Sorrento women are accumulated, pearl by pearl, as the price of years of labor. Giulietta, however, had come into the world, so to speak, with a gold spoon in her mouth,—since her grandmother, a thriving, stirring, energetic body, had got together a pair of ear-rings of unmatched size, which had descended as heirlooms to her, leaving her nothing to do but display them, which she did with the freest good-will. At present she was busily occupied in coquetting with a tall and jauntily-dressed fellow, wearing a plumed hat and a red sash, who seemed to be mesmerized by the power of her charms, his large dark eyes following every movement, as she now talked with him gayly and freely, and now pretended errands to this and that and the other person on the bridge, stationing herself here and there, that she might have the pleasure of seeing herself followed.

“Giulietta,” at last said the young man, earnestly, when he found her accidentally standing alone by the parapet, “I must be going to-morrow.”

“Well, what is that to me?” said Giulietta, looking wickedly from under her eyelashes.

“Cruel girl! you know”——

“Nonsense, Pietro! I don’t know anything about you”; but as Giulietta said this, her great, soft, dark eyes looked out furtively, and said just the contrary.

“You will go with me?”

“Did I ever hear anything like it? One can’t be civil to a fellow but he asks her to go to the world’s end. Pray, how far is it to your dreadful old den?”

“Only two days’ journey, Giulietta.”

“Two days!”

“Yes, my life; and you shall ride.”

“Thank you, Sir,—I wasn’t thinking of walking. But seriously, Pietro, I am afraid it’s no place for an honest girl to be in.”

“There are lots of honest women there,—all our men have wives; and our captain has put his eye on one, too, or I’m mistaken.”

“What! little Agnes?” said Giulietta. “He will be bright that gets her. That old dragon of a grandmother is as tight to her as her skin.”

“Our captain is used to helping himself,” said Pietro. “We might carry them both off some night, and no one the wiser; but he seems to want to win the girl to come to him of her own accord. At any rate, we are to be sent back to the mountains while he lingers a day or two more round here.”

“I declare, Pietro, I think you all little better than Turks or heathens, to talk in that way about carrying off women; and what if one should be sick and die among you? What is to become of one’s soul, I wonder?”

Page 13

“Pshaw! don’t we have priests? Why, Giulietta, we are all very pious, and never think of going out without saying our prayers. The Madonna is a kind Mother, and will wink very hard on the sins of such good sons as we are. There isn’t a place in all Italy where she is kept better in candles, and in rings and bracelets, and everything a woman could want. We never come home without bringing her something; and then we have lots left to dress all our women like princesses; and they have nothing to do from morning till night but play the lady. Come now?”

At the moment this conversation was going on in the balmy, seductive evening air at the bridge, another was transpiring in the Albergo della Torre, one of those dark, musty dens of which we have been speaking. In a damp, dirty chamber, whose brick floor seemed to have been unsuspecting of even the existence of brooms for centuries, was sitting the cavalier whom we have so often named in connection with Agnes. His easy, high-bred air, his graceful, flexible form and handsome face formed a singular contrast to the dark and mouldy apartment, at whose single unglazed window he was sitting. The sight of this splendid man gave an impression of strangeness, in the general bareness, much as if some marvellous jewel had been unaccountably found lying on that dusty brick floor.

He sat deep in thought, with his elbow resting on a rickety table, his large, piercing, dark eyes seeming intently to study the pavement.

The door opened, and a gray-headed old man entered, who approached him respectfully.

“Well, Paolo?” said the cavalier, suddenly starting.

“My Lord, the men are all going back to-night.”

“Let them go, then,” said the cavalier, with an impatient movement. “I can follow in a day or two.”

“Ah, my Lord, if I might make so bold, why should you expose your person by staying longer? You may be recognized and”——

“No danger,” said the other, hastily.

“My Lord, you must forgive me, but I promised my dear lady, your mother, on her death-bed”——

“To be a constant plague to me,” said the cavalier, with a vexed smile and an impatient movement; “but speak on, Paolo,—for when you once get anything on your mind, one may as well hear it first as last.”

“Well, then, my Lord, this girl,—I have made inquiries, and every one reports her most modest and pious,—the only grandchild of a poor old woman. Is it worthy of a great lord of an ancient house to bring her to shame?”

“Who thinks of bringing her to shame? ‘Lord of an ancient house!’” added the cavalier, laughing bitterly,—“a landless beggar, cast out of everything,—titles, estates, all! Am I, then, fallen so low that my wooing would disgrace a peasant-girl?”

“My Lord, you cannot mean to woo a peasant-girl in any other way than one that would disgrace her,—one of the House of Sarelli, that goes back to the days of the old Roman Empire!”

Page 14

“And what of the ‘House of Sarelli that goes back to the days of the old Roman Empire’? It is lying like weeds’ roots uppermost in the burning sun. What is left to me but the mountains and my sword? No, I tell you, Paolo, Agostino Sarelli, cavalier of fortune, is not thinking of bringing disgrace on a pious and modest maiden, unless it would disgrace her to be his wife.”

“Now may the saints above help us! Why, my Lord, our house in days past has been allied to royal blood. I could tell you how Joachim VI.”—

“Come, come, my good Paolo, spare me one of your chapters of genealogy. The fact is, my old boy, the world is all topsy-turvy, and the bottom is the top, and it isn’t much matter what comes next. Here are shoals of noble families uprooted and lying round like those aloes that the gardener used to throw over the wall in spring-time; and there is that great boar of a Caesar Borgia turned in to batten and riot over our pleasant places.”

“Oh, my Lord,” said the old serving-man, with a distressful movement, “we have fallen on evil times, to be sure, and they say his Holiness has excommunicated us. Anselmo heard that in Naples yesterday.”

“Excommunicated!” said the young man,—every feature of his fine face, and every nerve of his graceful form seeming to quiver with the effort to express supreme contempt. “Excommunicated! I should *hope* so! One would hope through Our Lady’s grace to act so that Alexander, and his adulterous, incestuous, filthy, false-swearing, perjured, murderous crew, *would* excommunicate us! In these times, one’s only hope of paradise lies in being excommunicated.”

“Oh, my dear master,” said the old man, falling on his knees, “what is to become of us? That I should live to hear you talk like an infidel and unbeliever!”

“Why, hear you, poor old fool! Did you never hear in Dante of the Popes that are burning in hell? Wasn’t Dante a Christian, I beg to know?”

“Oh, my Lord, my Lord! a religion got out of poetry, books, and romances won’t do to die by. We have no business with the affairs of the Head of the Church,—it’s the Lord’s appointment. We have only to shut our eyes and obey. It may all do well enough to talk so when you are young and fresh; but when sickness and death come, then we *must* have religion,— and if we have gone out of the only true Roman Catholic Apostolic Church, what becomes of our souls? Ah, I misdoubted about your taking so much to poetry, though my poor mistress was so proud of it; but these poets are all heretics, my Lord,—that’s my firm belief. But, my Lord, if you do go to hell, I’m going there with you; I’m sure I never could show my face among the saints, and you not there.”



“Well, come, then, my poor Paolo,” said the cavalier, stretching out his hand to his serving-man, “don’t take it to heart so. Many a better man than I has been excommunicated and cursed from toe to crown, and been never a whit the worse for it. There’s Jerome Savonarola there in Florence—a most holy man, they say, who has had revelations straight from heaven—has been excommunicated; but he preaches and gives the sacraments all the same, and nobody minds it.”

Page 15

“Well, it’s all a maze to me,” said the old serving-man, shaking his white head. “I can’t see into it, I don’t dare to open my eyes for fear I should get to be a heretic; it seems to me that everything is getting mixed up together. But one must hold on to one’s religion; because, after we have lost everything in this world, it would be too bad to burn in hell forever at the end of that.”

“Why, Paolo, I am a good Christian. I believe, with all my heart, in the Christian religion, like the fellow in Boccaccio,—because I think it must be from God, or else the Popes and Cardinals would have had it out of the world long ago. Nothing but the Lord Himself could have kept it against them.”

“There you are, my dear master, with your romances! Well, well, well! I don’t know how it’ll end. I say my prayers, and try not to inquire into what’s too high for me. But now, dear master, will you stay lingering after this girl till some of our enemies hear where you are and pounce down upon us? Besides, the troop are never so well affected when you are away; there are quarrels and divisions.”

“Well, well,” said the cavalier, with an impatient movement,—“one day longer. I must get a chance to speak with her once more. I *must* see her.”

* * * * *

SUN-PAINTING AND SUN-SCULPTURE;

With A stereoscopic trip across the Atlantic.

There is one old fable which Lord Bacon, in his “Wisdom of the Ancients,” has not interpreted. This is the flaying of Marsyas by Apollo. Everybody remembers the accepted version of it, namely,—that the young shepherd found Minerva’s flute, and was rash enough to enter into a musical contest with the God of Music. He was vanquished, of course,—and the story is, that the victor fastened him to a tree and flayed him alive.

But the God of Song was also the God of Light, and a moment’s reflection reveals the true significance of this seemingly barbarous story. Apollo was pleased with his young rival, fixed him in position against an iron rest, (the *tree* of the fable,) and took a *photograph*, a sun-picture, of him. This thin film or *skin* of light and shade was absurdly interpreted as being the *cutis*, or untanned leather integument of the young shepherd. The human discovery of the art of photography enables us to rectify the error and restore that important article of clothing to the youth, as well as to vindicate the character of Apollo. There is one spot less upon the sun since the theft from heaven of Prometheus Daguerre and his fellow-adventurers has enabled us to understand the ancient legend.

Page 16

We are now flaying our friends and submitting to be flayed ourselves, every few years or months or days, by the aid of the trenchant sunbeam which performed the process for Marsyas. All the world has to submit to it,—kings and queens with the rest. The monuments of Art and the face of Nature herself are treated in the same way. We lift an impalpable scale from the surface of the Pyramids. We slip off from the dome of St. Peter's that other imponderable dome which fitted it so closely that it betrays every scratch on the original. We skim off a thin, dry cuticle from the rapids of Niagara, and lay it on our unmoistened paper without breaking a bubble or losing a speck of foam. We steal a landscape from its lawful owners, and defy the charge of dishonesty. We skin the flints by the wayside, and nobody accuses us of meanness.

These miracles are being worked all around us so easily and so cheaply that most people have ceased to think of them as marvels. There is a photographer established in every considerable village,—nay, one may not unfrequently see a photographic *ambulance* standing at the wayside upon some vacant lot where it can squat unchallenged in the midst of burdock and plantain and apple-Peru, or making a long halt in the middle of a common by special permission of the "Selectmen."

We must not forget the inestimable preciousness of the new Promethean gifts because they have become familiar. Think first of the privilege we all possess now of preserving the lineaments and looks of those dear to us.

"Blest be the art which can immortalize,"

said Cowper. But remember how few painted portraits really give their subjects. Recollect those wandering Thugs of Art whose murderous doings with the brush used frequently to involve whole families; who passed from one country tavern to another, eating and painting their way,—feeding a week upon the landlord, another week upon the landlady, and two or three days apiece upon the children; as the walls of those hospitable edifices too frequently testify even to the present day. Then see what faithful memorials of those whom we love and would remember are put into our hands by the new art, with the most trifling expenditure of time and money.

This new art is old enough already to have given us the portraits of infants who are now growing into adolescence. By-and-by it will show every aspect of life in the same individual, from the earliest week to the last year of senility. We are beginning to see what it will reveal. Children grow into beauty and out of it. The first line in the forehead, the first streak in the hair are chronicled without malice, but without extenuation. The footprints of thought, of passion, of purpose are all treasured in these fossilized shadows. Family-traits show themselves in early infancy, die out, and reappear. Flitting moods which have escaped one pencil of sunbeams are caught by another. Each new picture gives us a new aspect of our friend; we find he had not one face, but many.

Page 17

It is hardly too much to say, that those whom we love no longer leave us in dying, as they did of old. They remain with us just as they appeared in life; they look down upon us from our walls; they lie upon our tables; they rest upon our bosoms; nay, if we will, we may wear their portraits, like signet-rings, upon our fingers. Our own eyes lose the images pictured on them. Parents sometimes forget the faces of their own children in a separation of a year or two. But the unfading artificial retina which has looked upon them retains their impress, and a fresh sunbeam lays this on the living nerve as if it were radiated from the breathing shape. How these shadows last, and how their originals fade away!

What is true of the faces of our friends is still more true of the places we have seen and loved. No picture produces an impression on the imagination to compare with a photographic transcript of the home of our childhood, or any scene with which we have been long familiar. The very point which the artist omits, in his effort to produce general effect, may be exactly the one that individualizes the place most strongly to our memory. There, for instance, is a photographic view of our own birthplace, and with it of a part of our good old neighbor's dwelling. An artist would hardly have noticed a slender, dry, leafless stalk which traces a faint line, as you may see, along the front of our neighbor's house next the corner. That would be nothing to him,—but to us it marks the stem of the *honeysuckle-vine*, which we remember, with its pink and white heavy-scented blossoms, as long as we remember the stars in heaven.

To this charm of fidelity in the minutest details the stereoscope adds its astonishing illusion of solidity, and thus completes the effect which so entrances the imagination. Perhaps there is also some half-magnetic effect in the fixing of the eyes on the twin pictures,—something like Mr. Braid's *hypnotism*, of which many of our readers have doubtless heard. At least the shutting out of surrounding objects, and the concentration of the whole attention, which is a consequence of this, produce a dream-like exaltation of the faculties, a kind of clairvoyance, in which we seem to leave the body behind us and sail away into one strange scene after another, like disembodied spirits.

“Ah, yes,” some unimaginative reader may say; “but there is no color and no motion in these pictures you think so life-like; and at best they are but petty miniatures of the objects we see in Nature.”

But color is, after all, a very secondary quality as compared with form. We like a good crayon portrait better for the most part in black and white than in tints of pink and blue and brown. Mr. Gibson has never succeeded in making the world like his flesh-colored statues. The color of a landscape varies perpetually, with the season, with the hour of the day, with the weather, and as seen by sunlight or moonlight; yet our home stirs us with its old associations, seen in any and every light.

Page 18

As to motion, though of course it is not present in stereoscopic pictures, except in those toy-contrivances which have been lately introduced, yet it is wonderful to see how nearly the effect of motion is produced by the slight difference of light on the water or on the leaves of trees as seen by the two eyes in the double-picture.

And lastly with respect to size, the illusion is on the part of those who suppose that the eye, unaided, ever sees anything but miniatures of objects. Here is a new experiment to convince those who have not reflected on the subject that the stereoscope shows us objects of their natural size.

We had a stereoscopic view taken by Mr. Soule out of our parlor-window, overlooking the town of Cambridge, with the river and the bridge in the foreground. Now, placing this view in the stereoscope, and looking with the left eye at the right stereographic picture, while the right eye looked at the natural landscape, through the window where the view was taken, it was not difficult so to adjust the photographic and real views that one overlapped the other, and then it was shown that the two almost exactly coincided in all their dimensions.

Another point in which the stereograph differs from every other delineation is in the character of its evidence. A simple photographic picture may be tampered with. A lady's portrait has been known to come out of the finishing-artist's room ten years younger than when it left the camera. But try to mend a stereograph and you will soon find the difference. Your marks and patches float above the picture and never identify themselves with it. We had occasion to put a little cross on the pavement of a double photograph of Canterbury Cathedral,—copying another stereoscopic picture where it was thus marked. By careful management the two crosses were made perfectly to coincide in the field of vision, but the image seemed suspended above the pavement, and did not absolutely designate any one stone, as it would have done, if it had been a part of the original picture. The impossibility of the stereograph's perjuring itself is a curious illustration of the law of evidence. "At the mouth of *two witnesses*, or of three, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; but at the mouth of one he shall not be put to death." No woman may be declared youthful on the strength of a single photograph; but if the stereoscopic twins say she is young, let her be so acknowledged in the high court of chancery of the God of Love.

Some two or three years since, we called the attention of the readers of this magazine to the subject of the stereoscope and the stereograph. Some of our expressions may have seemed extravagant, as if heated by the interest which a curious novelty might not unnaturally excite. We have not lost any of the enthusiasm and delight which that article must have betrayed. After looking over perhaps a hundred thousand stereographs and making a collection of about a thousand, we should feel the same excitement on receiving a new lot to look over and select from as in those early days of our experience. To make sure that this early interest has not cooled, let us put on record one or two convictions of the present moment.

Page 19

First, as to the wonderful nature of the invention. If a strange planet should happen to come within hail, and one of its philosophers were to ask us, as it passed, to hand him the most remarkable material product of human skill, we should offer him, without a moment's hesitation, a stereoscope containing an *instantaneous* double-view of some great thoroughfare,—one of Mr. Anthony's views of Broadway, (No. 203,) for instance.

Secondly, of all artificial contrivances for the gratification of human taste, we seriously question whether any offers so much, on the whole, to the enjoyment of the civilized races as the self-picturing of Art and Nature,—with three exceptions: namely, dress, the most universal, architecture, the most imposing, and music, the most exciting, of factitious sources of pleasure.

No matter whether this be an extravagance or an over-statement; none can dispute that we have a new and wonderful source of pleasure in the sun-picture, and especially in the solid sun-*sculptures* of the stereograph. Yet there is a strange indifference to it, even up to the present moment, among many persons of cultivation and taste. They do not seem to have waked up to the significance of the miracle which the Lord of Light is working for them. The cream of the visible creation has been skimmed off; and the sights which men risk their lives and spend their money and endure sea-sickness to behold,—the views of Nature and Art which make exiles of entire families for the sake of a look at them, and render “bronchitis” and dyspepsia, followed by leave of absence, endurable dispensations to so many worthy shepherds,—these sights, gathered from Alps, temples, palaces, pyramids, are offered you for a trifle, to carry home with you, that you may look at them at your leisure, by your fireside, with perpetual fair weather, when you are in the mood, without catching cold, without following a *valet-de-place*, in any order of succession,—from a glacier to Vesuvius, from Niagara to Memphis,—as long as you like, and breaking off as suddenly as you like;—and you, native of this incomparably dull planet, have hardly troubled yourself to look at this divine gift, which, if an angel had brought it from some sphere nearer to the central throne, would have been thought worthy of the celestial messenger to whom it was intrusted!

It seemed to us that it might possibly awaken an interest in some of our readers, if we should carry them with us through a brief stereographic trip,—describing, not from places, but from the photographic pictures of them which we have in our own collection. Again, those who have collections may like to compare their own opinions of particular pictures mentioned with those here expressed, and those who are buying stereographs may be glad of some guidance in choosing.

But the reader must remember that this trip gives him only a glimpse of a few scenes selected out of our gallery of a thousand. To visit them all, as tourists visit the realities, and report what we saw, with the usual explanations and historical illustrations, would make a formidable book of travels.

Page 20

Before we set out, we must know something of the sights of our own country. At least we must see Niagara. The great fall shows infinitely best on glass. Thomson's "Point View, 28," would be a perfect picture of the Falls in summer, if a lady in the foreground had not moved her shawl while the pictures were taking, or in the interval between taking the two. His winter view, "Terrapin Tower, 37," is perfection itself. Both he and Evans have taken fine views of the rapids, *instantaneous*, catching the spray as it leaped and the clouds overhead. Of Blondin on his rope there are numerous views; standing on one foot, on his head, carrying a man on his back, and one frightful picture, where he hangs by one leg, head downward, over the abyss. The best we have seen is Evans's No. 5, a front view, where every muscle stands out in perfect relief, and the symmetry of the most unimpressible of mortals is finely shown. It literally makes the head swim to fix the eyes on some of these pictures. It is a relief to get away from such fearful sights and look up at the Old Man of the Mountain. There stands the face, without any humanizing help from the hand of an artist. Mr. Bierstadt has given it to us very well. Rather an imbecile old gentleman, one would say, with his mouth open; a face such as one may see hanging about railway-stations, and, what is curious, a New-England style of countenance. Let us flit again, and just take a look at the level sheets of water and broken falls of Trenton,—at the oblong, almost squared arch of the Natural Bridge,—at the ruins of the Pemberton Mills, still smoking,—and so come to Mr. Barnum's "Historical Series." Clark's Island, with the great rock by which the Pilgrims "rested, according to the commandment," on the first Sunday, or Sabbath, as they loved to call it, which they passed in the harbor of Plymouth, is the most interesting of them all to us. But here are many scenes of historical interest connected with the great names and events of our past. The Washington Elm, at Cambridge, (through the branches of which we saw the first sunset we ever looked upon, from this planet, at least,) is here in all its magnificent drapery of hanging foliage. Mr. Soule has given another beautiful view of it, when stripped of its leaves, equally remarkable for the delicacy of its pendent, hair-like spray.

We should keep the reader half an hour looking through this series, if we did not tear ourselves abruptly away from it. We are bound for Europe, and are to leave *via* New York immediately.

Here we are in the main street of the great city. This is Mr. Anthony's miraculous instantaneous view in Broadway, (No. 203,) before referred to. It is the Oriental story of the petrified city made real to our eyes. The character of it is, perhaps, best shown by the use we make of it in our lectures, to illustrate the physiology of walking. Every foot is caught in its movement with such suddenness

Page 21

that it shows as clearly as if quite still. We are surprised to see, in one figure, how long the stride is,—in another, how much the knee is bent,—in a third, how curiously the heel strikes the ground before the rest of the foot,—in all, how singularly the body is accommodated to the action of walking. The facts which the brothers Weber, laborious German experimenters and observers, had carefully worked out on the bony frame, are illustrated by the various individuals comprising this moving throng. But what a wonder it is, this snatch at the central life of a mighty city as it rushed by in all its multitudinous complexity of movement! Hundreds of objects in this picture could be identified in a court of law by their owners. There stands Car No. 33 of the Astor House and Twenty-Seventh Street Fourth Avenue line. The old woman would miss an apple from that pile which you see glistening on her stand. The young man whose back is to us could swear to the pattern of his shawl. The gentleman between two others will no doubt remember that he had a headache the next morning, after this walk he is taking. Notice the caution with which the man driving the dapple-gray horse in a cart loaded with barrels holds his reins,—wide apart, one in each hand. See the shop-boys with their bundles, the young fellow with a lighted cigar in his hand, as you see by the way he keeps it off from his body, the *gamin* stooping to pick up something in the midst of the moving omnibuses, the stout philosophical carman sitting on his cart-tail, Newman Noggs by the lamp-post at the corner. Nay, look into Car No. 33 and you may see the passengers;—is that a young woman's face turned toward you looking out of the window? See how the faithful sun-print advertises the rival establishment of "Meade Brothers, Ambrotypes and Photographs." What a fearfully suggestive picture! It is a leaf torn from the book of God's recording angel. What if the sky is one great concave mirror, which reflects the picture of all our doings, and photographs every act on which it looks upon dead and living surfaces, so that to celestial eyes the stones on which we tread are written with our deeds, and the leaves of the forest are but undeveloped negatives where our summers stand self-recorded for transfer into the imperishable record? And what a metaphysical puzzle have we here in this simple-looking paradox! Is motion but a succession of rests? All is still in this picture of universal movement. Take ten thousand instantaneous photographs of the great thoroughfare in a day; every one of them will be as still as the *tableau* in the "Enchanted Beauty." Yet the hurried day's life of Broadway will have been made up of just such stillnesses. Motion is as rigid as marble, if you only take a wink's worth of it at a time.

We are all ready to embark now. Here is the harbor; and there lies the Great Eastern at anchor,—the biggest island that ever got adrift. Stay one moment,—they will ask us about secession and the revolted States,—it may be as well to take a look at Charleston, for an instant, before we go.

Page 22

These three stereographs were sent us by a lady now residing in Charleston. The Battery, the famous promenade of the Charlestonians, since armed with twenty-four-pounders facing Fort Sumter; the interior of Fort Moultrie, with the guns spiked by Major Anderson; and a more extensive view of the same interior, with the flag of the seven stars, (corresponding to the seven deadly sins,)—the free end of it tied to a gun-carriage, as if to prevent the winds of the angry heaven from rending it to tatters. In the distance, to the right, Fort Sumter, looking remote and inaccessible,—the terrible rattle which our foolish little spoiled sister Caroline has insisted on getting into her rash hand. How ghostly, yet how real, it looms up out of the dim atmosphere,—the guns looking over the wall and out through the embrasures,—meant for a foreign foe,—this very day (April 13th) turned in self-defence against the children of those who once fought for liberty at Fort Moultrie! It is a sad thought that there are truths which can be got out of life only by the *destructive analysis* of war. Statesmen deal in *proximate principles*,—unstable compounds; but war reduces facts to their simple elements in its red-hot crucible, with its black flux of carbon and sulphur and nitre. Let us turn our back on this miserable, even though inevitable, fraternal strife, and, closing our eyes for an instant, open them in London.

Here we are at the foot of Charing Cross. You remember, of course, how this fine equestrian statue of Charles I. was condemned to be sold and broken up by the Parliament, but was buried and saved by the brazier who purchased it, and so reappeared after the Restoration. To the left, the familiar words “Morley’s Hotel” designate an edifice about half windows, where the plebeian traveller may sit and contemplate Northumberland House opposite, and the straight-tailed lion of the Percys surmounting the lofty battlement which crowns its broad *facade*. We could describe and criticize the statue as well as if we stood under it, but other travellers have done that. Where are all the people that ought to be seen here? Hardly more than three or four figures are to be made out; the rest were moving, and left no images in this slow, old-fashioned picture,—how unlike the miraculous “instantaneous” Broadway of Mr. Anthony we were looking at a little while ago! But there, on one side, an omnibus has stopped long enough to be caught by the sunbeams. There is a mark on it. Try it with a magnifier.

Charing

Strand
633.

Here are the towers of Westminster Abbey. A dead failure, as we well remember them, —miserable modern excrescences, which shame the noble edifice. We will hasten on, and perhaps by-and-by come back and enter the cathedral.

Page 23

How natural Temple Bar looks, with the loaded coach and the cab going through the central arch, and the blur of the hurrying throng darkening the small lateral ones! A fine old structure,—always reminds a Bostonian of the old arch over which the mysterious *Boston Library* was said still to linger out its existence late into the present century. But where are the spikes on which the rebels' heads used to grin until their jaws fell off? They must have been ranged along that ledge which forms the chord of the arch surmounting the triple-gated structure. To the left a woman is spreading an awning before a shop;—a man would do it for her here. Ghost of a boy with bundle,—seen with right eye only. Other ghosts of passers or loiterers,—one of a pretty woman, as we fancy at least, by the way she turns her face to us. To the right, fragments of signs, as follow:

22
PAT

CO
BR
PR

What can this be but 229, *Patent Combs and Brushes*, PROUT? At any rate, we were looking after Front's good old establishment, (229, Strand,) which we remembered was close to Temple Bar, when we discovered these fragments, the rest being cut off by the limits of the picture.

London Bridge! Less imposing than Waterloo Bridge, but a massive pile of masonry, which looks as if its rounded piers would defy the Thames as long as those of the Bridge of Sant' Angelo have stemmed the Tiber. Figures indistinct or invisible, as usual, in the foreground, but farther on a mingled procession of coaches, cabs, carts, and people. See the groups in the recesses over the piers. The parapet is breast-high;—a woman can climb over it, and drop or leap into the dark stream lying in deep shadow under the arches. Women take this leap often. The angels hear them like the splash of drops of blood out of the heart of our humanity. In the distance, wharves, storehouses, stately edifices, steeples, and rising proudly above them, "like a tall bully," London Monument.

Here we are, close to the Monument. Tall, square base, with reliefs, fluted columns, queer top;—looks like an inverted wineglass with a shaving-brush standing up on it: representative of flame, probably. Below this the square cage in which people who have climbed the stairs are standing; seems to be ten or twelve feet high, and is barred or wired over. Women used to jump off from the Monument as well as from London Bridge, before they made the cage safe in this way.

"Holloa!" said a man standing in the square one day, to his companion,—“there's the flag coming down from the Monument!”

“It’s no flag,” said the other, “it’s a woman!”

Sure enough, and so it was.

Page 24

Nobody can mistake the four pepper-boxes, with the four weathercocks on them, surmounting the corners of a great square castle, a little way from the river's edge. That is the Tower of London. We see it behind the masts of sailing-vessels and the chimneys of steamers, gray and misty in the distance. Let us come nearer to it. Four square towers, crowned by four Oriental-looking domes, not unlike the lower half of an inverted balloon: these towers at the angles of a square building with buttressed and battlemented walls, with two ranges of round-arched windows on the side towards us. But connected with this building are other towers, round, square, octagon, walls with embrasures, moats, loop-holes, turrets, parapets,—looking as if the beef-eaters really meant to hold out, if a new army of Boulogne should cross over some fine morning. We can't stop to go in and see the lions this morning, for we have come in sight of a great dome, and we cannot take our eyes away from it.

That is St. Paul's, the Boston State-House of London. There is a resemblance in effect, but there is a difference in dimensions,—to the disadvantage of the native edifice, as the reader may see in the plate prefixed to Dr. Bigelow's "Technology." The dome itself looks light and airy compared to St. Peter's or the Duomo of Florence, not only absolutely, but comparatively. The colonnade on which it rests divides the honors with it. It does not brood over the city, as those two others over their subject towns. Michel Angelo's forehead repeats itself in the dome of St. Peter's. Sir Christopher had doubtless a less ample frontal development; indeed, the towers he added to Westminster Abbey would almost lead us to doubt if he had not a vacancy somewhere in his brain. But the dome of the London "State-House" is very graceful,—so light that it looks as if its lineage had been crossed by a spire. Wait until we have gilded the dome of our Boston St. Paul's before drawing any comparisons.

We have seen the outside of London. What do we care for the Crescent, and the Horseguards, and Nelson's Monument, and the statue of Achilles, and the new Houses of Parliament? The Abbey, the Tower, the Bridge, Temple Bar, the Monument, St. Paul's: these make up the great features of the London we dream about. Let us go into the Abbey for a few moments. The "dim religious light" is pretty good, after all. We can read every letter on that mural tablet to the memory of "the most illustrious and most benevolent John Paul Howard, Earl of Stafford," "a Lover of his Country, *A Relation to Relations*" (what a eulogy and satire in that expression!) and in many ways virtuous and honorable, as "The Countess Dowager, in Testimony of her great Affection and Respect to her Lord's Memory," has commemorated on his monument. We can see all the folds of the Duchess of Suffolk's dress, and the meshes of the net that confines her hair, as she lies in marble effigy on her sculptured sarcophagus. It looks old to

Page 25

our eyes,—for she was the mother of Lady Jane Grey, and died three hundred years ago,—but see those two little stone heads lying on their stone pillow, just beyond the marble Duchess. They are children of Edward III.,—the Black Prince's baby-brothers. They died five hundred years ago,—but what are centuries in Westminster Abbey? Under this pillared canopy, her head raised on two stone cushions, her fair, still features bordered with the spreading cap we know so well in her portraits, lies Mary of Scotland. These fresh monuments, protected from the wear of the elements, seem to make twenty generations our contemporaries. Look at this husband warding off the dart which the grim, draped skeleton is aiming at the breast of his fainting wife. Most famous, perhaps, of all the statues in the Abbey is this of Joseph Gascoigne Nightingale and his Lady, by Roubilliac. You need not cross the ocean to see it. It is here, literally to every dimple in the back of the falling hand, and every crinkle of the vermiculated stone-work. What a curious pleasure it is to puzzle out the inscriptions on the monuments in the background!—for the beauty of your photograph is, that you may work out minute details with the microscope, just as you can with the telescope in a distant landscape in Nature. There is a lady, for instance, leaning upon an urn,—suggestive, a little, of Morgiana and the forty thieves. Above is a medallion of one wearing a full periwig. Now for a half-inch lens to make out the specks that seem to be letters. “Erected to the Memory of William Pulteney, Earl of Bath, by his Brother”—That will do,—the inscription operates as a cold bath to enthusiasm. But here is our own personal namesake, the once famous Rear Admiral of the White, whose biography we can find nowhere except in the “Gentleman's Magazine,” where he divides the glory of the capture of Quebec with General Wolfe. A handsome young man with hyacinthine locks, his arms bare and one hand resting on a cannon. We remember thinking our namesake's statue one of the most graceful in the Abbey, and have always fallen back on the memory of that and of Dryden's Achates of the “Annus Mirabilis,” as trophies of the family.

Enough of these marbles; there is no end to them; the walls and floor of the great, many-arched, thousand-pillared, sky-lifted cavern are crusted all over with them, like stalactites and stalagmites. The vast temple is alive with the images of the dead. Kings and queens, nobles, statesmen, soldiers, admirals, the great men whose deeds we all know, the great writers whose words are in all our memories, the brave and the beautiful whose fame has shrunk into their epitaphs, are all around us. What is the cry for alms that meets us at the door of the church to the mute petition of these marble beggars, who ask to warm their cold memories for a moment in our living hearts? Look up at the mighty arches overhead, borne up on tall clustered columns,—as if that avenue of

Page 26

Royal Palms we remember in the West India Islands (photograph) had been spirited over seas and turned into stone. Make your obeisance to the august shape of Sir Isaac Newton, reclining like a weary swain in the niche at the side of the gorgeous screen. Pass through Henry VII.'s Chapel, a temple cut like a cameo. Look at the shining oaken stalls of the knights. See the banners overhead. There is no such speaking record of the lapse of time as these banners,—there is one of them beginning to drop to pieces; the long day of a century has decay for its dial-shadow.

We have had a glimpse of London,—let us make an excursion to Stratford-on-Avon.

Here you see the Shakspeare House as it was,—wedged in between, and joined to, the “Swan and Maidenhead” Tavern and a mean and dilapidated brick building, not much worse than itself, however. The first improvement (as you see in No. 2) was to pull down this brick building. The next (as you see in No. 3)—was to take away the sign and the bay-window of the “Swan and Maidenhead” and raise two gables out of its roof, so as to restore something like its ancient aspect. Then a rustic fence was put up and the outside arrangements were completed. The cracked and faded sign projects as we remember it of old. In No. 1 you may read “THE IMMORTAL SHAKES_peare ... Born in This House_” about as well as if you had been at the trouble and expense of going there.

But here is the back of the house. Did little Will use to look out at this window with the bull's-eye panes? Did he use to drink from this old pump, or the well in which it stands? Did his shoulders rub against this angle of the old house, built with rounded bricks? It a strange picture, and sets us dreaming. Let us go in and up-stairs. In this room he was born. They say so, and we will believe it. Rough walls, rudely boarded floor, wide window with small panes, small bust of him between two cactuses in bloom on window-seat. An old table covered with prints and stereographs, a framed picture, and under it a notice “Copies of this Portrait” ... the rest, in fine print, can only be conjectured.

Here is the Church of the Holy Trinity, in which he lies buried. The trees are bare that surround it; see the rooks' nests in their tops. The Avon is hard by, dammed just here, with flood-gates, like a canal. Change the season, if you like,—here are the trees in leaf, and in their shadow the tombs and graves of the mute, inglorious citizens of Stratford.

Ah, how natural this interior, with its great stained window, its mural monuments, and its slab in the pavement with the awful inscription! That we cannot see here, but there is the tablet with the bust we know so well. But this, after all, is Christ's temple, not Shakspeare's. Here are the worshippers' seats,—mark how the polished wood glistens,

—there is the altar, and there the open prayer-book,—you can almost read the service from it. Of the many striking

Page 27

things that Henry Ward Beecher has said, nothing, perhaps, is more impressive than his account of his partaking of the communion at that altar in the church where Shakspeare rests. A memory more divine than his overshadowed the place, and he thought of Shakspeare, "as he thought of ten thousand things, without the least disturbance of his devotion," though he was kneeling directly over the poet's dust.

If you will stroll over to Shottery now with me, we can see the Ann Hathaway cottage from four different points, which will leave nothing outside of it to be seen. Better to look at than to live in. A fearful old place, full of small vertebrates that squeak and smaller articulates that bite, if its outward promise can be trusted. A thick thatch covers it like a coarse-haired hide. It is patched together with bricks and timber, and partly crusted with scaling plaster. One window has the diamond panes framed in lead, such as we remember seeing of old in one or two ancient dwellings in the town of Cambridge, hard by. In this view a young man is sitting, pensive, on the steps which Master William, too ardent lover, used to climb with hot haste and descend with lingering delay. Young men die, but youth lives. Life goes on in the cottage just as it used to three hundred years ago. On the rail before the door sits the puss of the household, of the fiftieth generation, perhaps, from that "harmless, necessary cat" which purred round the poet's legs as he sat talking love with Ann Hathaway. At the foot of the steps is a huge basin, and over the rail hangs—a dishcloth, drying. In these homely accidents of the very instant, that cut across our romantic ideals with the sharp edge of reality, lies one of the ineffable charms of the sun-picture. It is a little thing that gives life to a scene or a face; portraits are never absolutely alive, because they do not *wink*.

Come, we are full of Shakspeare; let us go up among the hills and see where another poet lived and lies. Here is Rydal Mount, the home of Wordsworth. Two-storied, ivy-clad, hedge-girdled, dropped into a crease among the hills that look down dimly from above, as if they were hunting after it as ancient dames hunt after a dropped thimble. In these walks he used to go "booing about," as his rustic neighbor had it,—reciting his own verses. Here is his grave in Grasmere. A plain slab, with nothing but his name. Next him lies Dora, his daughter, beneath a taller stone bordered with a tracery of ivy, and bearing in relief a lamb and a cross. Her husband lies next in the range. The three graves have just been shorn of their tall grass,—in this other view you may see them half-hidden by it. A few flowering stems have escaped the scythe in the first picture, and nestle close against the poet's headstone. Hard by sleeps poor Hartley Coleridge, with a slab of freestone graven with a cross and a crown of thorns, and the legend, "By thy Cross and Passion, Good Lord, deliver us." [A] All around

Page 28

are the graves of those whose names the world has not known. This view, (302,) from above Rydal Mount, is so Claude-like, especially in its trees, that one wants the solemn testimony of the double-picture to believe it an actual transcript of Nature. Of the other English landscapes we have seen, one of the most pleasing on the whole is that marked 43,—Sweden Bridge, near Ambleside. But do not fail to notice St. Mary's Church (101) in the same mountain-village. It grows out of the ground like a crystal, with spur-like gables budding out all the way up its spire, as if they were ready to flower into pinnacles, like such as have sprung up all over the marble multiflora of Milan.

[Footnote A: Miss Martineau, who went to his funeral, and may be supposed to describe after a visit to the churchyard, gives the inscription incorrectly. See *Atlantic Monthly* for May, 1861, p. 552. Tourists cannot be trusted; stereographs can.]

And as we have been looking at a steeple, let us flit away for a moment and pay our reverence at the foot of the tallest spire in England,—that of Salisbury Cathedral. Here we see it from below, looking up,—one of the most striking pictures ever taken. Look well at it; Chichester has just fallen, and this is a good deal like it,—some have thought raised by the same builder. It has bent somewhat (as you may see in these other views) from the perpendicular; and though it has been strengthened with clamps and framework, it must crash some day or other, for there has been a great giant tugging at it day and night for five hundred years, and it will at last shut up into itself or topple over with a sound and thrill that will make the dead knights and bishops shake on their stone couches, and be remembered all their days by year-old children. This is the first cathedral we ever saw, and none ever so impressed us since. Vast, simple, awful in dimensions and height, just beginning to grow tall at the point where our proudest steeples taper out, it fills the whole soul, pervades the vast landscape over which it reigns, and, like Niagara and the Alps, abolishes that five- or six-foot personality in the beholder which is fostered by keeping company with the little life of the day in its little dwellings. In the Alps your voice is as the piping of a cricket. Under the sheet of Niagara the beating of your heart seems to trivial a movement to take reckoning of. In the buttressed hollow of one of these palaeozoic cathedrals you are ashamed of your ribs, and blush for the exiguous pillars of bone on which your breathing structure reposes. Before we leave Salisbury, let us look for a moment into its cloisters. A green court-yard, with a covered gallery on its level, opening upon it through a series of Gothic arches. You may learn more, young American, of the difference between your civilization and that of the Old World by one look at this than from an average lyceum-lecture an hour long. Seventy years of life means a great deal to you; how little, comparatively, to the dweller in these cloisters! You will have seen a city grow up about you, perhaps; your whole world will have been changed half a dozen times over. What change for him? The cloisters are just as when he entered them,—just as they were a hundred years ago,—just as they will be a hundred years hence.

Page 29

These old cathedrals are beyond all comparison what are best worth seeing, of a man's handiwork, in Europe. How great the delight to be able to bring them, bodily, as it were, to our own firesides! A hundred thousand pilgrims a year used to visit Canterbury. Now Canterbury visits us. See that small white mark on the pavement. That marks the place where the slice of Thomas a Becket's skull fell when Reginald Fitz Urse struck it off with a "Ha!" that seems to echo yet through the vaulted arches. And see the broad stains, worn by the pilgrims' knees as they climbed to the martyr's shrine. For four hundred years this stream of worshippers was wearing itself into these stones. But there was the place where they knelt before the altar called "Becket's Crown." No! the story that those deep hollows in the marble were made by the pilgrims' knees is too much to believe,—but there are the hollows, and that is the story.

And now, if you would see a perfect gem of the art of photography, and at the same time an unquestioned monument of antiquity which no person can behold without interest, look upon this,—the monument of the Black Prince. There is hardly a better piece of work to be found. His marble effigy lies within a railing, with a sounding board. Above this, on a beam stretched between two pillars, hang the arms he wore at the Battle of Poitiers,—the tabard, the shield, the helmet, the gauntlets, and the sheath that held his sword, which weapon it is said that Cromwell carried off. The outside casing of the shield has broken away, as you observe, but the lions or lizards, or whatever they were meant for, and the flower-de-laces or plumes may still be seen. The metallic scales, if such they were, have partially fallen from the tabard, or frock, and the leather shows bare in parts of it.

Here, hard by, is the sarcophagus of Henry IV. and his queen, also inclosed with a railing like the other. It was opened about thirty years ago, in presence of the dean of the cathedral. There was a doubt, so it was said, as to the monarch's body having been really buried there. Curiosity had nothing to do with it, it is to be presumed. Every over-ground sarcophagus is opened sooner or later, as a matter of course. It was hard work to get it open; it had to be sawed. They found a quantity of hay,—fresh herbage, perhaps, when it was laid upon the royal body four hundred years ago,—and a cross of twigs. A silken mask was on the face. They raised it and saw his red beard, his features well preserved, a gap in the front-teeth, which there was probably no court-dentist to supply,—the same the citizens looked on four centuries ago

"In London streets that coronation-day,
When Bolingbroke rode on roan Barbary";

then they covered it up to take another nap of a few centuries, until another dean has an historical doubt,—at last, perhaps, to be transported by some future Australian Barnum to the Sidney Museum and exhibited as the mummy of one of English Pharaohs. Look, too, at the "Warriors' Chapel," in the same cathedral. It is a very beautiful stereograph, and may be studied for a long time, for it is full of the most curious monuments.

Page 30

Before leaving these English churches and monuments, let us enter, if but for a moment, the famous Beauchamp Chapel at Warwick. The finest of the views (323, 324) recalls that of the Black Prince's tomb, as a triumph of photography. Thus, while the whole effect of the picture is brilliant and harmonious, we shall find, on taking a lens, that we can count every individual bead in the chaplet of the monk who is one of the more conspicuous reliefs on the sarcophagus. The figure of this monk itself is about half an inch in height, and its face may be completely hidden by the head of a pin. The whole chapel is a marvel of workmanship and beauty. The monument of Richard Beauchamp in the centre, with the frame of brass over the recumbent figure, intended to support the drapery thrown upon it to protect the statue,—with the mailed shape of the warrior, his feet in long-pointed shoes resting against the muzzled bear and the griffin, his hands raised, but not joined,—this monument, with the tomb of Dudley, Earl of Leicester,—Elizabeth's Leicester, —and that of the other Dudley, Earl of Warwick,—all enchased in these sculptured walls and illuminated through that pictured window, where we can dimly see the outlines of saints and holy maidens,—form a group of monumental jewels such as only Henry VII.'s Chapel can equal. For these two pictures (323 and 324) let the poor student pawn his outside-coat, if he cannot have them otherwise.

Of abbeys and castles there is no end, ago No. 4, Tintern Abbey, is the finest, on the whole, we have ever seen. No. 2 is also very perfect and interesting. In both, the masses of ivy that clothe the ruins are given with wonderful truth and effect. Some of these views have the advantage of being very well colored. Warwick Castle (81) is one of the best and most the interesting of the series of castles; Caernarvon is another still more striking.

We may as well break off here as anywhere, so far as England is concerned. England is one great burial-ground to an American. As islands are built up out of the shields of insects, so her soil is made the land of Burns, and see what one man can do to idealize and glorify the common life about him! Here is a poor "ten-footer", as we should call it, the cottage William "Burness" built with his own hands, where he carried his young bride Agnes, and where the boy Robert, his first-born, was given to the light and air which he made brighter and freer for mankind. Sit still and do not speak,—but see that your eyes do not grow dim as these pictures pass before them: The old hawthorn under which Burns sat with Highland Mary,—a venerable duenna-like tree, with thin arms and sharp elbows, and scanty *chevelure* of leaves; the Auld Brig o' Doon (No. 4),—a daring arch that leaps the sweet stream at a bound, more than half clad in a mantle of ivy, which has crept with its larva-like feet beyond the key-stone; the Twa Brigs of Ayr, with the beautiful reflections in the stream that shines under their eyebrow-arches; and poor little Alloway Kirk, with its fallen roof and high gables. Lift your hand to your eyes and draw a long breath,—for what words would come so near to us as these pictured, nay, real, memories of the dead poet who made a nation of a province, and the hearts of mankind its tributaries?

Page 31

And so we pass to many-towered and turreted and pinnacled Abbotsford, and to large-windowed Melrose, and to peaceful Dryburgh, where, under a plain bevelled slab, lies the great Romancer whom Scotland holds only second in her affections to her great poet. Here in the foreground of the Melrose Abbey view (436) is a gravestone which looks as if it might be deciphered with a lens. Let us draw out this inscription from the black archives of oblivion. Here it is:

In Memory of Francis Cornel, late Labourer in Greenwell, Who died 11th July, 1827, aged 89 years. Also Margaret Betty, his Spouse, who died 2'd Dec'r, 1831, aged 89 years.

This is one charm, as we have said over and over, of the truth-telling photograph. We who write in great magazines of course float off from the wreck of our century, on our life-preserving articles, to immortality. What a delight it is to snatch at the unknown head that shows for an instant through the wave, and drag it out to personal recognition and a share in our own sempiternal buoyancy! Go and be photographed on the edge of Niagara, O unknown aspirant for human remembrance! Do not throw yourself, O traveller, into Etna, like Empedocles, but be taken by the camera standing on the edge of the crater! Who is that lady in the carriage at the door of Burns's cottage? Who is that gentleman in the shiny hat on the sidewalk in front of the Shakspeare house? Who are those two fair youths lying dead on a heap of dead at the trench's side in the cemetery of Melegnano, in that ghastly glass stereograph in our friend Dr. Bigelow's collection? Some Austrian mother has perhaps seen her boy's features in one of those still faces. All these seemingly accidental figures are not like the shapes put in by artists to fill the blanks in their landscapes, but real breathing persons, or forms that have but lately been breathing, not found there by chance, but brought there with a purpose, fulfilling some real human errand, or at least, as in the last-mentioned picture, waiting to be buried.

Before quitting the British Islands, it would be pleasant to wander through the beautiful Vale of Avoca in Ireland, and to look on those many exquisite landscapes and old ruins and crosses which have been so admirably rendered in the stereograph. There is the Giant's Causeway, too,—not in our own collection, but which our friend Mr. Waterston has transplanted with all its basaltic columns to his Museum of Art in Chester Square. Those we cannot stop to look at now, nor these many objects of historical or poetical interest which lie before us on our own table. Such are the pictures of Croyland Abbey, where they kept that jolly drinking-horn of "Witlaf, King of the Saxons", which Longfellow has made famous; Bedd-Gelert, the grave of the faithful hound immortalized by—nay, who has immortalized—William Spencer; the stone that marks the spot where William Rufus fell by Tyrrel's shaft; the Lion's Head in Dove Dale, fit to be compared with our own Old Man of the Mountain; the "Bowder Stone," or the great boulder of Borrowdale; and many others over which we love to dream at idle moments.

Page 32

When we began these notes of travel, we meant to take our fellow-voyagers over the continent of Europe, and perhaps to all the quarters of the globe. We should make a book, instead of an article, if we attempted it. Let us, instead of this, devote the remaining space to an enumeration of a few of the most interesting pictures we have met with, many of which may be easily obtained by those who will take the trouble we have taken to find them.

Views of Paris are everywhere to be had, good and cheap. The finest illuminated or transparent paper view we have ever seen is one of the Imperial Throne. There is another illuminated view, the Palace of the Senate, remarkable for the beauty with which it gives the frescoes on the cupola. We have a most interesting stereograph of the Amphitheatre of Nismes, with a *bull-fight* going on in its arena at the time when the picture was taken. The contrast of the vast Roman structure, with its massive arched masonry, and the scattered assembly, which seems almost lost in the spaces once filled by the crowd of spectators who thronged to the gladiatorial shows, is one of the most striking we have ever seen. At Quimperle is a house so like the curious old building lately removed from Dock Square in Boston, that it is commonly taken for it at the first view. The Roman tombs at Arles and the quaint streets at Troyes are the only other French pictures we shall speak of, apart from the cathedrals to be mentioned.

Of the views in Switzerland, it may be said that the Glaciers are perfect, in the glass pictures, at least. Waterfalls are commonly poor: the water glares and looks like cotton-wool. Staubbach, with the Vale of Lauterbrunnen, is an exquisite exception. Here are a few signal specimens of Art. No. 4018, Seelisberg,—unsurpassed by any glass stereograph we have ever seen, in all the qualities that make a faultless picture. No. 4119, Mont Blanc from Sta. Rosa,—the finest view of the mountain for general effect we have met with. No. 4100, Suspension-Bridge of Fribourg,—very fine, but makes one giddy to look at it. Three different views of Goldau, where the villages lie buried under these vast masses of rock, recall the terrible catastrophe of 1806, as if it had happened but yesterday.

Almost everything from Italy is interesting. The ruins of Rome, the statues of the Vatican, the great churches, all pass before us but in a flash, as we are expressed by them on our ideal locomotive. Observe: next to snow and ice, stone is best rendered in the stereograph. Statues are given absolutely well, except where there is much foreshortening to be done, as in this of the Torso, where you see the thigh is unnaturally lengthened. See the mark on the Dying Gladiator's nose. That is where Michel Angelo mended it. There is Hawthorne's Marble Faun, (the one called of Praxiteles,) the Laocoon, the Apollo Belvedere, the Young Athlete with the Strigil, the Forum, the Cloaca Maxima, the Palace of the Caesars, the bronze Marcus Aurelius,—those wonders all the world flocks to see,—the God of Light has multiplied them all for you, and you have only to give a paltry fee to his servant to own in fee-simple the best sights that earth has to show.

Page 33

But look in at Pisa one moment, not for the Leaning Tower and the other familiar objects, but for the interior of the Campo Santo, with its holy earth, its innumerable monuments, and the fading frescoes on its walls,—see! there are the Three Kings of Andrea Orgagna. And there hang the broken chains that once, centuries ago, crossed the Arno,—standing off from the wall, so that it seems as if they might clank, if you jarred the stereoscope. Tread with us the streets of Pompeii for a moment: there are the ruts made by the chariots of eighteen hundred years ago,—it is the same thing as stooping down and looking at the pavement itself. And here is the amphitheatre out of which the Pompeians trooped when the ashes began to fall round them from Vesuvius. Behold the famous gates of the Baptistery at Florence,—but do not overlook the exquisite iron gates of the railing outside; think of them as you enter our own Common in Boston from West Street, through those portals which are fit for the gates of—not paradise. Look at this sugar-temple,—no, it is of marble, and is the monument of one of the Scalas at Verona. What a place for ghosts that vast *palazzo* behind it! Shall we stand in Venice on the Bridge of Sighs, and then take this stereoscopic gondola and go through it from St. Mark's to the Arsenal? Not now. We will only look at the Cathedral,—all the pictures under the arches show in our glass stereograph,—at the Bronze Horses, the Campanile, the Rialto, and that glorious old statue of Bartholomew Colleoni,—the very image of what a partisan leader should be, the broad-shouldered, slender-waisted, stern-featured old soldier who used to leap into his saddle in full armor, and whose men would never follow another leader when he died. Well, but there have been soldiers in Italy since his day. Here are the encampments of Napoleon's army in the recent campaign. This is the battle-field of Magenta with its trampled grass and splintered trees, and the fragments of soldiers' accoutrements lying about.

And here (leaving our own collection for our friend's before-mentioned) here is the great trench in the cemetery of Melegnano, and the heap of dead lying unburied at its edge. Look away, young maiden and tender child, for this is what war leaves after it. Flung together, like sacks of grain, some terribly mutilated, some without mark of injury, all or almost all with a still, calm look on their faces. The two youths, before referred to, lie in the foreground, so simple-looking, so like boys who had been overworked and were lying down to sleep, that one can hardly see the picture for the tears these two fair striplings bring into the eyes.

The Pope must bless us before we leave Italy. See, there he stands on the balcony of St. Peter's, and a vast crowd before him with uncovered heads as he stretches his arms and pronounces his benediction.

Page 34

Before entering Spain we must look at the Circus of Gavarni, a natural amphitheatre in the Pyrenees. It is the most picturesque of stereographs, and one of the best. As for the Alhambra, we can show that in every aspect; and if you do not vote the lions in the court of the same a set of mechanical h—gs and nursery bugaboos, we have no skill in entomology. But the Giralda, at Seville, is really a grand tower, worth looking at. The Seville Boston-folks consider it the linchpin, at least, of this rolling universe. And what a fountain this is in the Infanta's garden! what shameful beasts, swine and others, lying about on their stomachs! the whole surmounted by an unclad gentleman squeezing another into the convulsions of a galvanized frog! Queer tastes they have in the Old World. At the Fountain of the Ogre in Berne, the giant, or large-mouthed private person, upon the top of the column, is eating a little infant as one eats a radish, and has plenty more,—a whole bunch of such,—in his hand, or about him.

A voyage down the Rhine shows us nothing better than St. Goar, (No. 2257,) every house on each bank clean and clear as a crystal. The Heidelberg views are admirable;—you see a slight streak in the background of this one: we remember seeing just such a streak from the castle itself, and being told that it was the Rhine, just visible, afar off. The man with the geese in the goose-market at Nuremberg gives stone, iron, and bronze, each in perfection.

So we come to quaint Holland, where we see windmills, *ponts-levis*, canals, galiots, houses with gable-ends to the streets and little mirrors outside the windows, slanted so as to show the frows inside what is going on.

We must give up the cathedrals, after all: Santa Maria del Fiore, with Brunelleschi's dome, which Michel Angelo wouldn't copy and couldn't beat; Milan, aflame with statues, like a thousand-tapered candelabrum; Tours, with its embroidered portal, so like the lace of an archbishop's robe; even Notre Dame of Paris, with its new spire; Rouen, Amiens, Chartres,—we must give them all up.

Here we are at Athens, looking at the buttressed Acropolis and the ruined temples,—the Doric Parthenon, the Ionic Erechtheum, the Corinthian temple of Jupiter, and the beautiful Caryatides. But see those steps cut in the natural rock. Up those steps walked the Apostle Paul, and from that summit, Mars Hill, the Areopagus, he began his noble address, "Ye men of Athens!"

The Great Pyramid and the Sphinx! Herodotus saw them a little fresher, but of unknown antiquity,—far more unknown to him than to us. The Colossi of the Plain! Mighty monuments of an ancient and proud civilization standing alone in a desert now.

My name is Osymandyas, King of Kings;
Look on my works, ye mighty, and despair!



But nothing equals these vast serene faces of the Pharaohs on the great rock-temple of Abou Simbel (Ipsambul) (No. 1, F. 307). It is the sublimest of stereographs, as the temple of Kardasay, this loveliest of views on glass, is the most poetical. But here is the crocodile lying in wait for us on the sandy bank of the Nile, and we must leave Egypt for Syria.

Page 35

Damascus makes but a poor show, with its squalid houses, and glaring clayed roofs. We always wanted to invest in real estate there in Abraham Street or Noah Place, or some of its well-established thoroughfares, but are discouraged since we have had these views of the old town. Baalbec does better. See the great stones built into the wall there,—the biggest 64 x 13 x 13! What do you think of that?—a single stone bigger than both your parlors thrown into one, and this one of three almost alike, built into a wall as if just because they happened to be lying round, handy! So, then, we pass on to Bethlehem, looking like a fortress more than a town, all stone and very little window,—to Nazareth, with its brick oven-like houses, its tall minaret, its cypresses, and the black-mouthed, open tombs, with masses of cactus growing at their edge,—to Jerusalem,—to the Jordan, every drop of whose waters seems to carry a baptismal blessing,—to the Dead Sea,—and to the Cedars of Lebanon. Almost everything may have changed in these hallowed places, except the face of the stream and the lake, and the outlines of hill and valley. But as we look across the city to the Mount of Olives, we know that these lines which run in graceful curves along the horizon are the same that He looked upon as he turned his eyes sadly over Jerusalem. We know that these long declivities, beyond Nazareth, were pictured in the eyes of Mary's growing boy just as they are now in ours sitting here by our own firesides.

This is no *toy*, which thus carries us into the very presence of all that is most inspiring to the soul in the scenes which the world's heroes and martyrs, and more than heroes, more than martyrs, have hallowed and solemnized by looking upon. It is no toy: it is a divine gift, placed in our hands nominally by science, really by that inspiration which is revealing the Almighty through the lips of the humble students of Nature. Look through it once more before laying it down, but not at any earthly sight. In these views, taken through the telescopes of De la Rue of London and of Mr. Rutherford of New York, and that of the Cambridge Observatory by Mr. Whipple of Boston, we see the "spotty globe" of the moon with all its mountains and chasms, its mysterious craters and groove-like valleys. This magnificent stereograph by Mr. Whipple was taken, the first picture February 7th, the second April 6th. In this way the change of position gives the solid effect of the ordinary stereoscopic views, and the sphere rounds itself out so perfectly to the eye that it seems as if we could grasp it like an orange.

Page 36

If the reader is interested, or like to become interested, in the subject of sun-sculpture and stereoscopes, he may like to know what the last two years have taught us as to the particular instruments best worth owning. We will give a few words to the subject. Of simple instruments, for looking at one slide at a time, Smith and Beck's is the most perfect we have seen, but the most expensive. For looking at paper slides, which are light, an instrument which may be held in the hand is very convenient. We have had one constructed which is better, as we think, than any in the shops. Mr. Joseph L. Bates, 129, Washington Street, has one of them, if any person is curious to see it. In buying the instruments which hold many slides, we should prefer two that hold fifty to one that holds a hundred. Becker's small instrument, containing fifty paper slides, back to back, is the one we like best for these slides, but the top should be arranged so as to come off,—the first change we made in our own after procuring it.

We are allowed to mention the remarkable instrument contrived by our friend Dr. H.J. Bigelow, for holding fifty glass slides. The spectator looks in: all is darkness. He turns a crank: the gray dawn of morning steals over some beautiful scene or the *facade* of a stately temple. Still, as he turns, the morning brightens through various tints of rose and purple, until it reaches the golden richness of high noon. Still turning, all at once night shuts down upon the picture as at a tropical sunset, suddenly, without blur or gradual dimness,—the sun of the picture going down,

“Not as in Northern climes obscurely bright,
But one unclouded blaze of living light.”

We have not thanked the many friendly dealers in these pictures, who have sent us heaps and hundreds of stereographs to look over and select from, only because they are too many to thank. Nor do we place any price on this advertisement of their most interesting branch of business. But there are a few stereographs we wish some of them would send us, with the bill for the same: such as Antwerp and Strasbourg Cathedrals, —Bologna, with its brick towers,—the Lions of Mycenae, if they are to be had,—the Walls of Fiesole,—the Golden Candlestick in the Arch of Titus,—and others which we can mention, if consulted; some of which we have hunted for a long time in vain. But we write principally to wake up an interest in a new and inexhaustible source of pleasure, and only regret that the many pages we have filled can do no more than hint the infinite resources which the new art has laid open to us all.

THE LONDON WORKING-MEN'S COLLEGE.

Page 37

In what is now as near the centre of the Map of London as any house can properly be said to be is an old-fashioned dwelling-house on Great-Ormond Street, which is occupied, and densely occupied, by Frederic Denison Maurice's "Working-Men's College." The house looks, I suppose, very much as it did in 1784, when Great-Ormond Street bordered on the country,—when Lord Thurlow, the Chancellor of England, lived in this house,—when some thieves jumped over his garden-wall, forced two bars from the kitchen-window, entered a room adjoining the Lord Chancellor's study, and stole the Great Seal of England, "inclosed in two bags, one of leather and one of silk." London has grown so much since, that anything that is stolen from the Working-Men's College will not be stolen by thieves entering from the fields. I may say, in passing, that this theft "threw London into consternation"; there being an impression, that, for want of the Great Seal, all the functions of the Executive Government must be suspended. The Privy-Council, however, did not share this impression. They had a new seal made before night; and though the Government of England has often moved very slowly since, it has never confessedly stopped, as some Governments nearer home have done, from that day to this day.

In view of what is done in Lord Thurlow's old house now, it is worth while to linger a moment on what it was then and what he was. He was the Keeper of George III.'s conscience, until he caballed against Mr. Pitt, and was unceremoniously turned out by him. As Lord High-Chancellor, he was guardian-in-chief of all the wards in Chancery; and I suppose, for instance, without looking up the quotation in Boswell, that he was the particular Lord Chancellor to whom Dr. Johnson said he should like to intrust the making of all the matches in England. Louis Napoleon has just now undertaken to make all the friction-matches in France,—but Dr. Johnson's proposal referred to the matrimonial matches, the *denouemens* of the comedies and tragedies of domestic life. To us Americans, Thurlow is notable for the strong and uncompromising language which he used against us all through our Revolution, which excessively delighted the King. As to his faculty for keeping a conscience, it may be said, that, though he never married, he resided in this Great-Ormond Street house with his own mistress and his illegitimate children. Lord Campbell, who mentions this fact, informs us, that, as early as his own youth, the British Bench had reached such purity that judges were expected to marry their mistresses when they were appointed to the Bench. He adds, that it is long since any such condition as that was necessary. In Thurlow's time this stage of decency had not been attained even by Lord Chancellors. His humanity may be indicated by his stiff opposition to every reform ever proposed in the English criminal law, or in the social order of the time. He battled the bills for suppressing

Page 38

the slave-trade with all his might. "I desire of you, my Lords, in your humane frenzy, to show some humanity to the whites as well as to the negroes",—illustrating this remark by a picture of the sufferings of an English trader who had risked thirty thousand pounds on the slave-trade that year. When an entering wedge was attempted for the improvement of the bloody code of criminal law, Thurlow opposed it with passion. The particular clause selected by the reformers was one which demanded that women who had been connected with any treasonable movements should be burnt alive. It was proposed to reduce their punishment to the same scale as men's. Thurlow made it his duty to defend the ancient practice. He was, in short, mixed up with every effort of his time, which we now consider disgraceful, for arresting the gradual progress of reform.

Now that Thurlow's wine-cellar is a college-chapel, that young men study arithmetic in the room the Great Seal was stolen from, that Mr. Ruskin teaches water-color drawing in Thurlow's bed-chamber, that Tom Brown, *alias* Mr. Hughes, presides over a weekly tea-party in the three-pair back, and drills the awkward squad of the working-men's battalion in the garden, it seems worth while to show that at least some places in the world have improved in eighty years, whether the world itself is to be given up as a mistake or not. We will let Lord Thurlow go, as Lord Campbell does, with this charitable wish:—"I have not learned," he says, "any particulars of his end, but I will hope that it was a good one. I trust, that, conscious of the approaching change, having sincerely repented of his violence of temper, of the errors into which he had been led by worldly ambition, and of the irregularities of his private life, he had seen the worthlessness of the objects by which he had been allured; that, having gained the frame of mind which his awful situation required, he received the consolations of religion; and that, in charity with mankind, he tenderly bade a long and last adieu to the relations and friends who surrounded him." There is not an atom of fact known on which to found Lord Campbell's hope. But I, also, will leave Lord Thurlow with this charitable wish, and I will now ask the readers of the "Atlantic," who may be enough interested in social reform and a mutual education, to see what has happened between his wine-cellar and ridge-pole since the "London Working-Men's College" was established there.

The founder of the Working-Men's College, as I have intimated, is the Rev. Frederic Denison Maurice, the eminent practical theologian. Its age is now six years,—as it was founded in the autumn of 1854. He says himself, in a striking speech he made at Manchester not long since, that the plan originated in that "awful year 1848, which I shall always look upon as one of the great epochs in history." He says that "a knot of men, of different professions, lawyers, doctors, parsons, artists, chemists, and such like,"

Page 39

thought they saw, in the convulsions of 1848, a handwriting on the wall, sent them by God himself, testifying, "that, if either rank or wealth or knowledge is not held as a trust for men, if any one of these things is regarded as a possession of our own, it must perish." In a real desire, then, to "make their own little education of use to such persons as had less," and, in so doing, to establish a vital and effective relation between themselves and the men of the working-classes below them, they looked round for opportunities to work in the education of *men*. Anybody who remembers "Amyas Leigh" will remember how earnestly Charles Kingsley there presses the theory that most of what we learn as children should be left to be learned by men, as it was in the days of Queen Bess. I suppose that Maurice's "knot of parsons and such like" shared that view. At all events, they lectured to Mechanics' Institutes, and did other such wish-wash work, which is not good for much, except for the motive it shows; and having found that out, they were all the more willing to join in arrangements more definite and profitable. According to Mr. Maurice, the formation of the People's College in Sheffield started them on the plan of a college, and determined them, as far as they could, to give consistency to their dreams by carrying out the plan of an English college in their arrangements for working-men.

At this point I must beg the accomplished company of readers to recollect what an English college is. In its organization, and in much of its consequent *esprit du corps*, it is as different from an American college as an Odd-Fellows' lodge is from a country academy. The difference is also of precisely the same sort. The man or the boy who connects himself with an English college is, in theory, still the student of a thousand years ago, who came on foot to Oxford or Cambridge, because he had heard, in the wilds of Mercia or of Wessex, that there were some books at those places,—and that some Alfred or Ethelred or Eldred had given some privileges to students coming there. When he has arrived, he joins one or other of the societies of students whom he may find there, just as the Mercian Athelstan may have done. From the moment that the established society has tested him,—and the tests are very mild,—he is admitted as a member of a fraternity, sharing the privileges of that fraternity, and, to a certain extent, its duties. He is at first a junior member, it is true. Among his duties, therefore, will be obedience to some of the senior members, and respect to all. But none the less is he a neophyte member of a corporation which extends back hundreds of years perhaps,—he is a co-proprietor of its honors and privileges, is responsible for their preservation, and is, from the first, inoculated with its *esprit du corps*.

Page 40

Now in an American college there is *esprit du corps* enough, and sense of college dignity enough. But the student's *esprit du corps* is one thing, and the government's is another. The Commons Hall, for instance, has died out of most of our colleges. Why? Why, because it had ceased to be a *Commons* Hall. It was not the place where the junior and senior members of a college, the pupils and all their instructors, met together. It was the place where the undergraduates were fed,—and where a few wretched tutors were fed at their sides. But every member of the governing body who could possibly escape did so. At our Cambridge, they even went so far as to set apart a Commons Hall for each class of undergraduates at last,—for fear men should see each other eat; as at “Separate Prisons” the idea of communion in worship is carried out by introducing each prisoner into a state-pew or royal-box whose partitions are so high that he cannot see his neighbors. This was before they gave the *coup-de-grace* to the whole thing, and scattered the members of their college just as widely as they could at meal-times, as at all other times. The recitation, again, probably the only occasion when an American student meets his instructor, is conducted according to an arrangement by which the instructor meets all of a large section or class together, meeting them for recitation simply. In a word, the American college differs from any other American school chiefly in having larger endowments and older pupils.

In the English college, on the other hand, before a freshman has been there three months, he may have established his claim to some “scholarship,” which shall be his post and his “foundation” there for years. From the very beginning, one or another honor or prize is proposed to him,—which is the first stepping-stone on a line of promotion of which the last may be his appointment to the highest dignities in the University or in the Church. From the beginning, therefore, he has his duties in the college assigned to him, if he have earned any right to such honors. Thus, it may be his place to read the Scripture Lesson at prayers, or to read the Latin grace at the end of dinner,—the President and Vice-President of his college having done the same at the beginning.

These arrangements are not to be confounded with the services rendered by charity students. We have imitated some of these, which are so sadly described in “Tom Brown at Oxford.” But we have no arrangements which correspond at all to those of the system which in England brings graduates and undergraduates to a certain extent into a common life, mutually interested in the honor and popularity of “Our College.”

When Mr. Maurice and his friends spoke of “a college,” they meant to carry to the utmost these social and mutual views of college life. They wanted to come into closer connection with the working-men of London, and formed the Working-Men’s College that they might do so.

Page 41

They had, therefore, something in mind very different from sitting for an hour in presence of a dozen students, hearing them recite a lesson, saying then, "*Ite, missa est*," and departing all, every man to his own way. They foresaw their difficulties, undoubtedly, and they have undoubtedly met some which they did not foresee. But they meant to establish, on paper, if nowhere else, a mutual society,—a society, it is true, in which those who knew the most should teach those who knew the least, but still a society where the learners and the teachers met as members of the same fraternity, —equals so far as the laws of that society went,—and with certain common interests arising from their connection with it.

Not only does the necessity for such an undertaking appear in England as it does not here, but the difficulty of it is, on a moderate calculation, ten thousand times greater than it is here. Here, in the first place, if the "working-man" as a boy has felt any particular fancy for algebra or Greek or Latin, (and those fancies, in a fast country, are apt to develop before the boy is eighteen,) he has e'en gone to a high-school, and, if he wanted, to a "college," where, if he had not the means himself, some State Scholarship or Education Society has floated him through, and he has gained his fill of algebra, Latin, or Greek, or is on the way to do so. Or, if he have not done this,—if the appetite for these things, or for physical science, historical science, or political science, has developed itself a little later in life, he has hoarded up books for a few years, and has made himself meanwhile rather more necessary to his master than he was before, so that, when he says, some day, "I think we must arrange so that I can leave the shop earlier in the afternoon," the master has bowed submiss, and the incipient chemist, historian, or politician has worked his own sweet will. Or, thirdly, if he wanted instruction from anybody in the category we first named, who had tried the high-school and college plan, he had only to go and ask for it.

Very likely the man is his brother; at all events, he is somebody's brother: and there is no difference in their social *status* which makes any practical difficulty in their meeting together, man-fashion, to teach and to learn. But in saying all this, we speak of things which London understands no more than it does the system of society of the Chinese Empire. To begin: the thriving Oxford-Street retailer will tell you very frankly, perhaps, that he had rather his son should not learn to read, if he could only sign his name without learning. Reason: that the father has observed that his older son read so much more of bad than good, that he is left to doubt the benefits conferred by letters. I do not mean, that, practically, the London tradesman's son does not learn to read; but I do mean that that process meets this sort of prejudice. Grant, however, that he does learn to read, and has appetite

Page 42

for more; grant that he gets well through with A B C, and what follows; grant that he can read well enough to read the translations from French filth which his father is afraid of; but grant that his father and his mother, working with the blessing of his God, have kept him pure enough to steer clear of that temptation; grant that he becomes one-and-twenty, eager for algebra, for chemistry, for Latin, or for Greek. What are you going to do about it then? Then comes in the necessity which Mr. Maurice wanted to meet,—and there comes in, by the same steps, the exceeding difficulty of his experiment.

It is the difficulty of caste. I do not know how many castes there are in England; but I should think there were about thirty-seven. Any member of either of these finds it as hard to associate with a member of any other as a Sudra does to associate with a Brahmin, or a Brahmin with a Sudra. It is not that people are unwilling to condescend to the castes below them. At least, it is not that chiefly. It is, quite as much or more, that, with a good, solid, English pride, they do not care to be snobbish, and do not choose to put themselves upon people who are above them. They “know their place,” they say. And, for a race which has as good reason as the English for pride in its ability to stand firm, to “know one’s place” is a great thing to boast of. People who have travelled on the Continent have been amused to see how zealously Sir John and Lady Jane and Miss Jeanette talked together at the *table d’hôte* for a week, never by accident speaking to Mr. Williams, Mrs. Williams, and Miss Williamina, who sat next them. This is not inability to condescend, however. The Ws are as unwilling to speak to the Js. This difficulty is the same difficulty which Mr. Litchfield describes in an account of his “Five Years’ Teaching at Working-Men’s College.” “When a man first comes to our college,” he says, “he is apt to walk into his class-room in the solemn and discreet manner befitting an entry into a public institution, and generally for a night or two will persist in regarding his teacher as a severely official personage, whose dignity is not to be lightly trifled with. Now nothing, I believe, can really be done, till this notion is extinguished,—till teacher and students have got to understand each other, and have agreed to banish the foolish *mauvaise honte* which makes every Englishman shy of talking to a fellow-creature. The freer the colloquial intercourse between teacher and students, the more is learned in the time. To establish this is not easy; but harder still is the task of setting the students on a familiar footing with each other. There seems to be *some impassable obstacle to the fraternization of a dozen Londoners*, though sitting side by side, week after week, doing the same work.” The truth being, that the dozen Londoners might belong to twelve different castes. And just as in “the Rifle Movement” the clerks in the Queen’s civil service could not serve in the same battalion with architects’ clerks on the one hand, or students at law on the other,—you may have, in your algebra class, a goldsmith who is afraid of being snobbish if he speaks to a map-engraver, or a tailor who does not presume to address an opinion on Archimedes’ square to a piano-forte maker.

Page 43

But the Brahmin and the Sudra may both be converted to Christianity. In that case, though it seems very odd to both, the distinction of caste goes to the wall. And the “knot of parsons and such like,” spoken of above, having, very fortunately for the world, been born into the Christian Church, made it, as we have seen, their business to face the difficulty because of the necessity,—and the Working-Men’s College is the result of their endeavor. Mr. Maurice himself took the first step. Before the College itself was opened, he undertook a Bible-class. He invited whoever would to come. He read a portion of the Scriptures, explained its meaning as he could,—and invited all possible questioning. He testifies, in the most public way, that he got more good than he gave in the intercourse which followed. “I have learned more myself than I have imparted. Again and again the wish has come into my mind, when I have left those classes, ‘Would to God that anything I have said to them has been as useful to them as what they have said to me has been to me!’”

If now the American reader will free his mind from any comparisons with an American college, and take, instead, his notion of this “Bible-class,” we can give him some conception of what the Working-Men’s College is. For there is not a clergyman in America who has not conducted such a class, for the benefit of any who would come. And such classes are considered as mutual classes. Everybody may ask questions,—everybody may bring in any contribution he can to the conversation. Very clearly there is no reason why chemistry, algebra, Latin, or Greek may not be taught from the same motive, in classes gathered in much the same way, and with a like feeling of cooperation among those concerned. This is what the Working-Men’s College attempts. The instructors volunteer their services. They go, for the love of teaching, or to be of use, or to extend their acquaintance among their fellow-men. The students go, in great measure, doubtless, to learn. But they are encouraged to feel themselves members of a great coöperation society. So soon as possible, they are commissioned as teachers themselves, and are put in a position to take preparatory classes in the College. A majority of the finance-board consists of students. Let us now see what is the programme which grows out of such a plan. I have not at hand the schedule of exercises for the current year. I must therefore give that which was in force in the autumn of 1859, when by paying half-a-crown I became a member of the Working-Men’s College. As I make this boast, I must confess that I never took any certificate of proficiency there, nor was I ever “sent up” for any, even the humblest, degree. For the Working-Men’s College may send up students to the University of London for degrees.

Page 44

Remember, then, that to accommodate London working-hours, all the classes begin as late as seven o'clock in the evening. There are some Women's Classes in the afternoon, but they are under a wholly different management. From seven to ten every evening, Lord Thurlow's house is, so to speak, in full blast. Mr. Ruskin is the earliest professor. He comes at seven on Thursday, to teach drawing in landscape from seven till half-past ten. Work begins on other evenings and in other classes at half-past seven. Four other teachers of drawing are at work with their pupils on different evenings of the week. Monday and Thursday are the Latin days, Monday and Wednesday the Greek,—all taught by graduates of the Universities. The mathematics are Arithmetic, Algebra, Geometry in two classes, and Trigonometry. There was a class in Geology the winter I knew the College,—there had been classes in Botany and Chemistry. There were also classes in French, in German, in English Grammar, in Logic, in Political Economy, and in Vocal Music, a class on the Structure and Functions of the Human Body, and some general lectures or studies in History. There were also "practice classes," where the students worked with others more advanced than themselves on the subjects of the several exercises,—there were preparatory classes, and an adult school to teach men to read.

Now this is rather a rambling conspectus of a curriculum of study. But it teaches, I suppose, first, what the right men would volunteer to teach,—second, what the working-men wanted to learn. It is pretty clear, that, if the plan succeeds, it will bring up a body of young men who will know what is the advantage of a systematic line of study a good deal better than any of them can be expected to know at the beginning. Meanwhile here is certainly a very remarkable exhibition of instruction to any man in London for a price merely nominal. After he has once paid an entrance-fee,—half-a-crown, as I have said,—he may join any class in the College whenever he wishes, on the payment of a very insignificant additional fee. For the drawing-classes this fee is five shillings. For the courses of one hour a week it is two shillings sixpence, for those of two hours it is four shillings. The drawing-classes are a trifle more costly, because the room for drawing is kept open ready for practice-work every evening in the week. There is also open for everybody every evening a Library, and the Principal's Bible-class is open to all comers.

So much for the instruction side. Now to describe the social side, I had best perhaps give the detail of one or two of my own visits at the College. Walk into the front room on the lower floor of any house in Colonnade Row in Boston, where the entry is on the right of the house, and you see such a room as the present "Library" was when Lord Thurlow lived there. Here is the office of the College. Here I found Mr. Shorter, the Secretary, in a corner, at a little desk piled with catalogues,

Page 45

circulars, "Working-Men's College Magazines," etc. There was a coal fire in a grate, [Mem. Hot-air furnaces hardly known in England,] a plain suite of book-shelves on one or more sides of the room, and a suite of narrow tables for readers running across. There were, perhaps, a dozen young men sitting there to read. This is virtually a club-room for the College, and serves just the same purpose that the reading-room of the Christian Union or the Christian Association does with us, but that they take no newspapers. [Mem. 2d. If you are in England, you say, "They *take in* none." In America, the newspapers take in the subscribers.]

I told Mr. Shorter that I wanted to learn about the practical working of the College. He informed me very pleasantly of all that I inquired about. It proved that they published a monthly magazine, "The Working-Men's College Magazine," which was devoted to their interests. The subscription is a trifle, and I took the volume for the year. It proved, again, that I could become a member of the College by paying half-a-crown; so I paid, was admitted to the privilege of the reading-room, and sat down to read up, from the Magazine, as to the working of the College. It appeared, that, after my initiation, I might join any class, though it were not at the beginning of the term. So I boldly proposed to Mr. Shorter that I would join Mr. Ruskin's class. To tell the whole truth, I thought the experiment would be well worth making, if I only gained by it a single personal interview with the Oxford graduate, though I was doubtful about the quality of my impromptu skies.

"Says Paddy, 'There's few play
This music,—can you play?'—
Says I, 'I don't know, for I never did try.'"

I could at least have said this to the distinguished critic, if I found that his class was more advanced than I. But it proved that their session was within quarter of an hour of its end,—and with some lingering remains of native modesty, I waited for another occasion,—a morrow which never came,—before putting myself under Mr. Ruskin's volunteer tuition. But I tell the story to illustrate what might have been. Had I been legitimately a working-man in London, whatever the character of my work, I had a right to that privilege.

The Library proved to be one of those miscellaneous collections, such as all new establishments have, so long as they rely on the books which are given to them. I took down a volume of the "Reports of the Social Association,"—an institution which they have in England now, for the double purpose of giving an additional chance to philanthropists to talk, and of saving the world from the Devil by drainage, statistics, statutes, and machinery generally. But I looked over the edge of the book a good deal to see who drifted in and out. As different classes finished their work, one and another member came in,—and a few lingered to read. The aspect of activity

Page 46

and resolute purpose was the striking thing about the whole. The men were all young, —seemed at home, and interested in what they were doing. Half-past nine, or thereabouts, came, and a bell announced that all instruction was over, and that evening prayers would close the work of the day. Down-stairs I went, therefore, with those who stayed, into Lord Thurlow's wine-cellar, which, as I said, is the chapel.

The arrangements for this religious service, if I understood the matter rightly, are in the hands of Mr. Hughes, the well-known biographer of Tom Brown at Rugby and at Oxford. In an amusing speech about his connection with the College, Mr. Hughes gives an account of the way his services as a law professor were gradually dispensed with, and says, "Being a loose hand, they cast round to see what should be done with me." Then, he says, they gave him the charge of the common room of the College,—and that he considers it his business to promote, in whatever way he can, the "common life," or the communion, we may say, of the members who belong to different classes. In this view, for instance, in the tea-room, where there is always tea for any one who wants it, he presides at a social party weekly;—he had charge, when I was there, of the drill class, and, I think, at other seasons, conducted the cricket club, the gymnastics, or had an eye to them. In such a relation as that, such a man would think of the union in worship as an essential feature in his plans. And here I am tempted to say, that in a thousand things in England which seem a hopeful improvement on English lethargy, one catches sight of Dr. Arnold as being, behind all, the power that is moving. Hodson, in the East-Indian army, seems so different from anybody else, that you wonder where he came from, till it proves he was one of Arnold's boys. Price's Candle-Works, in London, and Spottiswoode's Printing-House have been before us here, in all our studies for the Christian oversight of great workshops,—and it turns out that it was Arnold who started the men who set these successes in order. The Bishop of London would not thank me for intimating that he gained something from being Arnold's successor; but I am sure Mr. Hughes would be pleased to think that Arnold's spirit still lives and works in his cellar-chapel.

The chapel is but one of the recitation-rooms,—and, like all the others, is fitted with the plainest unpainted tables and benches. Two gentlemen read the lessons and a short form of prayer, prepared, I think, by Mr. Maurice himself,—and so adapted to the place and the occasion. Thirty or more of the students were present.

I dare not say that it was a piece of Working-Men's College good-fellowship,—but, led either by that or by English hospitality, one of the gentlemen who officiated, to whom I had introduced myself with no privilege but that of a "fellow-commoner" at the College, not only showed me every courtesy there, but afterwards offered me every service which could facilitate my objects in London. This fact is worth repeating, because it shows, at least, what is possible in such an institution.

Page 47

After an introduction so cordial, it may well be supposed that I often looked in on the College of an evening. If I were in that part of the town when evening came on, I made the Library my club-room, to write a note or to waste an hour. I am sure, that, had it been in my power, I should have dropped in often,—so pleasant was it to watch the modest work of the place, and the energy of the crowded rooms,—and so new to me the aspects of English life it gave. I felt quite sure that the College was gaining ground, on the whole. I can easily understand that some classes drag,—perhaps some studies, which the managers would be most glad to see successful. But, on the whole, there seems spirit and energy,—and of course success.

My travelling companion, Chiron, is fond of twitting me as to the success of one of the “social meetings” to which I dragged him, promising to show him something of working-men’s life. We arrived too early. But the Secretary told us that the garden was lighted up for drill, and that the working-men’s battalion was drilling there. It was under the charge of Sergeant Reed, a medal soldier from the Crimea. At that time England was in one of her periodical fits of expecting an invasion. For some reason they will not call on every able-bodied man to serve in a militia;—I thought because they were afraid to arm all their people,—though no Englishman so explained it to me. They did, however, call for volunteers from those classes of society which could afford to buy uniforms and obtain “practice-grounds three hundred yards in length.” This included, I should say, about eleven of the thirty-seven castes of English society. It intentionally left out those beneath,—as it did all Ireland. Mr. Hughes, however, seized on it as an admirable chance for his College,—its common feeling, its gymnastics,—and many other “good things,” looking down the future. In general, the drills which were going on all over England were sad things to me. This idea of staking guineas against *sous*, when the contest with Napoleon did come,—staking an English judge, for instance, with his rifle, against some wretched conscript whom Napoleon had been drilling thoroughly, with his, seemed and seems to me wretched policy. But—if it were to be done this way—of course the best thing possible was to work as widely as you could in getting your recruits; and,—if England were too conservative to say, “We are twenty-eight millions, one-fifth fighting men,”—too conservative to put rifles or muskets into the hands of those five or six million fighters,—the next best thing was to rank as many as you could in your handful of upper-class riflemen. However, I offered my advice liberally to all comers, and explained that at home I was a soldier when the Government wanted me,—was registered somewhere,—and could be marched to San Juan, about which General Harney was vamping just then, whenever the authorities chose. So it was that I and Chiron stood superior to see Sergeant Reed drill thirty-nine working-men. Mr. Hughes was on the terrace, teaching an awkward squad their facings.

Page 48

Sergeant Reed paraded his men,—and wanted one or two more. He came and asked Mr. Hughes for them,—and he in turn told us very civilly, that, if “we knew our facings,” we might fall in. Alas for the theory of the *Landsturm*! Alas for the fame of the Massachusetts militia! Here are two of the “one hundred and fifty-two thousand eight hundred and fifty non-commissioned officers, musicians, artificers, and privates” whom Massachusetts that year registered at Washington,—two soldiers for whom somebody, somewhere, has two cartridge-boxes, two muskets, two shoulder-straps, and the rest;—here is an opportunity for them to show the gentlemen of a foreign service how much better we know our facings than they theirs,—and, alas, the representative two do not know their facings at all! We declined the invitation as courteously as it was offered. Perhaps we thus escaped a prosecution under the Act of 1819, when we came home,—for having entered the service of a foreign power. Certainly we avoided the guilt of felony, in England; for it is felony for an alien to take any station of trust or honor under the Queen,—and when Mr. Bates and Louis Napoleon were sworn in as special constables on the Chartists’ day, they might both have been tried for felony on the information of Fergus O’Connor, and sent to some Old Bailey or other. None the less did we regret our ignorance of the facings, and, after a few minutes, sadly leave the field of glory.

My last visit to the Working-Men’s College was to attend one of Mr. Maurice’s Sunday-evening classes, and this was the only occasion when I ever appeared as a student. It was held at nine in the evening,—out of the way, therefore, of any Church-service. There gathered nearly twenty young men, who seemed in most instances to be personally strangers to each other. Mr. Maurice is so far an historical person that I have a right, I believe, to describe his appearance. He must be about fifty years old now. He looks as if he had done more than fifty years’ worth of work,—and yet does not look older than that, on the whole. His hair is growing white; his face shows traces of experience of more sorts than one, but is very gentle and winning in its expression, both in his welcome, and in the vivid conversation which is called his lecture. He sat at a large table, and we gathered around it with our Testaments and note-books. The subject was the fourth chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews,—the conversation turning mostly, of course, on the “rest” which the people of God enter into. This is not the place for a report of the exposition, at once completely devout and completely transcendental, by which this distinguished theologian lighted up this passage for that cluster of young men. But I may say something of the manner of one so well known and so widely honored among a “present posterity” in America, for his works. He read the chapter through,—with a running commentary at first,—blocking

Page 49

out, as it were, his ground notion of it. This was the first *ebauche* of his criticism; but you felt after its details without quite finding them. In a word, the impression was precisely the uneasy impression you feel after the first reading of one of his sermons or lectures,—that there is a very grand general conception, but that you do not see how it is going to “fay in” in its respective parts. One of the students intimated some such doubt regarding some of the opening verses,—and there at once appeared enough to show how frank was the relation, in that class at least, between the teacher and the pupils. Then began the real work and the real joy of the evening. Then on the background he had washed in before he began to put in his middle-distance, and at last his foreground, and, last of all, to light up the whole by a set of flashes, which he had reserved, unconsciously, to the close. He dropped his forehead on his hand, worked it nervously with his fingers, as if he were resolved that what was within should serve him, went over the whole chapter in much more detail a second time, held us all charged with his electricity, so that we threw in this, that, or another question or difficulty,—till he fell back yet a third time, and again went through it, weaving the whole together, and making part illustrate part under the light of the comment and illumination which it had received before,—and so, when we read it with him for the fourth and last time, it was no longer a string of beads,—a set of separate verses,—Jewish, antiquated, and fragmentary,—but one vivid illustration of the “peace which passeth all understanding” into which the Christian man may enter.

With this fortunate illustration and exposition of the worth and work of the Working-Men’s College my connection with it closed. It seems to me a beautiful monument of the love and energy of its founder. Perhaps we are all best known through our friends, or, as the proverb says, “by the company we keep.” Let the reader know Mr. Maurice, then, by remembering that he is the godfather of Tennyson’s son,—

“Come, when no graver cares annoy,
Godfather, come and see your boy,”—

that Charles Kingsley has a Frederic Maurice among his children,—and that Thomas Hughes has a Maurice also. The last was lost, untimely, from this world, in bathing in the Thames. The magnetism of such a man has united the group of workers who have formed the Working-Men’s College. We need not wonder that with such a spirit it succeeds.

EMANCIPATION IN RUSSIA.

Page 50

Two great nations are peculiarly entitled to be considered modern in their general character, though each is living under ancient institutions. They are the *United States* and *Russia*. Neither of these nations is a century old, regarded as a power that largely affects affairs by its action, and into the composition of each there enters a great variety of elements. The United States may be said to date from 1761, just one hundred years ago, when the American debate began on the question of granting Writs of Assistance to the revenue-officers of the crown. The struggle between England and America was then commenced in the chief court of the Colony of Massachusetts Bay, and the Declaration of Independence was but the logical conclusion of the argument of James Otis; but that conclusion would not have established anything, had it not been confirmed by the inexorable logic of cannon. The last resort of kings was then on the side of the people, and gave them the victory. The fifteen years that passed between the time when James Otis spoke in Boston and the time when John Adams spoke in Philadelphia belong properly to our national history, and should be so regarded. The grandson and biographer of John Adams says that Mr. Adams “was attending the court as a member of the bar, and heard, with enthusiastic admiration, the argument of Otis, the effect of which was to place him at the head of that race of orators, statesmen, and patriots, by whose exertions the Revolution of American Independence was achieved. This cause was unquestionably the incipient struggle for that independence. It was to Mr. Adams like the oath of Hamilcar administered to Hannibal. It is doubtful whether Otis himself, or any person of his auditory, perceived or imagined the consequences which were to flow from the principles developed in that argument. For although, in substance, it was nothing more than the question upon the legality of general warrants, —a question by which, when afterward raised in England, in Wilkes’s case, Lord Camden himself was taken by surprise, and gave at first an incorrect decision,—yet, in the hands of James Otis, this question involved the whole system of the relations of authority and subjection between the British government and their colonies in America. It involved the principles of the British Constitution, and the whole theory of the social compact and the natural rights of mankind.”

In the summer of 1762, about seventeen months after Otis had made his argument, the existence of modern Russia began. Catharine II. then commenced her wonderful reign, having dethroned and murdered her husband, Peter III., the last of the sovereigns of Russia who could make any pretensions to possession of the blood of the Romanoffs. A minor German princess, who originally had no more prospect of becoming Empress-Regnant of Russia than she had of becoming Queen-Regnant of France, Sophia-Augusta of Anhalt-Zerbst was elevated to the throne of the Czars on the 9th

Page 51

of July, 1762; and a week later her miserable husband learned how true was the Italian dogma, that the distance between the prisons of princes and their graves is but short. Catharine II. founded a new dynasty in Russia, and gave to that country the peculiar character which it has ever since borne, and which has enabled it on more than one occasion to decide the fate of Europe, and therefore of the world. Important as were the labors of Peter the Great, it does not appear to admit of a doubt that their force was wellnigh spent when Peter III. ascended the throne; and his conduct indicated the triumph of the old Russian party and policy, as the necessary consequence of his violent feeling in behalf of German influences, ideas, and practices. The Czarina, like those Romans who became more German than the Germans themselves, affected to be fanatically Russian in her sentiments and purposes, and so acquired the power to Europeanize the policy of her empire. She it was who definitely placed the face of Russia to the West, and prepared the way for the entrance of Russian armies into Italy and France, and for the partition of Poland, the ultimate effect of which promises to be the reunion of that country under the sceptre of the Czar. It was the seizure of so much of Poland by Russia that fixed the latter's international character; and it was Catharine II. who destroyed Poland, and added so much of its territory to the dominions of the Czars. After the first partition had been effected, it was no longer in Russia's power to refrain from taking a leading part in European politics; and when her grandson, in 1814, was on the point of making war on England, France, and Austria, rather than abandon the new Polish spoil which he had torn from Napoleon I., he was but carrying out the great policy of the Great Catharine. If we look into the political literature of the last century, we shall find that Peter I.'s action had very little effect in the way of increasing the influence of Russia abroad. His eccentric conduct caused him to be looked upon as a sort of royal wild man of the woods, rather than as a great reformer whose aim it was to elevate his country to an equality with kingdoms that had become old while Russia was ruled by barbarians of the remote East. He was "a self-made man" on a throne, and displayed all the oddities and want of breeding that usually mark the demeanor of persons whose youth has not had the advantages that proceed from good examples and regular instruction. Of the courtly graces, and of those accomplishments which are most valued in courts, he had as many as belong to an ill-conditioned baboon. A railway-car on a cattle-train does not require more cleaning, at the end of a long journey, than did a room in a palace after it had been occupied by Peter and his clever spouse. Some of his best-authenticated acts could not be paralleled outside of a piggery. The Prussian court, one hundred and sixty years since, was not a very nice place, and its members were by no means

Page 52

remarkable for refinement; but they were shocked by the proceedings of the Czar and the Czarina, some of which greatly resembled those which are not uncommon in a very wild “wilderness of monkeys.” The last of Peter’s descendants who reigned *and ruled* was his daughter Elizabeth, who died in 1761, and who was a most admirable representative of her admirable parents. Neither the manners nor the morals of the Russian court and the Russian empire had improved during the twenty years that she governed; and as to policy in government, she had none, and apparently she was incapable of comprehending a political principle. Had her reign been followed by that of some Russian prince of kindred character as well as of kindred blood, and had that reign extended to twenty years’ time, Russia would have fallen back to the position she had held in 1680, and never could have become a European power. Fortunately or unfortunately,—who shall as yet undertake to decide which, considering as well European interests as Russian interests?—the reign of Peter III. was too short to be worth historical counting, and Elizabeth’s real successor was a foreigner, who not only was capable of comprehending Peter the Great’s ideas and purpose, but who had the advantage of understanding that world the civilization and vices of which Peter had sought to engraft on the Russian stock. The grand barbarian himself never could understand more than one-half of the work to which he devoted his life, as there was nothing in his nature to which Occidental thought could firmly fasten itself. He knew little of that the effects of which he so much admired. His mind was essentially Oriental in its cast, and the creation of his Northern capital was a piece of work that might have been done by some Eastern despot; and in the preceding century something like it had been done by Shah Jehan, when he created the new city of Delhi. In no European country could such an undertaking have been attempted. It pleased Catharine II., in after-days, to say of Peter, that “he introduced European manners and European costumes amongst a European people”; but this was only a piece of flattery to her subjects, whom she did so much to Europeanize by making them believe that they were of Europe, and were destined to rule that continent. She it was who did what Peter planned, and by making use of Russians as her agents. Her statesmen, her generals, and her “favorites” were Russians; and it was after her character and purposes became known that the rulers of Western Europe were forced to the conclusion that a change of policy was inevitable. But for the occurrence of the French Revolution, that Anglo-French Alliance which has been regarded as one of the prodigies of our prodigy-creating age would have been anticipated by more than sixty years. By destroying Poland and humiliating Turkey, Catharine forever settled the character of the Russian Empire; and her successors were enabled to solidify her work in consequence of

Page 53

the course which events took after the overthrow of the old French monarchy. Russian support was highly bidden for by both those parties in Europe which were headed respectively by France and by England; and it is difficult to decide from which Russia most profited in those days, the friendship of England or the enmity of France. One thing was sufficiently clear,—and that was, that, when the war had been decided in favor of the reactionists, Russia was the greatest power in the world. In the autumn of 1815, a Russian army one hundred and sixty thousand strong was reviewed near Paris, a spectacle that must have caused the sovereigns and statesmen of the West to have some doubts as to the wisdom of their course in paying so very high a price for the overthrow of Napoleon. It was certain that the genie had broken from his confinement, and that, while he towered to the skies, his shadow lay upon the world. The hegemony which Russia held for almost forty years after that date justified the fears which then were expressed by reflecting men. It only remained to be seen whether the Russian sovereigns, proceeding in the spirit that had moved Peter and Catharine, would take those measures by which alone a *Russian People* could be formed; and to that end, the abolition of serfdom was absolutely necessary: the masses of their subjects, the very population from which their victorious armies were conscribed, being in a certain sense slaves, a state of things that had no parallel in the condition of any European country.[A]

[Footnote A: At what precise time Russia's policy began to influence the action of the European powers it would not be easy to say. Unquestionably, Peter I.'s conduct was not without its effect, and his triumph over Charles XII. makes itself felt even to this day, and it ever will be felt. "Pultowa's day" was one of the grand field-days of history. Sweden had obtained a high place in Europe, in consequence of the grand part she played in the Thirty Years' War, to which contest she contributed the greatest generals, the ablest statesmen, and the best soldiers; and the successes of Charles XII. in the first half of his reign promised to increase the power of that country, which had become great under the rule and direction of Gustavus Adolphus and Oxenstierna. This fair promise was lost with the Battle of Pultowa; and a country that might have successfully resisted Russia, and which, had its greatness continued, could have protected Poland,—if, indeed, Poland could have been threatened, had Russia been unsuccessful at Pultowa,—was thrown into the list of third-rate nations. Poland was virtually given up to Russia through the defeat of Charles XII., just as, a century later, she failed of revival through the defeat of Napoleon I. in his Russian expedition. But the effect of Sweden's defeat was not fully seen until many years after its occurrence. Prussia became alarmed at the progress of Russia at an early day. The War of the Polish Succession was decided

Page 54

by Russian intervention, in 1733. In 1741 Maria Theresa relied on Russia, and in 1746 Russia and the Empress of Germany formed a defensive alliance. The *Cotillon* Coalition of the Seven Years' War, formed for the destruction of Frederic II., and the parties to which were the Czarina Elizabeth, Maria Theresa, and Madame de Pompadour,—a drunkard, a prude, and a harlot,—brought Russia famously forward in Europe. In the Eighty-Seventh Letter of Goldsmith's *Citizen of the World*, published a century ago, are some very just and discriminating remarks on "the folly of the Western parts of Europe in employing the Russians to fight their battles," which show that their author was far in advance of his time, and that he foresaw the growth of Russia in importance before she had seized upon Poland. In Catharine II.'s time, the Russian Empire was the object of much adulation from Western envoys, and the English sought to obtain the assistance of the barbarians in the American War, but with not such success as they desired, though they managed to keep our envoy from the court, and to make Russia unfriendly to us. Our diplomatic relations with Russia did not begin until a generation after the Declaration of Independence.]

Thus the United States and Russia began their careers at the same time, as nations destined to have influence in the ordering of Western life. They were then, as they are now, very unlike to each other. In one respect only was there any resemblance between them: In this country there were some myriads of slaves, and in Russia there were many millions of serfs. Now who, of all the sagacious, far-sighted men then living, could have ventured to predict that at the end of one hundred years the American nation that was so soon to be should be engaged in a civil contest having for its object, on the part of those who began it, the perpetuation and extension of slavery, while Russia should be threatened with such a contest because her government, an autocracy, had abolished serfdom? Many years earlier, Berkeley had predicted that Time's last and noblest offspring would be the nation that was growing up in North America; and when he died, in 1753, he would not have admitted that slavery was an institution which his favorite land could hug to its bosom, or that America would be less benevolent than that semi-barbarous empire which was rising in the East,—an empire, to use his own thought, which Europe was breeding in her decay. Franklin was then at the height of his fame as a philosopher, and his merits as a statesman were beginning to be acknowledged; but, wise as he was, he would have smiled, had there been a prophet capable of telling him the exact truth as to the future of America. Probably there was not a person then on earth who could have supposed that that would be which was written in the Book of Fate. That freedom should come to a people from a despot's throne was almost as hard to understand as that the

Page 55

rankest kind of despotism should rise up from among a people the most boastful of their liberty that ever existed. There are, unhappily, but too many instances of free nations that have behaved oppressively. The first African slaves that were brought into the territory of the American nation came under the flag of a people who had most heroically struggled for their rights, and the recollection of whose efforts has been revived by the brilliant labors of the most accomplished of living American historians. The Greeks, who had so much to say about their own liberty, believed that they had the right to enslave all other men; and the Romans, who sometimes talked as if they had a Fourth of July of their own, assumed that it was in the power of society to enslave any race whose services its members required. The slaves of free peoples have generally fared worse than the slaves of men themselves despotically governed. Thus there is nothing so very strange in the conduct of those Americans who, concerned for their "right" to trade in black humanity, and to live on the sweat of black humanity's brows. That which is strange in the condition of the world is the contrast which is furnished to the action of our Southern population by the action of the rulers of Russia. Since American democrats have endeavored to show that no such contrast exists,—that between the enslavement of black men and the granting of freedom to white men there is a close resemblance,—and that the two proceedings are one in fact, how much soever they may differ in name; that it is not because he is an enemy of slavery, as it is here understood, that the Czar has become an emancipationist, but because he is hostile to the slavery of white men,—that, were the Russian serfs as dark as American slaves, his heart would have remained as hard toward them as that of Pharaoh toward the Israelites when the plague-pressure was temporarily removed from his people,—that he would as soon have thought of washing the Ethiopian white with his own imperial hands as of conferring freedom upon this race. Such is the theory of those of our democrats who would still maintain their regard for the Czar and their worship of Czarism. Alexander has not, they aver, been so bad as the Abolitionists have drawn him. Like another illustrious personage, he is not half so black as he is painted. Nay, he is not black at all. He worships the white theory, and might run for the Montgomery Congress in South Carolina without any danger of being numbered among the victims of Lynch-law. Other democrats are not so well disposed toward the Czar, their feelings respecting him having changed as completely as did those of certain earlier democrats in regard to Mr. O'Connell, when the great Irishman denounced slavery in America. It is a sore subject with our pro-slavery people, this faithlessness of Russia to the cause of human oppression. How they sympathized with her in the war with the Western powers, and prophesied

Page 56

the defeat of the Allies in the Crimea, is well remembered; but when the new Czar announced his purpose to abolish serfdom, they, as Lord Castlereagh would have said, “turned their backs upon themselves,” and could see no good in the great Northern Empire. Russia as the great revolution-queller, reading the Riot Act to the liberals of Europe, and sending one hundred and fifty thousand men to “crush out” the nationality of Hungary, and to revivify the power of Austria, was to them an object of reverence; but Russia the liberator of serfs, and the backer of France in the Italian War, became an object of hate and fear. Nicholas might have patronized our Secessionists, for he was partial to rebels who supported his opinions; but his son can have no sympathy with men whose every act is a condemnation of those principles which govern his conduct as a Russian ruler,—though in his bearing toward Poland and others of the conquered portions of his empire he may prove himself no more lenient than Mr. Jefferson Davis would toward a Northern State that had declared itself independent of Southern supremacy, could he “subdue” it.

It would, however, be most unjust so to speak of Russian serfdom as to convey the impression that it ever was quite so bad as American slavery is. It is the peculiarity of American slavery, that it has no redeeming features. Long before it had become so odious as we see it, and before its existence was found incompatible with the peaceful prevalence of a constitutional system of government, its character was emphatically summed up in a few words by a great man, who called it “the sum of all villainies.” Time has not improved its character, but has made the institution worse, by extending the effect of its operations. The political character which American slavery has had ever since the formation of the Constitution has not only stood in the way of every emancipation project, but it has made slaveholders, and men who have sought political preferment through working on the prejudices of slaveholders, supporters of the institution on grounds that have had no existence in other countries; and the contest in which this country is now involved is the natural effect of the more rapid growth of the Free States in everything that leads to political power in modern times. Had the Slave States in 1860 been found relatively as strong as they were in 1840, the Secession movement could not have occurred; for most of the men who lead in it would have preferred to rule the United States, and would have cared little for the defeat of any political party, confident as they would have been in their capacity to control all American parties. As slavery is the foundation of political power in this country, its friends cannot abandon their ideas without abdicating their position. Hence the fierceness with which they have put forth, and advocated with all their strength, opinions that never were held by any other class of man-owners, and which would have been scouted in Barbary even

Page 57

in those days when religious animosity added additional venom to the feelings of the Mussulmans toward their Christian captives, and when Spain and Italy were Africa's Africa. The slave population of the United States are forbidden to hope. They form a doomed race, the physical peculiarities of which are forever to keep them out of the list of the elect. They are slaves, they and their ancestors always have been slaves, and they and their descendants always must be slaves. Such is the Southern theory, and the practice under it does that theory no violence. In Russia the condition of the enslaved has never been so bad as this, nor anything like it. Between the slave and the serf the difference has been almost as great as that between the serf and the free citizen.

Nothing certain is known as to the origin of Russian serfage. Able men have found the institution existing in very early times; and other men, of not less ability, and well acquainted with Russian history, are confident that it is a modern institution. Count Gurowski, whose authority on such a point he ought to be a very bold man to question, says,—“In Russia, slavery dates, with the utmost probability, since the introduction of the Northmen, originating with prisoners of war, and being established over conquered tribes of no Slavic descent. This was done when Rurik and his successors descended the Dwina, the Dnieper, and established there new dominions. In the course of time, the conquerors cleared the forests, established villages and cities. As, in other feudal countries, the tower, the *Schloss*, was outside of the village or of the borough,—so was in Russia the *dwor* or manor, where the conqueror or master dwelt,—and from which was derived his name of *dworianin*. That the genuine Russian of that time, whatever may have been his social position, was free in his village, is beyond doubt,—as, according to old records, the boroughs and villages, dependencies of the manor, were settled principally with prisoners of war and the conquered population. It was during the centuries of the Tartar dominion that the people, the peasantry, became nailed to the soil, and deprived of the right of freely changing their domicile. Then successively every peasant, that is, every agriculturist tilling the soil with his own hands, became enslaved. Only in estates owned by monasteries and convents, which were very numerous and generally very rich, slavery being judged to be opposed to Christian doctrine, it did not take root at once. Generally, monks were reluctant to the utmost, and even directly opposed to the sale of men in the markets, and the dependants of a monastery were never sold in such a manner.” The common view is, that Borys Gudenoff, who reigned at the beginning of the seventeenth century, established serfage age in Russia; but though the exact character of his legislation is yet in dispute, it is obvious that no Czar, and least of all one situated as was

Page 58

Borys, could have enslaved a people. His legislation is involved in as much doubt as for a long time were the Sempronian Laws of Rome. If we could believe that he instituted the system of serfage, or seriously strengthened it, we should find that Russian slavery came into existence but a few years before American slavery; but such a “coincidence” cannot be rigidly insisted upon. It would, however, we think, be difficult to show that the condition of the Russian laboring classes was not made worse by the action of the usurper.

Peter the Great was so affected by the circumstance that men and women and children could be sold like cattle, as American slaves now are, that he sought to put a stop to the infamous traffic, but without success. Catharine II. was a philosopher, and a patron of that eighteenth-century philosophy which so largely favored human rights, and she regretted the existence of serfage; but, in spite of this regret, and of some sentimental efforts toward emancipation, she strengthened the system of slavery under which so great a majority of her subjects lived. She gave peasants to her “favorites,” and to others whom she wished to reward or to bribe. The brothers Orloff are said to have received forty-five thousand peasants from her, being in part payment for what was done by their family in setting up the new Russian dynasty founded by the German princess. Potemkin received myriads of peasants. Some outrageous abuses were practised by wealthy landholders, in consequence of the Czarina having proclaimed that the laborers in Little Russia should belong to the soil on which they were at that date employed. Thousands of persons were entrapped into serfdom through a measure which the sovereign had intended should lessen the evils of that institution. Catharine’s authority was never but once seriously disputed at home, and that was by the rebellion of Pugatscheff, which is sometimes spoken of as an outbreak against serfdom, which it was not in any proper sense, though the abuses of the owners of serfs may have contributed to swell the ranks of the pretender,—Pugatscheff calling himself Peter III. The Czar Paul would not allow serfs to be sold apart from the soil to which they belonged. It is a curious incident, that, when Paul restored Kosciusko to liberty, he offered to give him a number of Russian peasants. The Polish patriot had no hesitation in refusing to accept the Emperor’s offer, for which, in these times, there are Americans who think he was a fool; but in 1797 certain lights had not been vouchsafed to the American mind, that have since led some of our countrymen to become champions of the cause of darkness.

Page 59

Alexander, whose reign began in 1801, was moved by a sincere desire to get rid of serfdom. Schnitzler says that he “solemnly declared that he would not endure the habit of making grants of peasants, a practice hitherto common with the autocrats, and forbade the announcement in public papers of the sales of human beings,”—and that “he permitted his nobles to sell to their serfs, together with their personal liberty, portions of land, which should thus become the *bona fide* property of the serf purchaser. This was a most important act; for Alexander thus laid the basis of a class of free cultivators.” A public man having requested an estate with its serfs as hereditary possessions, the Czar replied as follows:—“The peasants of Russia are for the most part *slaves*. I need not expatiate upon the degradation or the misfortune of such a condition. Accordingly, I have made a vow not to augment the number; and to this end I have laid down the principle, that I will not give away peasants as property.” The Czar was determined to go farther than this. Not only would he not increase the number of the serfs, but he would lessen their number. The serfs of Esthonia were first favored, their emancipation beginning in 1802, and being completed in 1816, the year in which Alexander may be regarded as having been at the height of his greatness, for he had completed the overthrow of Napoleon, and had seen France saved from partition through his influence and exertions. The Courland serfs were emancipated in 1817. Two years later, the nobles of Livonia formed a plan of emancipation in their country, and when they submitted it to the Czar, his answer was,—“I am delighted to see that the nobility of Livonia have fulfilled my expectations. You have set an example that ought to be imitated. You have acted in the spirit of our age, and have felt that liberal principles alone can form the basis of the people’s happiness.” So long as Alexander remained true to liberal principles himself, there was some hope that he might abolish serfdom throughout his dominions. He abhorred the “peculiar institution” of his empire with all the force of a mind that certainly was generous, and which had a strong bias in the direction of justice. Once he made a solemn religious vow that he would abolish it. It is probable that he would have made an attempt at complete emancipation, if the circumstances of his time and his country had enabled him to concentrate his thoughts and his labors upon domestic affairs. Unhappily for Russia, and for the Czar’s fame, he was soon drawn into the European vortex, and became one of the principal actors in the grand drama of that age, so that Russian interests were sacrificed to ambition, to the love of military glory, and to the Czar’s desire to become Don Quixote with an imperial crown and sceptre. He wished to reconstruct the map of Europe, which had been so terribly deranged by those terrible map-destroyers and map-makers, the

Page 60

French republicans. Catharine II. had had the sense to keep out of the war that had been waged against France, though no person in Europe—not even George III. himself—hated the revolutionists more intensely. She wished to see them subdued, but she preferred that the work of subjugation should be done by others, so that she might be at liberty to pursue her designs against Poland and Turkey and Persia. The destruction of Poland she completed, but she was called away before she could conquer the followers of Omar and of Ali. Paul was a party to the second coalition against France, and his armies tore Italy from its conquerors, and but for the stupidity of Austria there might have been a Russian restoration of the Bourbons in 1709. Alexander resumed the policy which his father had adopted only to discard, and though at one period of his reign he appeared well inclined to Napoleon, there never was any sincerity in the alliance between the two masters of so many millions. The Czar was easily induced to favor the strange scheme of an Italian adventurer for the rehabilitation of Europe, which had been adopted by his friend and counsellor, the Prince Czartoryski, and which ultimately furnished the basis, and many of the details, of that pacification which was effected in 1815. We have seen the treaties of that memorable year torn to tatters by Napoleon III., but the adoption of Piatoli's project by Alexander affected the last generation as intimately as the French Emperor's conduct has affected the men of to-day. It led the Czar away from his original purpose, and converted him, from a benevolent ruler, into a harsh, suspicious, unfeeling despot. There could be nothing done for Russian serfs while their sovereign was crusading it for the benefit of the Bourbons in particular and of legitimacy in general. "God is in heaven, and the Czar is afar off!" words once common with the suffering serfs, were of peculiar force when the Czar, who believed himself to be the chosen instrument of Heaven, was at Paris or Vienna, laboring for the settlement of Europe according to ideas adopted in the early years of his reign. Napoleonism and Liberalism were the same thing in the mind of Alexander, and he finally came to regard serfdom itself as something that should not be touched. It was a stone in that social edifice which he was determined to maintain at all hazards. The plan of emancipation had worked well in the outlying Baltic provinces, where there were few or no Russians, but he discouraged its application to other portions of his dominions. Some of his greatest nobles were anxious to take the lead as emancipationists, but he would not allow them to proceed in the only way that promised success, and so the bondage system was continued with the approbation of the Czar. In his last years, Alexander, though still quite a young man,—he was but forty-eight when he died,—was the most determined enemy of liberty in Europe or Asia.

Page 61

The Emperor Nicholas began his remarkable reign with the desire strong in his mind to emancipate the serfs,—or, if that be too sweeping an expression, so to improve their condition as to render their emancipation by his successors a comparatively easy proceeding. Much of his legislation shows this, and that he was aware that the time must come when the serfs could no longer be deprived of their freedom. Such was the effect of his conduct, however, that all that he did in behalf of the serfs was attributed to a desire on his part to create ill-feeling between the nobility and the peasants. Then he was so thoroughly arbitrary in his disposition, that he often neutralized the good he did by his manner of doing it. But that which mainly prevented him from doing much for his people was his determination to maintain the position which Russia had acquired in Europe, and to maintain it, too, in the interest of despotism, “pure and simple.” A succession of events caused the Czar’s attention to be drawn to foreign affairs. The French Revolution of 1830, the Polish Revolution of the same year, the troubles in Germany, the Reform contest in England, the change in the order of the Spanish succession, the outbreaks in Italy,—these things, and others of a similar character, all of which were protests against that European system which Russia had established and still favored, compelled Nicholas to look abroad, and to neglect, measurably, domestic government. At a later period, he was one of the parties to that combination of great powers which threatened France with a renewal of those invasions from which she had suffered so much in 1814 and 1815. Turkey was the source of perpetual trouble to the Czar; and his eyes were frequently drawn to India, where one of his envoys half threatened an English minister that the troops of their two countries might meet, and was curtly answered by the minister that he cared not how soon the interview should begin. The extinction of Cracow served to show how close was the watch which the Czar kept upon the West, and that he was ready to crush even the smallest of those countries in which the spirit of liberty should show itself. Had San Marino lain within his reach, he would have been induced neither by its weakness nor its age to spare it. The struggle with the Circassians was long, vexatious, and costly. Finally, the Revolutions of 1848, leading, as they did, to the invasion of Hungary, in the first place, and then to the war with the Western Powers, operated to prejudice the Imperial mind against every form of freedom, and to provide too much occupation for the Emperor and his ministers to permit them to labor with care and effect in behalf of the oppressed serfs at home. It would have been a strange spectacle, had the man who was trampling down the Hungarians employed his leisure in raising his own serfs from the dust.

Page 62

The Emperor Nicholas died in March, 1855, having lived long enough after the beginning of that great war which he had so rashly provoked to see his armies everywhere beaten and his fleets everywhere blockaded, while the Russian leadership of Europe was struck down at a blow, never to be resumed, unless there should be a radical change effected in Russian institutions. Nearly thirty years of the most arrogant rule ever known to the world came to an end in a moment, because the Emperor took "a slight cold." A breath of the Northern winter served to stop the breath of the Emperor of the North. He slept with his fathers, and his son, Alexander II., reigned in his stead. The new Czar, who has the reputation of being a much milder man than his father, and to bear considerable resemblance to his uncle, as that uncle was in his best days, was soon reported to be an emancipationist; but as the same reports had prevailed respecting both Alexander I. and Nicholas, the world gave little heed to what was said on the subject. It was not until he had reigned for almost two years that something definite was done in relation to it by the Czar; and then as many obstacles were thrown in the way of the reform as would have served to disgust any man who had not been in downright earnest. The Czar then took matters into his own hands, so far as that was possible, and the work was pushed forward with considerable speed. There was much discussion, and there were many disappointments, in the course of the business; but through all the Czar held to his determination, with a pertinacity that was not expected of him, and which leaves the impression that his character has not been properly understood. The history of the undertaking is yet to be written, but, from what little is known of its details, we should say that Alexander II. experienced more opposition, and that of an extremely disagreeable character, from the nobility, than Alexander I. would have encountered from the nobles of his time, had he resolved upon emancipation in good faith, and adhered to his resolution, as his nephew has done. Persons who suppose that a Russian Czar cannot be drowned, because belonging to that select class who are born to be strangled, would have it that the question would be settled by an application of the bowstring, or the sash of some guardsman, to the Imperial throat; and so a successful palace revolution lead to the postponement of the plan of emancipation for another quarter of a century. But Russian morality is of a much higher character than it was, and the members of the reigning house are models of decorum, and know how to defer to opinion. The nobles, too, are men of a very different stamp from their predecessors of 1762 and 1801. The Russian polity is no longer a despotism tempered by the cord. Fighting the good fight with something of a Puritanical perseverance, the Czar was enabled to triumph over all opposition to his preliminary project; and on the 3d of March, (N.S.,) 1861, the "Imperial Manifesto" emancipating the serfs was published.

Page 63

In the opening paragraph of this document, the Autocrat declares, that, on ascending the throne, he took a vow in his innermost heart so to respond to the mission which was intrusted to him as to surround with his affection and his Imperial solicitude all his faithful subjects of every rank and of every condition, from the warrior who nobly bears arms for the defence of the country to the humble artisan devoted to the works of industry,—from the official in the career of the high offices of the State to the laborer whose plough furrows the soil; and then proceeds to say,—“In considering the various classes and conditions of which the State is composed, we came to the conviction that the legislation of the empire, having wisely provided for the organization of the upper and middle classes, and having defined with precision their obligations, their rights, and their privileges, has not attained the same degree of efficiency as regards the peasants attached to the soil, thus designated because either from ancient laws or from custom they have been hereditarily subjected to the authority of the proprietors, on whom it was incumbent at the same time to provide for their welfare. The rights of the proprietors have been hitherto very extended and very imperfectly defined by the law, which has been supplied by tradition, custom, and the good pleasure of the proprietors. In the most favorable cases this state of things has established patriarchal relations founded upon a solicitude sincerely equitable and benevolent on the part of the proprietors, and on an affectionate submission on the part of the peasants; but in proportion as the simplicity of morals diminished, as the diversity of the mutual relations became complicated, as the paternal character of the relations between the proprietors and the peasants became weakened, and, moreover, as the seigneurial authority fell sometimes into hands exclusively occupied with their personal interests, those bonds of mutual good-will slackened, and a wide opening was made for an arbitrary sway which weighed upon the peasants, was unfavorable to their welfare, and made them indifferent to all progress under the conditions of their existence. These facts had already attracted the notice of our predecessors of glorious memory, and they had taken measures for improving the condition of the peasants; but among those measures some were not stringent enough, insomuch as they remained subordinate to the spontaneous initiative of such proprietors as showed themselves animated with liberal intentions; and others, called forth by peculiar circumstances, have been restricted to certain localities, or simply adopted as an experiment. It was thus that Alexander I. published the regulation for the free cultivators, and that the late Emperor Nicholas, our beloved father, promulgated that one which concerns the peasants bound by contract. ... We thus came to the conviction that the work of a serious improvement of the condition of the peasants was a sacred inheritance bequeathed to us by our ancestors,—a mission which, in the course of events, Divine Providence called upon us to fulfil.”

Page 64

It will be observed that the Czar goes no farther back than the beginning of the reign of his uncle, sixty years since, in speaking of the measures that have been taken for the improvement of the peasants' condition; and he names only his father and his uncle as reforming Emperors, though his language is such as to warrant the belief that all his ancestors, who had reigned, had been friends of the serf, and anxious to promote their welfare. But Alexander II. is too well acquainted with the history of his family to venture to speak of the actions of either the Great Peter or the Grand Catharine toward the peasants. Gurowski tells us of the effect of one of Peter's acts in very plain language. "In 1718," he says, "Peter the Great ordered a general census to be taken all over the empire. The census officials, most probably through thoughtlessness or caprice, divided the whole rural population into two sections: First, the free peasants belonging to the crown or its domains; and, secondly, all the rest of the peasantry, the *krestianins*, or serfs living on private estates, were inscribed *khrepostnoie kholopy*, that is, as chattels. The primitive Slavic communal organization thus survived only on the royal domain, and there it exists till the present day. The census of Peter having thus fairly inaugurated chattelhood, it immediately began to develop itself in all its turpitude. The masters grew more reckless and cruel; they sold chattels separately from the lands; they brought them singly into market, disregarding all family-ties and social bonds. Estates were no more valued according to the area of land they contained, but according to the number of their chattels, who were now called souls. In short, all the worst features of chattelism, as it exists at the present day in the American Slave States, immediately followed the publication of this accursed census." [B] The same authority states that Nicholas in reality was the first Emperor who granted estates excepting therefrom the resident peasantry.

[Footnote B: *Slavery in History*, pp. 245, 246.]

Alexander II., in his Manifesto, expresses his confidence in the nobility of Russia, which compliment is pronounced ironical, inasmuch as they did not yield their consent to emancipation until they discovered that the Czar and the serfs had united to extort it. "It is to the nobles themselves," says the Czar, "conformably to their own wishes, that we have reserved the task of drawing up the propositions for the new organization of the peasants,—propositions which make it incumbent upon them to limit their rights over the peasants, and to accept the *onus* of a reform which could not be accomplished without some material losses. Our confidence has not been deceived. We have seen the nobles assembled in committees in the districts, through the medium of their confidential agents, making the voluntary sacrifice of their rights as regards the personal servitude

Page 65

of the peasants. These committees, after having collected the necessary *data*, have formulated their propositions concerning the new organization of the peasants attached to the soil in their relations with the proprietors. These propositions having been found very diverse, as was to be expected from the nature of the question, they have been compared, collated, and reduced to a regular system, then rectified and completed in the superior committee instituted for that purpose; and these new dispositions thus formulated relative to the peasants and domestics of the proprietors have been examined in the Council of the Empire.” Invoking the Divine assistance, the Czar says that he is resolved to carry this work into execution. In virtue of the new dispositions, the peasants attached to the soil are to be invested with all the rights of free cultivators. The proprietors are to retain their rights of property in all the land belonging to them, but they are to grant to the peasants for a fixed regulated rental the full enjoyment of their *close*, or homestead; and, to assure their livelihood, and to guaranty the fulfilment of their obligations toward the Government, the quantity of arable land is fixed, as well as other rural appurtenances. In return for the enjoyment of these territorial allotments, the peasants are obligated to acquit the rentals fixed to the profit of the proprietors; but in this state, which must be a transitory one, the peasants shall be designated as “temporarily bound.” The peasants are granted the right of purchasing their homesteads, and, with the consent of the proprietors, they may acquire in full property the arable lands and other appurtenances which are allotted to them as a permanent holding. By the acquisition in full property of the quantity of land fixed the peasants will become free from their obligations toward the proprietors for land thus purchased, and they will enter definitively into the condition of free peasants, or landholders. A transitory state is fixed for the domestics, adapted to their callings, and to the exigencies of their position. At the close of two years, they are to receive their full enfranchisement, and some temporary immunities. “It is according to these fundamental principles,” says the Manifesto, “that the dispositions have been formulated which define the future organization of the peasants and of the domestics, which establish the order of the general administration of this class, and specify in all their details the rights given to the peasants and to the domestics, as well as the obligations imposed upon them toward the Government and toward the proprietors. Although these dispositions, general as well as local, and the special supplementary rules for some particular localities, for the lands of small proprietors, and for the peasants who work in the manufactories and establishments of the proprietors, have been, as far as was possible, adapted to economical necessities

Page 66

and local customs, nevertheless, to preserve the existing state where it presents reciprocal advantages, we leave it to the proprietors to come to amicable terms with the peasants, and to conclude transactions relative to the extent of the territorial allotment, and to the amount of rental to be fixed in consequence, observing at the same time the established rules to guaranty the inviolability of such agreements.” The new organization, however, cannot be immediately put in execution, in consequence of the inevitable complexity of the changes which it necessitates. Not less than two years, or thereabout, will be required to perfect the work; and to avoid all misunderstanding, and to protect public and private interests during this interval, the existing system will be maintained up to the moment when a new one shall have been instituted by the completion of the required preparatory measures. To this end, the Czar has deemed it advisable,—

“1. To establish in each district a special court for the question of the peasants; it will have to investigate the affairs of the rural communes established on the land of the lords of the soil.

“2. To appoint in each district justices of the peace to investigate on the spot all misunderstandings and disputes which may arise on the occasion of the introduction of the new regulation, and to form district assemblies with these justices of the peace.

“3. To organize in the seigneurial properties communal administrations, and to this end to leave the rural communes in their actual composition, and to open in the large villages district administrations (provincial boards) by uniting the small communes under one of these district administrations.

“4. To formulate, verify, and confirm in each rural district or estate a charter of rules, in which shall be enumerated, on the basis of the local statute, the amount of land reserved to the peasants in permanent enjoyment, and the extent of the charges which may be exacted from them for the benefit of the proprietor, as well for the land as for other advantages granted by him.

“5. To put these charters of rules into execution as they are gradually confirmed in each estate, and to introduce their definitive execution within the term of two years, dating from the day of publication of the present manifesto.

“6. Up to the expiration of this term the peasants and domestics are to remain in the same obedience towards their proprietors, and to fulfil their former obligations without scruple.

“7. The proprietors will continue to watch over the maintenance of order on their estates, with the right of jurisdiction and of police, until the organization of the districts and of the district tribunals has been effected.”

Page 67

In the concluding portion of the Manifesto, the Czar expresses his confidence in the nobility, and his belief that they will so labor as to perfect the great work upon which all parties in Russia are engaged; but there is something in the language he employs that sounds hollow, as if he were not altogether so certain of support as he claims to be. He speaks less like a man stating a fact than like one appealing to the controllers of powerful interests. He also warns those persons who have misunderstood the Imperial purpose, "individuals more intent upon liberty than mindful of the duties which it imposes," and whose conduct was not beyond reproach when the first news of the great reform became diffused among the rural population. The serfs are called upon, with much unction, to appreciate and recognize the considerable sacrifices which the nobility have made on their behalf. They are expected to understand that the blessings of an existence supported upon the basis of guarantied property, as well as a greater liberty in the administration of their goods, entail upon them, with new duties toward society and themselves, the obligation of justifying the protecting designs of the law by a loyal and judicious use of the rights which are now accorded to them. "For," says the Autocrat, "if men do not labor themselves to insure their own well-being under the shield of the laws, the best of those laws cannot guaranty it to them." These are "noble sentiments"; but the shrewder portion of the serfs will probably attach more importance to the declaration, that, "to render the transactions between the proprietors and the peasants more easy, in virtue of which the latter may acquire in full property their homestead and the land they occupy, the Government will advance assistance, according to a special regulation, by means of loans, or a transfer of debts encumbering an estate."

Such are the principal details of this great measure, the most important undertaking of modern days, whether we refer only to the measure itself, or take its probable consequences into consideration. That forty-five millions of human beings should be lifted out of the slough of slavery, and placed in a condition to become *men*, would alone be a proceeding that ought to take first rank among the illustrations of this age. But we cannot consider it solely by itself. Every deed that is likely to influence the life of a nation that is endowed with great vitality and energy must be considered in connection with its probable consequences. Russia stands in the fore-front rank of the leading nations of the world. In the European Pentarchy, she is the superior of Austria, the controller of Prussia, and the equal of France and England. The growth of the United States in political power having received a check through the occurrence of the Secession Rebellion, the relations of the great empires, which our advance had threatened to disturb in an essential manner, will probably remain

Page 68

unchanged; and so Russia, unless she should become internally convulsed, will maintain her place. Assuming that the work of emancipation is to be peacefully and successfully accomplished, it would be fair to argue that the power of the Russian Empire will be incalculably increased through the elevation of the masses of its population. The Czar is doing for his dominions what Tiberius Gracchus sought to do for the Roman Republic when he began that course of much misunderstood agrarian legislation which led to his destruction, and to the overthrow of the constitutional party in his country. As the Roman Tribune sought to renew the Roman people, and to substitute a nation of independent cultivators for those slaves who had already begun to eat out the heart of the republic, so does the Russian Autocrat seek to create a nation of freemen to take the place of a nation of serfs. If the Roman had succeeded, the course of history must have been entirely changed; and if the Russian shall succeed, we may feel assured that his success will have prodigious results, though different from what are expected, perhaps, by the Imperial reformer himself. His motives of action are probably of that mixed character which governs the proceedings of most men. Undoubtedly he wishes well to the millions for whose freedom he has labored and is laboring; but then he would improve their condition in order that he may become more powerful than ever were his predecessors. He would rule over men rather than over slaves, because men make better subjects and better soldiers than slaves ever could be expected to make. The Russian serf has certainly proved himself to be possessed of high military qualities in the past, but it admits of a good deal of doubt whether he is equal to the present military standard; and Russia cannot safely fall behind her neighbors and contemporaries in the matter of soldiership. The events of all the wars in which Russia has been engaged since 1815 prove that her armies have not kept pace with those of most other countries. The first of Nicholas's wars with Turkey would have ended in his total defeat, if the Turks had been able to find a leader of ordinary capacity and average integrity. The Persian War was successful because Persia is weak, and she had not the means of making a powerful resistance to her old enemy. The Poles, in 1831, held the Russians at bay for months, and would have established their independence but for their own dissensions; and even then Russia was much assisted by Prussia. The invasion of Hungary was a military promenade, and the failure of the patriots was owing less to the ability of Paskevitch than to the treason of Goergei. In the contest between Russia and the Western powers, (1854-6,) the former was beaten in every battle; and when she had only the Turks on her hands, in 1853, her every purpose was foiled, and not one victory did her armies in Europe win over that people. The world saw that a new breed of men had taken the places of those soldiers who had

Page 69

been so prominent in the work of overthrowing Napoleon; and even the heroes of 1812-15 were admitted to be inferior to *their* predecessors, the soldiers of Zuerich and Trebbia and Novi. It is the fact, and one upon which military men can ruminate at their leisure, that the Russian armies showed more real power and “pluck” a century ago than they have exhibited in any of the wars of the last sixty years. They fought better at Zorndorf and Kunersdorf, against the great Frederic, than they did at Austerlitz and Friedland, against the greater Napoleon, or than we have seen them fight, at the Alma, and at Inkerman, and at Eupatoria, against Raglan, and St. Arnaud, and Omar Pacha. There was no falling off in the soldiers of Suvaroff; but personal character had much to do with his successes, as he was a man of genius, and the only original soldier that Russia has ever had; and the men whom he led to victory in Turkey, Poland, and Italy were trained by officers who had learned their trade of the warriors who had fought against Frederic. But in the nineteenth Century the change in the Russian army was perceptible to all men, and in none could that change have produced more serious feelings than in the present Czar and his father. Nicholas is supposed to have died of mortification because his army, the instrument of his power over Europe, had been cut through by the swords of the West; and Alexander II. succeeded to a disgraced throne because his troops had proved themselves unworthy successors of the men of Kulm. Wishing to have better soldiers than he found in his armies, or than had served his father, Alexander II. hastened that scheme of emancipation which he had been thinking of, we may presume, for years, and which, he asserts, is the hereditary idea of his line. We do not suppose that he is less inclined to rule despotically than was his father, or that he would be averse to the recovery of the position which was held by his uncle and his father. We find not the slightest evidence, in all the proceedings of the Russian Government, that the *people* whom the Czar means to create are to be endowed with political freedom. A more vigorous race of Russians, morally speaking, is needed, and, except in some parts of the United States, there are no men to be found capable of arguing that any portion of the human family is susceptible of improvement through servitude. The serf is naturally clever, and can “turn his hand” to almost anything. The inference that freedom would exalt his mind and improve his condition is one that was logically drawn at St. Petersburg and Moscow, though they reason differently at Richmond and Montgomery. An army recruited from slaves could not, in these times, when even bayonets think and cannon reason much more accurately than they did when Louis XIV. was a pattern monarch, ever look in the face the intelligent trained legions of France or England or Germany. A combination of political circumstances, similar to those of 1840, might give

Page 70

victory to a grand Russian army, like that laurelless triumph which was then won in Hungary, when the victors were nothing but the bloodhounds and gallows-feeders of the House of Austria; but of *military* glory the present Russians could hope to have no more. To regain the place they had held, it was necessary that they should be made personally free. That they might be the better prepared to enslave others, they were themselves to be converted into men. The freedom of the individuals might be the means of supplying soldiers who should equal the fanatics who followed Suvaroff, or the patriots who followed Kutusoff, or the avengers who followed the first Alexander to Paris. The experiment, at all events, was worth trying; and the Czar is trying it on a scale that most impressively affects both the mind and the imagination of mankind, who may learn that his works are destined greatly to bear upon their interests.

In war, it is not only men that are wanted, and in large numbers, but money, and in large sums. Always of importance to the military monarch, money is now the first thing that he must think of and provide, or his operations will be checked effectually. War is a luxury that no poor nation or poor king can now long enjoy. It is reserved for wealthy nations, and for sovereigns who may possess the riches of Solomon without being endowed with his wisdom. Having impressed so many agents into its service, and subdued science itself to the condition of a bondman, war consumes gold almost as rapidly as the searches and labors of millions can produce it. The only sure, enduring source of wealth is industry,—industry as enlightened in its modes and processes as imperfect man will allow to exist. Russia is an empire that abounds with the means of wealth, rather than with wealth itself. It is a country, or collection of countries, of which almost anything in the way of riches may be predicated, should intelligent labor be directed to the development of its immense and various resources. Russian sovereigns have frequently sought to do something for the people; but Alexander II., a wiser man than any of his predecessors, is willing that the people should do something for themselves, because he knows that all that they shall gain, each man for himself, will be so much added to the common stock of the empire. The many must become wealthy, in order that one, the head of all, may become strong. Time and again has Russia found her armies paralyzed and her victories barren because she was moneyless; and but for the gold of foreign nations she must have halted in her course, and never have become a European power. With a nation of freemen all this may be, and most probably it will be, changed,—though it is not so certain that the change will be attended with exactly that order of results which the Czar may have arranged in his own mind. The mightiest of monarchs are not exempt from the rule, that, while man proposes, it is God who disposes the things of this world. Not one of those reforming kings who broke down the power of the great nobles of Western Europe, and so created absolute monarchies, appears to have had any just conception of the business in which he was engaged; but all were instruments in the hands of that mighty Power which overrules the ambition of individuals so that it shall promote the welfare of the world.

Page 71

The two years that are set apart for the completion of the plan of emancipation will be the trial time of Russia. They may expire, and nothing have been done, and the condition of the peasants be no more hopeful than it was in those years which followed the “good intentions” of Alexander I. It is not difficult to see that there are numerous and powerful disturbing causes to the success of the project. These causes are of a twofold character. They are to be found in the internal state of the empire, and in the relations which it holds to foreign countries. There is still a powerful party in Russia who are opposed to emancipation, and who, though repulsed for the time, are far from being disheartened. One-half the nobility are supposed to be enemies of the Imperial plan, and they will continue to throw every possible obstacle in the way of its success. There is nothing so pertinacious, so unrelenting, and so difficult to change, as an aristocratical body. The best liberals the world has seen have been of aristocratical origin, or democracy would have made but little advance; but what is true of individuals is not true of the mass, which is obstinate and unyielding. There is nothing that men so reluctantly abandon as direct power over their fellows. The chief of egotists is the slaveholder, unless he happen to be the wisest and best of men. Man loves his fellow-man—as a piece of property, as a chattel, above all things. It is a striking proof of superiority to be able to command men with the certainty of being as blindly obeyed as was the Roman centurion. The sense of power that is created by the possession of slaves is sure to render men arbitrary of disposition and insolent in their conduct. The troubles of our own country ought to be sufficient to convince every one that there must be nobles in Russia who would prefer resistance to the Czar to the elevation of millions whose depression is evidence of the power of the privileged classes. But for the conviction that the United States could no longer be ruled in the interest of the slaveholders, the Secession movement would have been postponed for another generation, and certain traitors would have gone to their graves with the reputation of having been honest men. There are Secessionists in Russia, and for the next two years they may be able to do much to prevent the completion of the work so well begun by Alexander II. But he appears to be as resolute as they can be, and even fanatically determined upon having his way. Supported by one-half the nobles, and by all the serfs, and confident of the army’s loyalty, he ought to be able to triumph over all internal opposition. What he has already effected has been extorted from a powerful foe; and that costly step, the first step, having been taken, the Russian reformers, headed by the Emperor, ought to prove victorious in so vitally important a contest as that in which they have voluntarily engaged.

Page 72

The greatest danger to the emancipation project proceeds from the side of foreign countries. As we have seen, both Alexander I. and Nicholas were led away from the pursuit of a policy that might long since have converted the Russian serfs into a Russian people, through their desire to interfere in the affairs of other nations. They could not reform Russia and crush reformers elsewhere. That they might decide grand contests in which Russia had no immediate interest, it was necessary that Russians should remain enslaved. What was it to Russia whether Bourbons or Bonapartes should reign over France? If she had an interest in the question, it was rather favorable to the Bonapartes, whom she overthrew, than to the Bourbons, whom she set up in order that the French might again overthrow them. The old Bourbons were never friendly to Russia, and would gladly have headed a coalition to drive her back to her forests; and the first Bonaparte was very desirous of being on good terms with the Northern Colossus, as if he were dimly forewarned of his coming fate at its hands. Led away from the true path, Alexander I. squandered on foreign affairs the time, the industry, and the money that should have been devoted to the prosecution of those internal reforms that were necessary to convert his subjects into men. Nicholas inherited from his unwise brother that policy which he so vehemently supported, and which caused him to waste on France and Austria the attention and the energy which, as a conscientious sovereign, he was bound to bestow upon Russia. The danger now is that Alexander II. will walk in the same wrong path that was found to lead only to destruction by his uncle and his father. The world was never so unsettled as it is now, and wars of the most extensive character threaten every country that is competent to put an army into the field. The Italian question is yet to be solved, and its solution concerns Russia, which is strongly interested in every movement that threatens to break up the Austrian Empire, or that promises to create in the Kingdom of Italy a new Mediterranean nation. The Schleswig-Holstein question is yet to be settled, and Russia has an immediate interest in its settlement, as Denmark, she expects, will one day be her own. The Eastern question is as unanswerable as ever it has been, and it is but a few weeks since the belief was common that Russia and France were to unite for the purpose of settling it, which could have meant nothing less than the partition of the Turkish Empire,—the union of one of the “sick man’s” old protectors with his enemy, for the perfect plundering of his possessions. This arrangement, had it been completed, would have led to a war between France and Russia, on the one side, and England and Austria on the other, while half a dozen lesser nations would have been drawn into the conflict. But if an alliance for any such purpose was ever thought of by the Autocrat and the Stratocrat, it is supposed that it fell through in consequence

Page 73

of the occurrence of troubles in Russian Poland,—the Polish question, after having been kept entirely out of sight for years, having suddenly forced itself on the attention of Europe's monarchs, to the no small increase of their perplexities. Here are four great questions that are intimately connected with Russia's interests, any one of which, if pressed by circumstances to a decision, would probably plunge her into a long and costly war, one of the effects of which would be to postpone the emancipation of the serfs for many years. No empire could effect an internal change like that which the Czar has begun, and at the same time carry on a war that would require immense expenditures and the active services of a million of men. The Czar is in constant danger of being "coerced" into a foreign war; and the enemies of emancipation would throw all their weight on the side of the war faction, even if they should feel but little interest in the fortunes of either party to a contest into which Russia might be plunged. Leaving aside all the questions mentioned but that of Turkey, that alone is ever threatening to bring Russia into conflict with some of her neighbors. Neither England nor Austria could allow her to have her will of Turkey, no matter how excellent an opportunity might be presented by the death of the Sultan, or some similar event, to strike an effectual blow at that tottering, doomed empire. So that war ever hangs over the Czar from that side, unless he should, for the sake of the domestic reform he so much desiderates, disregard the traditions and abandon the purpose of his house. Were he to do so, it would be a splendid example of self-denial, and such as few men who have reigned have ever been capable of affording either to the admiration or the derision of the world. But could he safely do it? Then it does not altogether depend either upon the Czar or upon his subjects whether he or they shall preserve the peace of their country. Suppose Poland to rise,—and she has been becoming very wakeful of late,—then war would be forced upon Russia; and that war might be extended over most of Continental Europe. A Polish war could hardly fail to draw Prussia and Austria into it, they being almost as much interested in the maintenance of the partition as Russia; and France could scarcely be kept out of such a contest, she having been the patron of Poland ever since the partition was effected.

Considering the matter in its various bearings, and noting how inflammable is the condition of the world, and observing that a Russian war would be fatal to emancipation, we can but say, that the freedom of the serfs is something that may be hoped for, but which we should not speak of as assured. Alexander II. wishes to complete his work, but he is only an instrument in the hands of Fate, and things may so fall out as to cover the present fair prospect with those clouds and that darkness in which have been forever enveloped some of the best undertakings for the promotion of man's welfare. We may hope and pray for a good ending to the reform that has been commenced, but it is not without fear and trembling that we do so.

Page 74

* * * * *

THE HAUNTED SHANTY.

As the principal personage of this story is dead, and there is no likelihood that any of the others will ever see the "Atlantic Monthly," I feel free to tell it without reservation.

The mercantile house of which I was until recently an active member had many business connections throughout the Western States, and I was therefore in the habit of making an annual journey through them, in the interest of the firm. In fact, I was always glad to escape from the dirt and hubbub of Cortland Street, and to exchange the smell of goods and boxes, cellars and gutters, for that of prairie grass and even of prairie mud. Although wearing the immaculate linen and golden studs of the city Valentine, there still remained a good deal of the country Orson in my blood, and I endured many hard, repulsive, yea, downright vulgar experiences for the sake of a run at large, and the healthy animal exaltation which accompanied it.

Eight or nine years ago, (it is, perhaps, as well not to be very precise, as yet, with regard to dates,) I found myself at Peoria, in Illinois, rather late in the season. The business I had on hand was mostly transacted; but it was still necessary that I should visit Bloomington and Terre Haute before returning to the East. I had come from Wisconsin and Northern Illinois, and, as the great railroad spider of Chicago had then spun but a few threads of his present tremendous mesh, I had made the greater part of my journey on horseback. By the time I reached Peoria the month of November was well advanced, and the weather had become very disagreeable. I was strongly tempted to sell my horse and take the stage to Bloomington, but the roads were even worse to a traveller on wheels than to one in the saddle, and the sunny day which followed my arrival flattered me with the hope that others as fair might succeed it.

The distance to Bloomington was forty miles, and the road none of the best; yet, as my horse "Peck" (an abbreviation of "Pecatonica") had had two days' rest, I did not leave Peoria until after the usual dinner at twelve o'clock, trusting that I should reach my destination by eight or nine in the evening, at the latest. Broad bands of dull, gray, felt-like clouds crossed the sky, and the wind had a rough edge to it which predicted that there was rain within a day's march.

The oaks along the rounded river-bluffs still held on to their leaves, although the latter were entirely brown and dead, and rattled around me with an ominous sound, as I climbed to the level of the prairie, leaving the bed of the muddy Illinois below. Peck's hoofs sank deeply into the unctuous black soil, which resembled a jetty tallow rather than earth, and his progress was slow and toilsome. The sky became more and more obscured: the sun faded to a ghastly moon, then to a white blotch in the gray vault, and finally retired in disgust. Indeed, there was nothing in the landscape worth his



contemplation. Dead flats of black, bristling with short corn-stalks, flats of brown grass, a brown belt of low woods in the distance,—that was all the horizon inclosed: no embossed bowl, with its rim of sculptured hills, its round of colored pictures, but a flat earthen pie-dish, over which the sky fell like a pewter cover.

Page 75

After riding for an hour or two over the desolate level, I descended through rattling oaks to the bed of a stream, and then ascended through rattling oaks to the prairie beyond. Here, however, I took the wrong road, and found myself, some three miles farther, at a farm-house, where it terminated. "You kin go out over the perairah yander," said the farmer, dropping his maul beside a rail he had just split off,—“there's a plain trail from Sykes's that'll bring you onto the road not fur from Sugar Crick.” With which knowledge I plucked up heart and rode on.

What with the windings and turnings of the various cart-tracks, the family resemblance in the groves of oak and hickory, and the heavy, uniform gray of the sky, I presently lost my compass-needle,—that natural instinct of direction, on which I had learned to rely. East, west, north, south,—all were alike, and the very doubt paralyzed the faculty. The growing darkness of the sky, the *watery* moaning of the wind, betokened night and storm; but I pressed on, hap-hazard, determined, at least, to reach one of the incipient villages on the Bloomington road.

After an hour more, I found myself on the brink of another winding hollow, threaded by a broad, shallow stream. On the opposite side, a quarter of a mile above, stood a rough shanty, at the foot of the rise which led to the prairie. After fording the stream, however, I found that the trail I had followed continued forward in the same direction, leaving this rude settlement on the left. On the opposite side of the hollow, the prairie again stretched before me, dark and flat, and destitute of any sign of habitation. I could scarcely distinguish the trail any longer; in half an hour, I knew, I should be swallowed up in a gulf of impenetrable darkness; and there was evidently no choice left me but to return to the lonely shanty, and there seek shelter for the night.

To be thwarted in one's plans, even by wind or weather, is always vexatious; but in this case, the prospect of spending a night in such a dismal corner of the world was especially disagreeable. I am—or at least I consider myself—a thoroughly matter-of-fact man, and my first thought, I am not ashamed to confess, was of oysters. Visions of a favorite saloon, and many a pleasant supper with Dunham and Beeson, (my partners,) all at once popped into my mind, as I turned back over the brow of the hollow and urged Peck down its rough slope. “Well,” thought I, at last, “this will be one more story for our next meeting. Who knows what originals I may not find, even in a solitary settler's shanty?”

Page 76

I could discover no trail, and the darkness thickened rapidly while I picked my way across dry gullies, formed by the drainage of the prairie above, rotten tree-trunks, stumps, and spots of thicket. As I approached the shanty, a faint gleam through one of its two small windows showed that it was inhabited. In the rear, a space of a quarter of an acre, inclosed by a huge worm-fence, was evidently the vegetable patch, at one corner of which a small stable, roofed and buttressed with corn-fodder, leaned against the hill. I drew rein in front of the building, and was about to hail its inmates, when I observed the figure of a man issue from the stable. Even in the gloom, there was something forlorn and dispiriting in his walk. He approached with a slow, dragging step, apparently unaware of my presence.

“Good evening, friend!” I said.

He stopped, stood still for half a minute, and finally responded,—

“Who air you?”

The tone of his voice, querulous and lamenting, rather implied, “Why don’t you let me alone?”

“I am a traveller,” I answered, “bound from Peoria to Bloomington, and have lost my way. It is dark, as you know, and likely to rain, and I don’t see how I can get any farther to-night.”

Another pause. Then he said, slowly, as if speaking to himself,—

“There a’n’t no other place nearer ’n four or five mile.”

“Then I hope you will let me stay here.”

The answer, to my surprise, was a deep sigh.

“I am used to roughing it,” I urged; “and besides, I will pay for any trouble I may give you.”

“It a’n’t *that*,” said he; then added, hesitatingly,—“fact is, we’re lonesome people here, —don’t often see strangers; yit I s’pose you can’t go no further;—well, I’ll talk to my wife.”

Therewith he entered the shanty, leaving me a little disconcerted with so uncertain, not to say suspicious, a reception. I heard the sound of voices—one of them unmistakable in its nasal shrillness—in what seemed to be a harsh debate, and distinguished the words, “I didn’t bring it on,” followed with, “Tell him, then, if you like, and let him stay,”—which seemed to settle the matter. The door presently opened, and the man said,—

“I guess we’ll have t’ accommodate you. Give me your things, an’ then I’ll put your horse up.”

I unstrapped my valise, took off the saddle, and, having seen Peck to his fodder-tent, where I left him with some ears of corn in an old basket, returned to the shanty. It was a rude specimen of the article,—a single room of some thirty by fifteen feet, with a large fireplace of sticks and clay at one end, while a half-partition of unplanned planks set on end formed a sort of recess for the bed at the other. A good fire on the hearth, however, made it seem tolerably cheerful, contrasted with the dismal gloom outside. The furniture consisted of a table, two or three chairs, a broad bench, and a kitchen-dresser of boards. Some golden ears of seed-corn, a few sides of bacon, and ropes of onions hung from the rafters.

Page 77

A woman in a blue calico gown, with a tin coffee-pot in one hand and a stick in the other, was raking out the red coals from under the burning logs. At my salutation, she partly turned, looked hard at me, nodded, and muttered some inaudible words. Then, having levelled the coals properly, she put down the coffee-pot, and, facing about, exclaimed, —“Jimmy, git off that cheer!”

Though this phrase, short and snappish enough, was not worded as an invitation for me to sit down, I accepted it as such, and took the chair which a lean boy of some nine or ten years old had hurriedly vacated. In such cases, I had learned by experience, it is not best to be too forward: wait quietly, and allow the unwilling hosts time to get accustomed to your presence. I inspected the family for a while, in silence. The spare, bony form of the woman, her deep-set gray eyes, and the long, thin nose, which seemed to be merely a scabbard for her sharp-edged voice, gave me her character at the first glance. As for the man, he was worn by some constant fret or worry, rather than naturally spare. His complexion was sallow, his face honest, every line of it, though the expression was dejected, and there was a helpless patience in his voice and movements, which I have often seen in women, but never before in a man. “Henpecked in the first degree,” was the verdict I gave, without leaving my seat. The silence, shyness, and puny appearance of the boy might be accounted for by the loneliness of his life, and the usual “shakes”; but there was a wild, frightened look in his eye, a nervous restlessness about his limbs, which excited my curiosity. I am no believer in those freaks of fancy called “presentiments,” but I certainly felt that there was something unpleasant, perhaps painful, in the private relations of the family.

Meanwhile, the supper gradually took shape. The coffee was boiled, (far too much, for my taste,) bacon fried, potatoes roasted, and certain lumps of dough transformed into farinaceous grape-shot, called “biscuits.” Dishes of blue queensware, knives and forks, cups and saucers of various patterns, and a bowl of molasses were placed upon the table; and finally the woman said, speaking to, though not looking at, me,—

“I s’pose you ha’n’t had your supper.”

I accepted the invitation with a simple “No,” and ate enough of the rude fare (for I was really hungry) to satisfy my hosts that I was not proud. I attempted no conversation, knowing that such people never talk when they eat, until the meal was over, and the man, who gladly took one of my cigars, was seated comfortably before the fire. I then related my story, told my name and business, and by degrees established a mild flow of conversation. The woman, as she washed the dishes and cleared up things for the night, listened to us, and now and then made a remark to the coffee-pot or frying-pan, evidently intended for our ears. Some things which she said must have had a meaning hidden from me, for I could see that the man winced, and at last he ventured to say,—

Page 78

"Mary Ann, what's the use in talkin' about it?"

"Do as you like," she snapped back; "only I a'n't a-goin' to be blamed for *your* doin's. The stranger'll find out, soon enough."

"You find this life rather lonely, I should think," I remarked, with a view of giving the conversation a different turn.

"Lonely!" she repeated, jerking out a fragment of malicious laughter. "It's lonely enough in the daytime, Goodness knows; but you'll have your fill o' company afore mornin'."

With that, she threw a defiant glance at her husband.

"Fact is," said he, shrinking from her eye, "we're sort o' troubled with noises at night. P'raps you'll be skeered, but it's no more 'n noise,—onpleasant, but never hurts nothin'."

"You don't mean to say this shanty is haunted?" I asked.

"Well,—yes: some folks 'd call it so. There *is* noises an' things goin' on, but you can't see nobody."

"Oh, if that is all," said I, "you need not be concerned on my account. Nothing is so strange, but the cause of it can be discovered."

Again the man heaved a deep sigh. The woman said, in rather a milder tone,—

"What's the good o' knowin' what makes it, when you can't stop it?"

As I was neither sleepy nor fatigued, this information was rather welcome than otherwise. I had full confidence in my own courage; and if anything *should* happen, it would make a capital story for my first New-York supper. I saw there was but one bed, and a small straw mattress on the floor beside it for the boy, and therefore declared that I should sleep on the bench, wrapped in my cloak. Neither objected to this, and they presently retired. I determined, however, to keep awake as long as possible. I threw a fresh log on the fire, lit another cigar, made a few entries in my note-book, and finally took the "Iron Mask" of Dumas from my valise, and tried to read by the wavering flashes of the fire.

In this manner another hour passed away. The deep breathing—not to say snoring—from the recess indicated that my hosts were sound asleep, and the monotonous whistle of the wind around the shanty began to exercise a lulling influence on my own senses. Wrapping myself in my cloak, with my valise for a pillow, I stretched myself out on the bench, and strove to keep my mind occupied with conjectures concerning the sleeping family. Furthermore, I recalled all the stories of ghosts and haunted houses which I had ever heard, constructed explanations for such as were still unsolved, and,

so far from feeling any alarm, desired nothing so much as that the supernatural performances might commence.

Page 79

My thoughts, however, became gradually less and less coherent, and I was just sliding over the verge of slumber, when a faint sound in the distance caught my ear. I listened intently: certainly there was a far-off, indistinct sound, different from the dull, continuous sweep of the wind. I rose on the bench, fully awake, yet not excited, for my first thought was that other travellers might be lost or belated. By this time the sound was quite distinct, and, to my great surprise, appeared to proceed from a drum, rapidly beaten. I looked at my watch: it was half-past ten. Who could be out on the lonely prairie with a drum, at that time of night? There must have been some military festival, some political caucus, some celebration of the Sons of Malta, or jubilation of the Society of the Thousand and One, and a few of the scattered members were enlivening their dark ride homewards. While I was busy with these conjectures, the sound advanced nearer and nearer,—and, what was very singular, without the least pause or variation,—one steady, regular roll, ringing deep and clear through the night.

The shanty stood at a point where the stream, leaving its general southwestern course, bent at a sharp angle to the southeast, and faced very nearly in the latter direction. As the sound of the drum came from the east, it seemed the more probable that it was caused by some person on the road which crossed the creek a quarter of a mile below. Yet, on approaching nearer, it made directly for the shanty, moving, evidently, much more rapidly than a person could walk. It then flashed upon my mind that *this* was the noise I was to hear, *this* the company I was to expect! Louder and louder, deep, strong, and reverberating, rolling as if for a battle-charge, it came on: it was now but a hundred yards distant,—now but fifty,—ten,—just outside the rough clapboard-wall,—but, while I had half risen to open the door, it passed directly through the wall and sounded at my very ears, inside the shanty!

The logs burned brightly on the hearth: every object in the room could be seen more or less distinctly: nothing was out of its place, nothing disturbed, yet the rafters almost shook under the roll of an invisible drum, beaten by invisible hands! The sleepers tossed restlessly, and a deep groan, as if in semi-dream, came from the man. Utterly confounded as I was, my sensations were not those of terror. Each moment I doubted my senses, and each moment the terrific sound convinced me anew. I do not know how long I sat thus in sheer, stupid amazement. It may have been one minute, or fifteen, before the drum, passing over my head, through the boards again, commenced a slow march around the shanty. When it had finished the first, and was about commencing the second round, I shook off my stupor, and determined to probe the mystery. Opening the door, I advanced in an opposite direction to meet it. Again the sound passed close beside my head, but I could see nothing, touch nothing. Again it entered the shanty, and I followed. I stirred up the fire, casting a strong illumination into the darkest corners; I thrust my hand into the very heart of the sound, I struck through it in all directions with a stick,—still I saw nothing, touched nothing.

Page 80

Of course, I do not expect to be believed by half my readers,—nor can I blame them for their incredulity. So astounding is the circumstance, even yet, to myself, that I should doubt its reality, were it not therefore necessary, for the same reason, to doubt every event of my life.

At length the sound moved away in the direction whence it came, becoming gradually fainter and fainter until it died in the distance. But immediately afterwards, from the same quarter, came a thin, sharp blast of wind,—or what seemed to be such. If one could imagine a swift, intense stream of air, no thicker than a telegraph-wire, producing a keen, whistling rush in its passage, he would understand the impression made upon my mind. This wind, or sound, or whatever it was, seemed to strike an invisible target in the centre of the room, and thereupon ensued a new and worse confusion. Sounds as of huge planks lifted at one end and then allowed to fall, slamming upon the floor, hard, wooden claps, crashes, and noises of splitting and snapping, filled the shanty. The rough boards of the floor jarred and trembled, and the table and chairs were jolted off their feet. Instinctively, I jerked away my legs, whenever the invisible planks fell too near them.

It never came into my mind to charge the family with being the authors of these phenomena: their care and distress were too evident. There was certainly no other human being but myself in or near the shanty. My senses of sight and touch availed me nothing, and I confined my attention, at last, to simply noting the manifestations, without attempting to explain them. I began to experience a feeling, not of terror, but of disturbing uncertainty. The solid ground was taken from beneath my feet.

Still the man and his wife groaned and muttered, as if in a nightmare sleep, and the boy tossed restlessly on his low bed. I would not disturb them, since, by their own confession, they were accustomed to the visitation. Besides, it would not assist me, and, so long as there was no danger of personal injury, I preferred to watch alone. I recalled, however, the woman's remarks, remembering the mysterious blame she had thrown upon her husband, and felt certain that she had adopted some explanation of the noises, at his expense.

As the confusion continued, with more or less violence, sometimes pausing for a few minutes, to begin again with renewed force, I felt an increasing impression of somebody else being present. Outside the shanty this feeling ceased, but every time I opened the door I fully expected to see some one standing in the centre of the room. Yet, looking through the little windows, when the noises were at their loudest, I could discover nothing. Two hours had passed away since I first heard the drum-beat, and I found myself at last completely wearied with my fruitless exertions and the unusual excitement. By this time the disturbances had become faint, with more frequent pauses.

Page 81

All at once, I heard a long, weary sigh, so near me that it could not have proceeded from the sleepers. A weak moan, expressive of utter wretchedness, followed, and then came the words, in a woman's voice,—came I know not whence, for they seemed to be uttered close beside me, and yet far, far away,—“How great is my trouble! How long shall I suffer? I was married, in the sight of God, to Eber Nicholson. Have mercy, O Lord, and give him to me, or release me from him!”

These were the words, not spoken, but rather moaned forth in a slow, monotonous wail of utter helplessness and broken-heartedness. I have heard human grief expressed in many forms, but I never heard or imagined anything so desolate, so surcharged with the despair of an eternal woe. It was, indeed, too hopeless for sympathy. It was the utterance of a sorrow which removed its possessor into some dark, lonely world girdled with iron walls, against which every throb of a helping or consoling heart would beat in vain for admittance. So far from being moved or softened, the words left upon me an impression of stolid apathy. When they had ceased, I heard another sigh,—and some time afterwards, far-off, retreating forlornly through the eastern darkness, the wailing repetition,—“I was married, in the sight of God, to Eber Nicholson. Have mercy, O Lord!”

This was the last of those midnight marvels. Nothing further disturbed the night except the steady sound of the wind. The more I thought of what I had heard, the more I was convinced that the phenomena were connected, in some way, with the history of my host. I had heard his wife call him “Ebe,” and did not doubt that he was the Eber Nicholson who, for some mysterious crime, was haunted by the reproachful ghost. Could murder, or worse than murder, lurk behind these visitations? It was useless to conjecture; yet, before giving myself up to sleep, I determined to know everything that could be known, before leaving the shanty.

My rest was disturbed: my hip-bones pressed unpleasantly on the hard bench; and every now and then I awoke with a start, hearing the same despairing voice in my dreams. The place was always quiet, nevertheless,—the disturbances having ceased, as nearly as I could judge, about one o'clock in the morning. Finally, from sheer weariness, I fell into a deep slumber, which lasted until daylight. The sound of pans and kettles aroused me. The woman, in her lank blue gown, was bending over the fire; the man and boy had already gone out. As I rose, rubbing my eyes and shaking myself, to find out exactly where and who I was, the woman straightened herself and looked at me with a keen, questioning gaze, but said nothing.

“I must have been very sound asleep,” said I.

“There's no sound sleepin' here. Don't tell me that.”

“Well,” I answered, “your shanty is rather noisy; but, as I’m neither scared nor hurt, there’s no harm done. But have you never found out what occasions the noise?”

Page 82

Her reply was a toss of the head and a peculiar snorting interjection, “Hngh!” (impossible to be represented by letters,) “it’s all *her* doin’.”

“But who is *she*?”

“You’d better ask *him*.”

Seeing there was nothing to be got out of her, I went down to the stream, washed my face, dried it with my pocket-handkerchief, and then looked after Peck. He gave a shrill whinny of recognition, and, I thought, seemed to be a little restless. A fresh feed of corn was in the old basket, and presently the man came into the stable with a bunch of hay, and commenced rubbing off the marks of Peck’s oozy couch which were left on his flanks. As we went back to the shanty I noticed that he eyed me furtively, without daring to look me full in the face. As I was apparently none the worse for the night’s experiences, he rallied at last, and ventured to talk *at*, as well as to, me.

By this time, breakfast, which was a repetition of supper, was ready, and we sat down to the table. During the meal, it occurred to me to make an experimental remark. Turning suddenly to the man, I asked,—

“Is your name Eber Nicholson?”

“There!” exclaimed the woman, “I knowed he’d heerd it!”

He, however, flushing a moment, and then becoming more sallow than ever, nodded first, and then—as if that were not sufficient—added, “Yes, that’s my name.”

“Where did you move from?” I continued, falling back on the first plan I had formed in my mind.

“The Western Reserve, not fur from Hudson.”

I turned the conversation on the comparative advantages of Ohio and Illinois, on farming, the price of land, *etc.*, carefully avoiding the dangerous subject, and by the time breakfast was over had arranged, that, for a consideration, he should accompany me as far as the Bloomington road, some five miles distant.

While he went out to catch an old horse, ranging loose in the creek-bottom, I saddled Peck, strapped on my valise, and made myself ready for the journey. The feeling of two silver half-dollars in her hard palm melted down the woman’s aggressive mood, and she said, with a voice the edge whereof was mightily blunted,—

“Thankee! it’s too much fur sich as you had.”

“It’s the best you can give,” I replied.

“That’s so!” said she, jerking my hand up and down with a pumping movement, as I took leave.

I felt a sense of relief when we had climbed the rise and had the open prairie again before us. The sky was overcast and the wind strong, but some rain had fallen during the night, and the clouds had lifted themselves again. The air was fresh and damp, but not chill. We rode slowly, of necessity, for the mud was deeper than ever.

I deliberated what course I should take, in order to draw from my guide the explanation of the nightly noises. His evident shrinking, whenever his wife referred to the subject, convinced me that a gradual approach would render him shy and uneasy; and, on the whole, it seemed best to surprise him by a sudden assault. Let me strike to the heart of the secret, at once,—I thought,—and the details will come of themselves.

Page 83

While I was thus reflecting, he rode quietly by my side. Half turning in the saddle, I looked steadily at his face, and said, in an earnest voice,—

“Eber Nicholson, who was it to whom you were married in the sight of God?”

He started as if struck, looked at me imploringly, turned away his eyes, then looked back, became very pale, and finally said, in a broken, hesitating voice, as if the words were forced from him against his will,—

“Her name is Rachel Emmons.”

“Why did you murder her?” I asked, in a still sterner tone.

In an instant his face burned scarlet. He reined up his horse with a violent pull, straightened his shoulders so that he appeared six inches taller, looked steadily at me with a strange, mixed expression of anger and astonishment, and cried out,—

“Murder her? *Why, she’s livin’ now!*”

My surprise at the answer was scarcely less great than his at the question.

“You don’t mean to say she’s not dead?” I asked.

“Why, no!” said he, recovering from his sudden excitement, “she’s not dead, or she wouldn’t keep on troublin’ me. She’s been livin’ in Toledo, these ten year.”

“I beg your pardon, my friend,” said I; “but I don’t know what to think of what I heard last night, and I suppose I have the old notion in my head that all ghosts are of persons who have been murdered.”

“Oh, if I had killed her,” he groaned, “I’d ‘a’ been hung long ago, an’ there ‘d ‘a’ been an end of it.”

“Tell me the whole story,” said I. “It’s hardly likely that I can help you, but I can understand how you must be troubled, and I’m sure I pity you from my heart.”

I think he felt relieved at my proposal,—glad, perhaps, after long silence, to confide to another man the secret of his lonely, wretched life.

“After what you’ve heerd,” said he, “there’s nothin’ that I don’t care to tell. I’ve been sinful, no doubt,—but, God knows, there never was a man worse punished.

“I told you,” he continued, after a pause, “that I come from the Western Reserve. My father was a middlin’ well-to-do farmer,—not rich, nor yit exactly poor. He’s dead now. He was always a savin’ man,—looked after money a *leetle* too sharp, I’ve often thought

sence: howsever, 't isn't my place to judge him. Well, I was brought up on the farm, to hard work, like the other boys. Rachel Emmons,—she's the same woman that haunts me, you understand,—she was the girl o' one of our neighbors, an' poor enough *he* was. His wife was always sickly-like,—an' you know it takes a woman as well as a man to git rich farmin'. So they were always scrimped, but that didn't hinder Rachel from bein' one o' the likeliest gals round. We went to the same school in the winter, he an' me, ('t isn't much schoolin' I ever got, though,) an' I had a sort o' nateral hankerin' after her, as fur back as I can remember. She was different lookin' then from, what she is now,—an' me, too, for that matter.

Page 84

“Well, you know how boys an’ gals somehow git to likin’ each other afore they know it. Me an’ Rachel was more an’ more together, the more we growed up, only more secret-like; so by the time I was twenty an’ she was nineteen, we was promised to one another as true as could be. I didn’t keep company with her, though,—leastways, not reg’lar: I was afeard my father ‘d find it out, an’ I knowed what *he* ‘d say to it. He kep’ givin’ me hints about Mary Ann Jones,—that was my wife’s maiden name. Her father had two hundred acres an’ money out at interest, an’ only three children. He’d had ten, but seven of ‘em died. I had nothin’ agin Mary Ann, but I never thought of her that way, like I did towards Rachel.

“Well, things kep’ runnin’ on; I was a good deal worried about it, but a young feller, you know, don’t look fur ahead, an’ so I got along. One night, howsever,—’t was jist about as dark as last night was,—I’d been to the store at the Corners, for a jug o’ molasses. Rachel was there, gittin’ a quarter of a pound o’ tea, I think it was, an’ some sewin’-thread. I went out a little while after her, an’ follered as fast as I could, for we had the same road nigh to home.

“It weren’t long afore I overtook her. ‘T was mighty dark, as I was sayin’, an’ so I hooked her arm into mine, an’ we went on comfortable together, talkin’ about how we jist suited each other, like we was cut out o’ purpose, an’ how long we’d have to wait, an’ what folks ‘d say. O Lord! don’t I remember every word o’ *that* night? Well, we got quite tender-like when we come t’ Old Emmons’s gate, an’ I up an’ giv’ her a hug and a lot o’ kisses, to make up for lost time. Then she went into the house, an’ I turned for home; but I hadn’t gone ten steps afore I come agin somebody stan’in’ in the middle o’ the road. ‘Hullo!’ says I. The next thing he had a holt o’ my coat-collar an’ shuck me like a tarrier-dog shakes a rat. I knowed who it was afore he spoke; an’ I couldn’t ‘a’ been more skeered, if the life had all gone out o’ me. He’d been down to the tavern to see a drover, an’ comin’ home he’d follered behind us all the way, hearin’ every word we said.

“I don’t like to think o’ the words he used that night. He was a professin’ member, an’ yit he swore the awfulest I ever heerd.”—Here the man involuntarily raised his hands to his ears, as if to stop them against even the memory of his father’s curses.—“I expected every minute he’d ‘a’ struck me down. I’ve wished, sence, he *had*: I don’t think I could ‘a’ stood *that*. Howsever, he dragged me home, never lettin’ go my collar, till we got into the room where mother was settin’ up for us. Then he told *her*, only makin’ it ten times harder ‘n it really was. Mother always kind o’ liked Rachel, ‘cause she was mighty handy at sewin’ an’ quiltin’, but she’d no more dared stan’ up agin father than a sheep agin a bull-dog. She looked at me pityin’-like, I must say, an’ jist begun to cry,—an’ I couldn’t help cryin’ nuther, when I saw how it hurt her.

Page 85

“Well, after that, ‘t wa’n’t no use thinkin’ o’ Rachel any more. I *had* to go t’ Old Jones’s, whether I wanted to or no. I felt mighty mean when I thought o’ Rachel, an’ was afeard no good ‘d come of it; but father jist managed things *his* way, an’ I couldn’t help myself. Old Jones had nothin’ agin me, for I was a stiddy, hard-workin’ feller as there was round, —an’ Mary Ann was always as pleasant as could be, *then*;—well, I oughn’t to say nothin’ agin her now; she’s had a hard life of it, ‘longside o’ me. Afore long we were bespoke, an’ the day set. Father hurried things, when it got that fur. I don’t think Rachel knowed anything about it till the day afore the weddin’, or mebbby the very day. Old Mr. Larrabee was the minister, an’ there was only the two families at the house, an’ Miss Plankerton,—her that sewed for Mary Ann. I never felt so oneasy in my life, though I tried hard not to show it.

“Well, ‘t was all jist over, an’ the kissin’ about to begin, when I heerd the house-door bu’st open, suddent. I felt my heart give one jump right up to the root o’ my tongue, an’ then fall back ag’in, sick an’ dead-like.

“The parlor-door flew open right away, an’ in come Rachel without a bunnet, an’ her hair all frowzed by the wind. She was as white as a sheet, an’ her eyes like two burnin’ coals. She walked straight through ‘em all an’ stood right afore me. They was all so taken aback that they never thought o’ stoppin’ her. Then she kind o’ screeched out,—‘Eber Nicholson, what are you doin’?’ Her voice was strange an’ onnatural-like, an’ I’d never ‘a’ knowed it to be hern, if I hadn’t ‘a’ seen her. I couldn’t take my eyes off of her, an’ I couldn’t speak: I jist stood there. Then she said ag’in,—‘Eber Nicholson, what are you doin’? You are married to me, in the sight of God. You belong to me an’ I to you, forever an’ forever!’ Then they begun cryin’ out,—‘Go ‘way!’ ‘Take her away!’ ‘What d’s she mean?’ an’ old Mr. Larrabee ketched holt of her arm. She begun to jerk an’ trimble all over; she drawed in her breath in a sort o’ groanin’ way, awful to hear, an’ then dropped down on the floor in a fit. I bu’st out in a terrible spell o’ cryin’;—I couldn’t ‘a’ helped it, to save my life.”

The man paused, drew his sleeve across his eyes, and then timidly looked at me. Seeing nothing in my face, doubtless, but an expression of the profoundest commiseration, he remarked, with a more assured voice, as if in self-justification,—

“It was a pretty hard thing for a man to go through with, now, wasn’t it?”

“You may well say that,” said I. “Your story is not yet finished, however. This Rachel Emmons,—you say she is still living,—in what way does she cause the disturbances?”

Page 86

"I'll tell you all I know about it," said he,—“an’ if you understand it *then*, you’re wiser ’n I am. After they carried her home, she had a long spell o’ sickness,—come near dyin’, they said; but they brought her through, at last, an’ she got about ag’in, lookin’ ten year older. I kep’ out of her sight, though. I lived awhile at Old Jones’s, till I could find a good farm to rent, or a cheap un to buy. I wanted to git out o’ the neighborhood: I was oneasy all the time, bein’ so near Rachel. Her mother was wuss, an’ her father failin’-like, too. Mother seen ’em often: she was as good a neighbor to ’em as she dared be. Well, I got sort o’ tired, an’ went out to Michigan an’ bought a likely farm. Old Jones giv’ me a start. I took Mary Ann out, an’ we got along well enough, a matter o’ two year. We heerd from home now an’ then. Rachel’s father an’ mother both died, about the time we had our first boy,—him that you seen,—an’ she went off to Toledo, we heerd, an’ hired out to do sewin’. She was always a mighty good hand at it, an’ could cut out as nice as a born manty-maker. She’d had another fit after the funerals, an’ was older-lookin’ an’ more serious than ever, they said.

“Well, Jimmy was six months old, or so, when we begun to be woke up every night by his cryin’. Nothin’ seemed to be the matter with him: he was only frightened-like, an’ couldn’t be quieted. I heerd noises sometimes,—nothin’ like what come afterwards,—but sort o’ crackin’ an’ snappin’, sich as you hear in new furnitur’, an’ it seemed like somebody was in the room; but I couldn’t find nothin’. It got wuss and wuss: Mary Ann was sure the house was haunted, an’ I had to let her go home for a whole winter. When she was away, it went on the same as ever,—not every night,—sometimes not more ’n onst a week,—but so loud as to wake me up, reg’lar. I sent word to Mary Ann to come on, an’ I’d sell out an’ go to Illinois. Good perairah land was cheap then, an’ I’d ruther go further off, for the sake o’ quiet.

“So we pulled up stakes an’ come out here: but it weren’t long afore the noise follered us, wuss ’n ever, an’ we found out at last what it was. One night I woke up, with my hair stan’in’ on end, an’ heerd Rachel Emmons’s voice, jist as you heerd it last night. Mary Ann heerd it too, an’ it’s little peace she’s giv’ me sence that time. An’ so it’s been goin’ on an’ on, these eight or nine year.”

“But,” I asked, “are you sure she is alive? Have you seen her since? Have you asked her to be merciful and not disturb you?”

“Yes,” said he, with a bitterness of tone which seemed quite to obliterate the softer memories of his love, “I’ve seen her, an’ I’ve begged her on my knees to let me alone; but it’s no use. When it got to be so bad I couldn’t stan’ it, I sent her a letter, but I never got no answer. Next year, when our second boy died, frightened and worried to death, I believe, though he was scrawny enough when

Page 87

he was born, I took some money I'd saved to buy a yoke of oxen, an' went to Toledo o' purpose to see Rachel. It cut me awful to do it, but I was desprit. I found her livin' in a little house, with a bit o' garden, she'd bought. I s'pose she must 'a' had five or six hundred dollars when the farm was sold, an' she made a good deal by sewin', besides. She was settin' at her work when I went in, an' knowed me at onst, though I don't believe I'd ever 'a' knowed *her*. She was old, an' thin, an' hard-lookin'; her mouth was pale an' sot, like she was bitin' somethin' all the time; an' her eyes, though they was sunk into her head, seemed to look through an' through an' away out th' other side o' you.

"It jist shut me up when she looked at me. She was so corpse-like I was afraid she'd drop dead, then and there: but I made out at last to say, 'Rachel, I've come all the way from Illinois to see you.' She kep' lookin' straight at me, never sayin' a word. 'Rachel,' says I, 'I know I've acted bad towards you. God knows I didn't mean to do it. I don't blame you for payin' it back to me the way you're doin', but Mary Ann an' the boy never done you no harm. I've come all the way o' purpose to ask your forgiveness, hopin' you'll be satisfied with what's *been* done, an' leave off bearin' malice agin us.' She looked kind o' sorrowful-like, but drewed a deep breath, an' shuck her head, 'Oh, Rachel,' says I,—an' afore I knowed it I was right down on my knees at her feet,—'Rachel, don't be so hard on me. I'm the onhappiest man that lives. I can't stan' it no longer. Rachel, you didn't use to be so cruel, when we was boys an' girls together. Do forgive me, an' leave off' hauntin' me so.'

"Then she spoke up, at last, an' says she,—

"'Eber Nicholson, I was married to you, in the sight o' God!'

"'I know it,' says I; 'you say it to me every night; an' it wasn't my doin's that you're not my wife now: but, Rachel, if I'd 'a' betrayed you, an' ruined you, an' killed you, God couldn't 'a' punished me wuss than you're a-punishin' me.'

"She giv' a kind o' groan, an' two tears run down her white face. 'Eber Nicholson,' says she, 'ask God to help you, for I can't. There might 'a' been a time,' says she, 'when I could 'a' done it, but it's too late now.'

"'Don't say that, Rachel,' says I; 'it's never too late to be merciful an' forgivin'.'

"'It doesn't depend on myself,' says she; 'I'm *sent* to you. It's th' only comfort I have in life to be near you; but I'd give up that, if I could. Pray to God to let me die, for then we shall both have rest.'

"An' that was all I could git out of her.



“I come home ag’in, knowin’ I’d spent my money for nothin’. Sence then, it’s been jist the same as before,—not reg’lar every night, but sort o’ comes on by spells, an’ then stops three or four days, an’ then comes on ag’in. Fact is, what’s the use o’ livin’ in this way? We can’t be neighborly; we’re afeard to have anybody come to see us; we’ve got no peace, no comfort o’ bein’ together, an’ no heart to work an’ git ahead, like other folks. It’s jist killin’ me, body an’ soul.”

Page 88

Here the poor wretch fairly broke down, bursting suddenly into an uncontrollable fit of weeping. I waited quietly until the violence of his passion had subsided. A misery so strange, so completely out of the range of human experience, so hopeless apparently, was not to be reached by the ordinary utterances of consolation. I had seen enough to enable me fully to understand the fearful nature of the retribution which had been visited upon him for what was, at worst, a weakness to be pitied, rather than a sin to be chastised. "Never was a man worse punished," he had truly said. But I was as far as ever from comprehending the secret of those nightly visitations. The statement of Rachel Emmons, that they were now produced without her will, overturned—supposing it to be true—the conjecture which I might otherwise have adopted. However, it was now plain that the unhappy victim sobbing at my side could throw no further light on the mystery. He had told me all he knew.

"My friend," said I, when he had become calmer, "I do not wonder at your desperation. Such continual torment as you must have endured is enough to drive a man to madness. It seems to me to spring from the malice of some infernal power, rather than the righteous justice of God. Have you never tried to resist it? Have you never called aloud, in your heart, for Divine help, and gathered up your strength to meet and defy it, as you would to meet a man who threatened your life?"

"Not in the right way, I'm afeard," said he. "Fact is, I always tuck it as a judgment hangin' over me, an' never thought o' nothin' else than jist to grin and bear it."

"Enough of that," I urged,—for a hope of relief had suggested itself to me,—"you have suffered enough, and more than enough. Now stand up to meet it like a man. When the noises come again, think of what you have endured, and let it make you indignant and determined. Decide in your heart that you *will* be free from it, and perhaps you may be so. If not, build another shanty and sleep away from your wife and boy, so that they may escape, at least. Give yourself this claim to your wife's gratitude, and she will be kind and forbearing."

"I don't know but you're more 'n half right, stranger," he replied, in a more cheerful tone. "Fact is, I never thought on it that way. It's lightened my heart a heap, tellin' you; an' if I'm not too broke an' used-up-like, I'll try to foller your advice. I couldn't marry Rachel now, if Mary Ann was dead, we've been druv so fur apart. I don't know how it'll be when we're *all* dead: I s'pose them 'll go together that belongs together;—leastways, 't ought to be so."

Here we struck the Bloomington road, and I no longer needed a guide. When we pulled our horses around, facing each other, I noticed that the flush of excitement still burned on the man's sallow cheek, and his eyes, washed by probably the first freshet of feeling which had moistened them for years, shone with a faint lustre of courage.

Page 89

"No, no,—none o' that!" said he, as I was taking out my porte-monnaie; "you've done me a mighty sight more good than I've done you, let alone payin' me to boot. Don't forgit the turn to the left, after crossin' Jackson's Run. Good-bye, stranger! Take good keer o' yourself!"

And with a strong, clinging, lingering grasp of the hand, in which the poor fellow expressed the gratitude which he was too shy and awkward to put into words, we parted. He turned his horse's head, and slowly plodded back through the mud towards the lonely shanty.

On my way to Bloomington, I went over and over the man's story, in memory. The facts were tolerably clear and coherent: his narrative was simple and credible enough, after my own personal experience of the mysterious noises, and the secret, whatever it was, must be sought for in Rachel Emmons. She was still living in Toledo, Ohio, he said, and earned her living as a seamstress; it would, therefore, not be difficult to find her. I confess, after his own unsatisfactory interview, I had little hope of penetrating her singular reserve; but I felt the strongest desire to see her, at least, and thus test the complete reality of a story which surpassed the wildest fiction. After visiting Terre Haute, the next point to which business called me, on the homeward route, was Cleveland; and by giving an additional day to the journey, I could easily take Toledo on my way. Between memory and expectation the time passed rapidly, and a week later I registered my name at the Island House, Toledo.

After wandering about for an hour or two, the next morning, I finally discovered the residence of Rachel Emmons. It was a small story-and-a-half frame building, on the western edge of the town, with a locust-tree in front, two lilacs inside the paling, and a wilderness of cabbage-stalks and currant-bushes in the rear. After much cogitation, I had not been able to decide upon any plan of action, and the interval between my knock and the opening of the door was one of considerable embarrassment to me. A small, plumpish woman of forty, with peaked nose, black eyes, and but two upper teeth, confronted me. She, certainly, was not the one I sought.

"Is your name Rachel Emmons?" I asked, nevertheless.

"No, I'm not her. This is her house, though."

"Will you tell her a gentleman wants to see her?" said I, putting my foot inside the door as I spoke. The room, I saw, was plainly, but neatly furnished. A rag-carpet covered the floor; green rush-bottomed chairs, a settee with chintz cover, and a straight-backed rocking-chair were distributed around the walls; and for ornament there was an alphabetical sampler in a frame, over the low wooden mantel-piece.

The woman, however, still held the door-knob in her hand, saying, "Miss Emmons is busy. She can't well leave her work. Did you want some sewin' done?"

“No,” said I; “I wish to speak with her. It’s on private and particular business.”

Page 90

"Well," she answered with some hesitation, "I'll *tell* her. Take a cheer."

She disappeared through a door into a back room, and I sat down. In another minute the door noiselessly reopened, and Rachel Emmons came softly into the room. I believe I should have known her anywhere. Though from Eber Nicholson's narrative she could not have been much over thirty, she appeared to be at least forty-five. Her hair was streaked with gray, her face thin and of an unnatural waxy pallor, her lips of a whitish-blue color and tightly pressed together, and her eyes, seemingly sunken far back in their orbits, burned with a strange, ghastly—I had almost said phosphorescent—light. I remember thinking they must shine like touch-wood in the dark. I have come in contact with too many persons, passed through too wide a range of experience, to lose my self-possession easily; but I could not meet the cold, steady gaze of those eyes without a strong internal trepidation. It would have been the same, if I had known nothing about her.

She was probably surprised at seeing a stranger, but I could discern no trace of it in her face. She advanced but a few steps into the room, and then stopped, waiting for me to speak.

"You are Rachel Emmons?" I asked, since a commencement of some sort must be made.

"Yes."

"I come from Eber Nicholson," said I, fixing my eyes on her face.

Not a muscle moved, not a nerve quivered, but I fancied that a faint purple flush played for an instant under the white mask. If I were correct, it was but momentary. She lifted her left hand slowly, pressed it on her heart, and then let it fall. The motion was so calm that I should not have noticed it, if I had not been watching her so steadily.

"Well?" she said, after a pause.

"Rachel Emmons," said I,—and more than one cause conspired to make my voice earnest and authoritative,—“I know all. I come to you not to meddle with the sorrow—let me say the sin—which has blighted your life; not because Eber Nicholson sent me; not to defend him or to accuse you; but from that solemn sense of duty which makes every man responsible to God for what he does or leaves undone. An equal pity for him and for you forces me to speak. He cannot plead his cause; you cannot understand his misery. I will not ask by what wonderful power you continue to torment his life; I will not even doubt that you pity while you afflict him; but I ask you to reflect whether the selfishness of your sorrow may not have hardened your heart, and blinded you to that consolation which God offers to those who humbly seek it. You say that you are married to Eber Nicholson, in His sight. Think, Rachel Emmons, think of that moment

when you will stand before His awful bar, and the poor, broken, suffering soul, whom your forgiveness might still make yours in the holy marriage of heaven, shrinks from you with fear and pain, as in the remembered persecutions of earth!"

Page 91

The words came hot from my very heart, and the ice-crust of years under which hers lay benumbed gave way before them. She trembled slightly; and the same sad, hopeless moan which I had heard at midnight in the Illinois shanty came from her lips. She sank into a chair, letting her hands fall heavily at her side. There was no movement of her features, yet I saw that her waxy cheeks were moist, as with the slow ooze of tears so long unshed that they had forgotten their natural flow.

"I do pity him," she murmured at last, "and I believe I forgive him; but, oh! I've become an instrument of wrath for the punishment of both."

If any feeling of reproof still lingered in my mind, her appearance disarmed me at once. I felt nothing but pity for her forlorn, helpless state. It was the apathy of despair, rather than the coldness of cherished malice, which had so frozen her life. Still, the mystery of those nightly persecutions!

"Rachel Emmons," I said, "you certainly know that you still continue to destroy the peace of Eber Nicholson and his family. Do you mean to say that you *cannot* cease to do so, if you would?"

"It is too late," said she, shaking her head slowly, as she clasped both hands hard against her breast. "Do you think I would suffer, night after night, if I could help it? Haven't I stayed awake for days, till my strength gave way, rather than fall asleep, for *his* sake? Wouldn't I give my life to be free?—and would have taken it, long ago, with my own hands, but for the sin!"

She spoke in a low voice, but with a wild earnestness which startled me. She, then, was equally a victim!

"But," said I, "this thing had a beginning. Why did you visit him in the first place, when, perhaps, you might have prevented it?"

"I am afraid that was my sin," she replied, "and this is the punishment. When father and mother died, and I was layin' sick and weak, with nothin' to do but think of *him*, and me all alone in the world, and not knowin' how to live without him, because I had nobody left,—that's when it begun. When the deadly kind o' sleeps came on—they used to think I was dead, or faintin', at first—and I could go where my heart drew me, and look at him away off where he lived, 't was consolin', and I didn't try to stop it. I used to long for the night, so I could go and be near him for an hour or two. I don't know how I went: it seemed to come of itself. After a while I felt I was troublin' him and doin' no good to myself, but the sleeps came just the same as ever, and then I couldn't help myself. They're only a sorrow to me now, but I s'pose I shall have 'em till I'm laid in my grave."

Page 92

This was all the explanation she could give. It was evidently one of those mysterious cases of spiritual disease which completely baffle our reason. Although compelled to accept her statement, I felt incapable of suggesting any remedy. I could only hope that the abnormal condition into which she had fallen might speedily wear out her vital energies, already seriously shattered. She informed me, further, that each attack was succeeded by great exhaustion, and that she felt herself growing feebler, from year to year. The immediate result, I suspected, was a disease of the heart, which might give her the blessing of death sooner than she hoped. Before taking leave of her, I succeeded in procuring from her a promise that she would write to Eber Nicholson, giving him that free forgiveness which would at least ease his conscience, and make his burden somewhat lighter to bear. Then, feeling that it was not in my power to do more, I rose to depart. Taking her hand, which lay cold and passive in mine,—so much like a dead hand that it required a strong effort in me to repress a nervous shudder,—I said, “Farewell, Rachel Emmons, and remember that they who seek peace in the right spirit will always find it at last.”

“It won’t be many years before I find it”, she replied, calmly; and the weird, supernatural light of her eyes shone upon me for the last time.

I reached New York in due time, and did not fail, sitting around the broiled oysters and celery, with my partners, to repeat the story of the Haunted Shanty. I knew, beforehand, how they would receive it; but the circumstances had taken such hold of my mind,—so *burned* me, like a boy’s money, to keep buttoned up in the pocket,—that I could no more help telling the tale than the man I remember reading about, a great while ago, in a poem called “The Ancient Mariner”. Beeson, who, I suspect, don’t believe much of anything, is always apt to carry his raillery too far; and thenceforth, whenever the drum of a target-company, marching down Broadway, passed the head of our street, he would whisper to me, “There comes Rachel Emmons!” until I finally became angry, and insisted that the subject should never again be mentioned.

But I none the less recalled it to my mind, from time to time, with a singular interest. It was the one supernatural, or, at least, inexplicable experience of my life, and I continued to feel a profound curiosity with regard to the two principal characters. My slight endeavor to assist them by such counsel as had suggested itself to me was actuated by the purest human sympathy, and upon further reflection I could discover no other means of help. A spiritual disease could be cured only by spiritual medicine,—unless, indeed, the secret of Rachel Emmons’s mysterious condition lay in some permanent dislocation of the relation between soul and body, which could terminate only with their final separation.

Page 93

With the extension of our business, and the increasing calls upon my time during my Western journeys, it was three years before I again found myself in Toledo, with sufficient leisure to repeat my visit. I had some difficulty in finding the little frame house; for, although it was unaltered in every respect, a number of stately brick “villas” had sprung up around it and quite disguised the locality. The door was opened by the same little black-eyed woman, with the addition of four artificial teeth, which were altogether too large and loose. They were attached by plated hooks to her eye-teeth, and moved up and down when she spoke.

“Is Rachel Emmons at home?” I asked.

The woman stared at me in evident surprise.

“She’s dead,” said she, at last, and then added,—“let’s see,—ain’t you the gentleman that called here, some three or four years ago?”

“Yes”, said I, entering the room; “I should like to hear about her death.”

“Well,—’twas rather queer. She was failin’ when you was here. After that she got softer and weaker-like, an’ didn’t have her deathlike wearin’ sleeps so often, but she went just as fast for all that. The doctor said ’twas heart-disease, and the nerves was gone, too; so he only giv’ her morphy, and sometimes pills, but he knowed she’d no chance from the first. ’Twas a year ago last May when she died. She’d been confined to her bed about a week, but I’d no thought of her goin’ so soon. I was settin’ up with her, and ’twas a little past midnight, maybe. She’d been layin’ like dead awhile, an’ I was thinkin’ I could snatch a nap before she woke. All’t onst she riz right up in bed, with her eyes wide open, an’ her face lookin’ real happy, an’ called out, loud and strong,—‘Farewell, Eber Nicholson! farewell! I’ve come for the last time! There’s peace for me in heaven, an’ peace for you on earth! Farewell! farewell!’ Then she dropped back on the pillar, stone-dead. She’d expected it, ’t seems, and got the doctor to write her will. She left me this house and lot,—I’m her second cousin on the mother’s side,—but all her money in the Savin’s Bank, six hundred and seventy-nine dollars and a half, to Eber Nicholson. The doctor writ out to Illinois, an’ found he’d gone to Kansas, a year before. So the money’s in bank yit; but I s’pose he’ll git it, some time or other.”

As I returned to the hotel, conscious of a melancholy pleasure at the news of her death, I could not help wondering,—“Did he hear that last farewell, far away in his Kansas cabin? Did he hear it, and fall asleep with thanksgiving in his heart, and arise in the morning to a liberated life?” I have never visited Kansas, nor have I ever heard from him since; but I know that the *living ghost* which haunted him is laid forever.

Reader, you will not believe my story: BUT IT IS TRUE.

* * * * *

RHOTRUDA.



Page 94

In the golden reign of Charlemaign the king,
The three-and-thirtieth year, or thereabout,
Young Eginardus, bred about the court,
(Left mother-naked at a postern-door,)
Had thence by slow degrees ascended up,—
First page, then pensioner, lastly the king's knight
And secretary; yet held these steps for nought,
Save as they led him to the Princess' feet,
Eldest and loveliest of the regal three,
Most gracious, too, and liable to love:
For Bertha was betrothed; and she, the third,
Giselia, would not look upon a man.
So, bending his whole heart unto this end,
He watched and waited, trusting to stir to fire
The indolent interest in those large eyes,
And feel the languid hands beat in his own,
Ere the new spring. And well he played his part,—
Slipping no chance to bribe or brush aside
All that would stand between him and the light:
Making fast foes in sooth, but feeble friends.
But what cared he, who had read of ladies' love,
And how young Launcelot gained his Guenovere,—
A foundling, too, or of uncertain strain?
And when one morning, coming from the bath,
He crossed the Princess on the palace-stair,
And kissed her there in her sweet disarray,
Nor met the death he dreamed of in her eyes,
He knew himself a hero of old romance,—
Not seconding, but surpassing, what had been.

And so they loved; if that tumultuous pain
Be love,—disquietude of deep delight,
And sharpest sadness: nor, though he knew her heart
His very own,—gained on the instant, too,
And like a waterfall that at one leap
Plunges from pines to palms, shattered at once
To wreaths of mist and broken spray-bows bright,—
He loved not less, nor wearied of her smile;
But through the daytime held aloof and strange
His walk; mingling with knightly mirth and game;
Solicitous but to avoid alone
Aught that might make against him in her mind;



Yet strong in this,—that, let the world have end,
He had pledged his own, and held Rhotruda's troth.

But Love, who had led these lovers thus along,
Played them a trick one windy night and cold:
For Eginardus, as his wont had been,
Crossing the quadrangle, and under dark,—
No faint moonshine, nor sign of any star,—
Seeking the Princess' door, such welcome found,
The knight forgot his prudence in his love;
For lying at her feet, her hands in his,
And telling tales of knightship and emprise
And ringing war, while up the smooth white arm
His fingers slid insatiable of touch,
The night grew old: still of the hero-deeds
That he had seen he spoke, and bitter blows
Where all the land seemed driven into dust,
Beneath fair Pavia's wall, where Loup beat down
The Longobard, and Charlemagne laid on,
Cleaving horse and rider; then, for dusty drought
Of the fierce tale, he drew her lips to his,
And silence locked the lovers fast and long,
Till the great bell crashed One into their dream.

Page 95

The castle-bell! and Eginard not away!
With tremulous haste she led him to the door,
When, lo! the courtyard white with fallen snow,
While clear the night hung over it with stars!
A dozen steps, scarce that, to his own door:
A dozen steps? a gulf impassable!
What to be done? Their secret must not lie
Bare to the sneering eye with the first light;
She could not have his footsteps at her door!
Discovery and destruction were at hand:
And, with the thought, they kissed, and kissed again;
When suddenly the lady, bending, drew
Her lover towards her half-unwillingly,
And on her shoulders fairly took him there,—
Who held his breath to lighten all his weight,—
And lightly carried him the courtyard's length
To his own door; then, like a frightened hare,
Fled back in her own tracks unto her bower,
To pant awhile, and rest that all was safe.

But Charlemain the king, who had risen by night
To look upon memorials, or at ease
To read and sign an ordinance of the realm,—
The Fanolehen or Cunigosteura
For tithing corn, so to confirm the same
And stamp it with the pommel of his sword,—
Hearing their voices in the court below,
Looked from his window, and beheld the pair.

Angry the king,—yet laughing-half to view
The strangeness and vagary of the feat:
Laughing indeed! with twenty minds to call
From his inner bed-chamber the Forty forth,
Who watched all night beside their monarch's bed,
With naked swords and torches in their hands,
And test this lover's-knot with steel and fire;
But with a thought, "To-morrow yet will serve
To greet these mummers," softly the window closed,
And so went back to his corn-tax again.

But, with the morn, the king a meeting called
Of all his lords, courtiers and kindred too,
And squire and dame,—in the great Audience Hall
Gathered; where sat the king, with the high crown



Upon his brow, beneath a drapery
That fell around him like a cataract,
With flecks of color crossed and cancellate;
And over this, like trees about a stream,
Rich carven-work, heavy with wreath and rose,
Palm and palmirah, fruit and frondage, hung.

And more the high hall held of rare and strange:
For on the king's right hand Leoena bowed
In cloudlike marble, and beside her crouched
The tongueless lioness; on the other side,
And poising this, the second Sappho stood,—
Young Erexcea, with her head discrowned,
The anadema on the horn of her lyre:
And by the walls there hung in sequence long
Merlin himself, and Uterpendragon,
With all their mighty deeds, down to the day
When all the world seemed lost in wreck and rout,
A wrath of crashing steeds and men; and, in
The broken battle fighting hopelessly,
King Arthur, with the ten wounds on his head.

Page 96

But not to gaze on these appeared the peers.
Stern looked the king, and, when the court was met,—
The lady and her lover in the midst,—
Spoke to his lords, demanding them of this:
“What merits he, the servant of the king,
Forgetful of his place, his trust, his oath,
Who, for his own bad end, to hide his fault,
Makes use of her, a Princess of the realm,
As of a mule,—a beast of burden!—borne
Upon her shoulders through the winter’s night
And wind and snow?” “Death!” said the angry lords;
And knight and squire and minion murmured, “Death!”
Not one discordant voice. But Charlemagne—
Though to his foes a circulating sword,
Yet, as a king, mild, gracious, exorable,
Blest in his children too, with but one born
To vex his flesh like an ingrowing nail—
Looked kindly on the trembling pair, and said:
“Yes, Eginardus, well hast thou deserved
Death for this thing; for, hadst thou loved her so,
Thou shouldst have sought her Father’s will in this,—
Protector and disposer of his child,—
And asked her hand of him, her lord and thine.
Thy life is forfeit here; but take it, thou!—
Take even two lives for this forfeit one;
And thy fair portress—wed her; honor God,
Love one another, and obey the king.”

Thus far the legend; but of Rhotrude’s smile,
Or of the lords’ applause, as truly they
Would have applauded their first judgment too,
We nothing learn: yet still the story lives,
Shines like a light across those dark old days,
Wonderful glimpse of woman’s wit and love,
And worthy to be chronicled with hers
Who to her lover dear threw down her hair,
When all the garden glanced with angry blades;
Or like a picture framed in battle-pikes
And bristling swords, it hangs before our view,—
The palace-court white with the fallen snow,
The good king leaning out into the night,
And Rhotrude bearing Eginard on her back.

GREEK LINES.

[Concluded.]

“As when a ship, by skilful steersman wrought Nigh river’s mouth or foreland, where the wind Veers oft, as oft so steers, and shifts her sail,— So varied he, and of his tortuous train Curl’d many a wanton wreath in sight of Eve To lure her eye.”

And Eve, alas! yielded to the blandishments of the wily serpent, as we moderns, in our Art, have yielded to the licentious, specious life-curve of Hogarth. When I say Art, I mean that spirit of Art which has made us rather imitative than creative, has made us hold a too faithful mirror up to Nature, and has been content to let the great Ideal remain petrified in the marbles of Greece.

Page 97

I have endeavored to show how this Ideal may be concentrated in a certain abstract line, not only of sensuous, but of intellectual Beauty,—a line which, while it is as wise and subtle as the serpent, is as harmless and loving as the sacred dove of Venus. I have endeavored to prove how this line, the gesture of Attic eloquence, expresses the civilization of Pericles and Plato, of Euripides and Apelles. It is now proposed briefly to relate how this line was lost, when the politeness and philosophy, the literature and the Art of Greece were chained to the triumphal cars of Roman conquerors,—and how it seems to have been found again in our own day, after slumbering so long in ruined temples, broken statues, and cinerary urns.

The scholar who studies the aesthetical anatomy of Greek Art has a melancholy pleasure, like a surgeon, in watching its slow, but inevitable atrophy under the incubus of Rome. The wise, but childlike serenity and cheerfulness of soul, so tenderly pictured in the white stones from the quarries of Pentelicus, had, it is true, a certain sickly, exoteric life in Magna Graecia, as Pompeii and Herculaneum have proved to us. But the brutal manhood of Rome overshadowed and tainted the gentle exotic like a Upas-tree. Where, as in these places, the imported Greek could have some freedom, it grew up into a dim resemblance of its ancient purity under other skies. It had, I think, an elegiac plaintiveness in it, like a song of old liberty sung in captivity. Yet there was added to it a certain fungus-growth, never permitted by that far-off Ideal whose seeds were indigenous in the Peloponnesus, but rather springing from the rank ostentation of Rome. In its more monumental developments, under these new influences, the true line of Beauty became gradually vulgarized, and, by degrees, less intellectual and pure, till its spirit of fine and elegant reserve was quite lost in a coarse splendor. It must be admitted, however, that the Greek colonies of Italy expressed not a little of the old refinement in the lamps and candelabra and vases and *bijouterie* which we have exhumed from the ashes of Vesuvius.

But, turning to Rome herself, the most casual examination will impress us with the fact that there the lovely Greek lines were seized by rude conquerors, and at once were bent to answer base and brutal uses. To narrow a broad subject down to an illustration, let us look at a single feature, the *Cymatium*, as it was understood in Greece and Rome. This is a moulding of very frequent occurrence in classic entablatures, a curved surface with a double flexure. Perhaps the type of Greek lines, as represented in the previous paper on this subject, may be safely accepted as a fair example of the Greek interpretation of this feature. The Romans, on the other hand, not being able to understand and appreciate the delicacy and deep propriety of this line, seized their compasses, and, without thought or love, mechanically produced a gross likeness to it by the union of two quarter-circles thus:—

Page 98

[Illustration:

Greek.

Roman.]

Look upon this picture, and on this!—the one, refined, delicate, sensitive, fastidious, severe, never repeated; the other, thoughtless, vulgar, mathematical, common-sense, sensuous, reappearing ever with a stolid monotony. And such is the sentiment pervading all Roman Art. The conquerors took the *letter* from the Greeks, but never had the slightest feeling for its Ideal. But even this *letter*, when they transcribed it, writhed and was choked beneath hands which knew better the iron caestus of the gladiator than the subtile and spiritual touch of the artist.

We can have no stronger and more convincing proof that Architecture is the truest record of the various phases of civilization than we find in this. There was Greek Art, living and beautiful, full of inductive power and capacities of new expressions; and there were the boundless wealth and power of Rome. But Rome had her own ideas to enunciate; and so possessed was she with the impulse to give form to these ideas, to her ostentatious brutality, her barbarous pride, her licentious magnificence, that she could not pause to learn calm and serious lessons from the Greeks who walked her very forums, but, seizing their fair sanctuaries, she stretched them out to fit her standard; she took the pure Greek orders to decorate her arches, she piled these orders one above the other, she bent them around her gigantic circuses, till at last they had become acclimated and lost all their peculiar refinement, all their intellectual and dignified humanity. Every moulding, every capital, every detail was changed. The Romans had neither time nor inclination to bestow any love or thought on the expressiveness and tender meaning of subordinate parts. But out of the suggestions and reminiscences of Greek lines they made a rigid and inflexible grammar of their own, —a grammar to suit the mailed clang of Roman speech, which, in its cruel martial strength, sought no refinements, no delicate inflections from a distant Acropolis. The result was the coarse splendor of the Empire. How utterly the still Greek Ideal was forgotten in this noisy splendor, how entirely the chaste spirituality of the Greek line was lost in the round and lusty curves which are the *inevitable* footprints of Sensual Life, scarcely needs further amplification. I have referred to the Ionic capital of the Erechtheum as containing a microcosm of Attic Art, as presenting a fair epitome of the thought and love which Hellenic artists offered in the worship of their gods. Turn now to the Roman Ionic, as developed in any one of the most familiar examples of it, in the Temple of Concord, near the Via Sacra, in the Theatre of Marcellus, or the Colosseum. What a contrast! How formal, mechanical, pattern-like it has become! The grace of its freedom, the intellectual reserve of its strength, the secret humanity that thrilled through all its lines, the divine Art which obtained

Page 99

such sweet repose there,—all these are gone. Quality has yielded to quantity, and nothing is left save those external characteristics which he who runs may read, and he who pauses to study finds cold, vacant, and unsatisfactory. What the Ionic capital of Rome wants, and what all Roman Art wants, is *the inward life*, the living soul, which gives a peculiar expressiveness to every individual work, and raises it infinitely above the dangerous academic formalism of the schools.

In view of our own architecture, that which touches our own experience and is of us and out of us, the danger of this academic formalism cannot be too emphatically spoken of. When one carefully examines the transition from Greek to Roman Art, he cannot but be impressed with the fact, that the spirit which worked in this transition was the spirit of a vulgar and greedy conqueror. To illustrate his rude magnificence and to give a finer glory to his triumph, by right of conquest he appropriated the Greek orders. But the living soul which was in those orders, and gave them an infinity of meaning, an ever-varying poetry of expression, could not be enslaved; nor could the worshipful Love which created them find a home under the helmet of the soldier. So they became lifeless; they were at once formally systematized and classified, subjected to strict proportions and rules, and cast, as it were, in moulds. This arrangement enabled the conqueror, without waste of time in that long contemplative stillness out of which alone the beauty of the true Ideal arises, out of which alone man can create like a god, to avail himself at once of the Greek orders, not as a sensitive and delicate means of fine aesthetic expression, but as a mechanical language of contrasts of form to be used according to the exigencies of design. The service of Greek Art was perfect freedom; enslaved at Rome, it became academic. Thus systematized, it is true, it awes us by the superb redundancy and sumptuousness of its use in the temples and forums reared by that omnipresent power from Britannia to Baalbec. But the Art which is systematized is degraded. Emerson somewhere remarks that man descends to meet his fellows,—meaning, I suppose, that he has to sacrifice some of the higher instincts of his individuality when he desires to become social, and to meet his fellows on that low level of society, which, made up as it is of many individualities, has none of those secret aspirations which arise out of his own isolation. Society is a systematic aggregation for the benefit of the multitude, but great men lift themselves above it into a purer atmosphere. As Longfellow says, “They rise like towers in the city of God.” So with Art, —when we systematize it for the indiscriminate use of thoughtless and unloving men, we degrade it. And a singular proof of this is found in the fact that the Roman academical orders never have anything in them reserved from the common ken. They are superficial. They say all that

Page 100

they have to say and express all that they have to express at once, and disturb the mind with no doubt about any hidden meaning. They are at once understood. All their intention and purpose are patent to the most casual observer. He does not pause to inquire what motives actuated the architect in the composition of any Corinthian capital, because he feels that it is made according to the dictates of a rigid school created for the convenience of an unartistic age, and there is no individual love or aspiration in it.

Virtually, the Roman orders died in the first century of the Christian era. We all know how, when the authority of the Pagan schools was gone and the stern Vitruvian laws had become lost in the mists of antiquity, these orders gradually fell from their strict allegiance, and imbibed a new and healthy life from that rude but earnest Romanesque spirit, as in Byzantium and Lombardy. And we know, too, how, in after Gothic times, the spirit of the forgotten Aphrodite, Ideal Beauty, sometimes lurked furtively in the image of the Virgin Mary, and inspired the cathedral-builders with somewhat of the old creative impulse of Love. But the workings of this impulse are singularly contrasted in the productions of the Greek and Mediaeval artists. Nature, we have seen, offered to the former mysterious and oracular Sibylline leaves, profoundly significant of an indwelling humanity diffused through all her woods and fields and mountains, all her fountains, streams, and seas. Those meditative creators sat at her feet, earnest disciples, but gathering rather the spirit and motive of her gifts than the gifts themselves, making an Ideal and worshipping it as a deity. But for the cathedral-builder, Dryads and Hamadryads, Oreads, Fauns, and Naiads did not exist,—the Oak of Dodona uttered no oracles.

“A primrose by the river’s brim
A yellow primrose was to him,
And it was nothing more.”

To him Nature was an open book, from which he continually quoted with a loving freedom, not to illustrate his own deep relationships with her, but to give greater glory to that vast Power which stood behind her beautiful text and was revealed to him in the new religion from Palestine. He loved fruits and flowers and leaves because they were manifestations of the Love of God; and he used them in his Art, not as motives out of which to create abstract forms, out of which to eliminate an ideal humanity, but to show his intense appreciation of the Divine Love which gave them. Had he been a Pantheist, as Orpheus was, it is probable he would have idealized these things and created Greek lines. But believing in a distinct God, the supreme Originator of all things, he was led to a worship of sacrifice and offerings, and needed no Ideal. So, with a lavish hand, he appropriated the abundant Beauty of Nature, imitating its external expressions with his careful chisel, and suffering his sculptured lines to throw their wayward tendrils and vagrant leaflets outside the strict limits of his spandrels. The life of Gothic lines was in their sensuous liberty; the life of Greek lines was in their intellectual reserve. Those

arose out of a religion of emotional ardor; these, out of a religion of philosophical reflection. Hence, while the former were wild and picturesque, the latter were serious, chaste, and very human.

Page 101

Doubtless the nearest approach to ideal abstractions to be found in Mediaeval Art is contained in that remarkable and very characteristic system of foliations and cuspidations in tracery, which were suggested by the leaf-forms in Nature. In this adaptation, when first it was initiated in the earliest phases of Gothic, there is something like Greek Love. The simple trefoil aperture seems a fair architectural version of the clover-leaves. But the propriety of the use of these clover-lines was hinted by a constructive exigency, the pointed arch. The inevitable assimilation of the natural forms of leaves with this feature was too evident not to be improved by such active and ardent worshippers as the Freemasons. Thus originated Gothic tracery, which afterwards branched out into such sumptuous and unrestrained luxury as we find in the Decorated styles of England, the Flamboyant of France, the late Geometric of Germany. Thus were the masons true to the zealous and passionate enthusiasm of their religion. They used foliations, not on account of their subjective significance, as the Greek artists did, but on account of their objective and material applicability to the decoration of their architecture. But no natural form was ever made use of by a Greek artist merely because suggested by a constructive exigency. It was the inward life of the thing itself which he saw, and it was his love for it which made him adopt it. This love refined and purified its object, and never would have permitted it to grow into any wild and licentious Flamboyant under the serene and quiet skies of the Aegean.

And so the Greek lines slept in patient marble through the long Dark Ages, and no one came to awaken them into beautiful life again. No one, consecrated Prince by the chrism of Nature, wandered into the old land to kiss the Sleeping Beauty into life, and break the deep spell which was around her kingdom.

Then came the Renaissance in the fifteenth century. But—alas that we must say it!—it was fundamentally a Renaissance of error rather than of truth. It was a revival of Roman Art, and not of Greek. The line which we call Hogarth's, but which in reality is as old as human life and its passions, was the key-note of it all. So wanton were the wreaths it curled in the sight of the great masters of that period, that they all yielded to its subtle fascinations and sinned,—sinned, inasmuch as they devoted their vast powers to the revival and refinement of a sensuous academic formalism, instead of breathing into all the architectural forms and systems then known (a glorious material to work with) the pure life of the Ideal. Had such men as Michel Angelo, San Gallo, Palladio, Scamozzi, Vignola, San Michele, Bernini, been inspired by the highest principles of Art, and known the thoughtful lines of Greece, so catholic to all human moods, and so wisely adapted to the true spirit of reform,—had they known these, all subsequent Art would have felt the noble impulse, and been developed into that sphere of perfection which we see rendering illustrious the primitive posts and lintels of antiquity, and which we picture to ourselves in the imaginary future of Hope as glorifying a far wider scope of human knowledge and ingenuity.

Page 102

The Gothic architecture of the early part of the fifteenth century was ripe for the spirit of healthy reform. It had been actively accumulating, during the progress of the age of Christianity, a boundless wealth of forms, a vast amount of constructive resources, and material fit for innumerable architectural expressions of human power. But in the last two centuries of this era the Love which gave life to this architecture in its earlier developments gradually became swallowed up in the Pride of the workman; and the luscious and abandoned luxury of line led it farther and farther astray from the true path, till at last it became like an unweeded garden run to seed, and there was no health in it. In the year 1555, at Beauvais, the masonic workmen uttered their last cry of defiance against the old things made new in Italy. Jean Wast and Francois Marechal of that town, two cathedral-builders, said,—“that they had heard of the Church of St. Peter at Rome, and would maintain that their Gothic could be built as high and on as grand a scale as the antique orders of this Michel Angelo.” And with this spirit they built a wonderful pyramid over the cross of their cathedral. But, alas! it fell in the fifth year of its arrogant pride, and this is the last we hear of Gothic architecture in those times. Over the wild and picturesque ruins the spirits of the old conquerors of Gaul once more strode with measured tread, and began to set up their prevailing standards in the very strongholds of Gothic supremacy. These conquerors trampled down the true as well as the false in the Mediaeval *regime*, and utterly extinguished that sole lamp of knowledge which had given light to the Ages of Darkness and had kindled into life and beauty the cathedrals of Europe.

This was the error of the Renaissance. Its apostles would not recognize the capacities existing in the great architecture they displaced, for opening into a new life under the careful culture of a revived knowledge. But they rooted it out bodily, and planted instead an exotic of the schools. It was the re-birth of an Art *system*, which in its former existence had developed in an atmosphere of conquest. It taught them to kill, burn, and destroy all that opposed the progress of its triumph. It was eminently revolutionary in its character, and its reign, to all those multitudinous expressions of life and thought which had arisen under the intermediate and more liberal dynasty, was one of terror. Truly, it was a fierce and desolating instrument of reform.

It would be a tempting theme of speculation to follow in the imagination the probable progress of a Greek, instead of a Roman Renaissance, into such active, but misguided schools as those of Rouen and Tours in the latter part of the fifteenth century,—of Rouen, with its Roger Arge, its brothers Leroux, who built the old and famous Hotel Bourgtheroulde there, its Pierre de Saulbeaux, and all that legion of architects

Page 103

and builders who were employed by the Cardinal Amboise in his castle of Gaillon,—of Tours, with its Pierre Valence, its Francois Marchant, its Viart and Colin Byart, out of whose rich and picturesque craft-spirit arose the quaint fancies of the palaces of Blois and Chambord, and the playfulness of many an old Flemish house-front. Such a Renaissance would not have come among these venial sins of *naïvete*, this sportive affluence of invention, to overturn ruthlessly and annihilate. Its mission would inevitably have been, not to destroy, but to fulfil,—to invest these strange results of human frailty and human power with that grave ideal beauty which nineteen centuries before had done a good work with the simple columns and architraves on the banks of the Ilissus, and which, under the guidance of Love, would have made the arches and vaults and buttresses and pinnacles of a later civilization illustrious with even more eloquent expressions of refinement. For Greek lines do not stand apart from the sympathies of men by any spirit of ceremonious and exclusive rigor, as is undeniably the case with those which were adopted from Rome. They are not a *system*, but a *sentiment*, which, wisely directed, might creep into the heart of any condition of society, and leaven all its architecture with a purifying and pervading power without destroying its independence, where an inflexible system could assume a position only by tyrannous oppression.

Yet when we examine the works of the Renaissance, after the system had become more manageable and acclimated under later Italian and French hands, we cannot but admire the skill with which the lightest fancies and the most various expressions of human contrivance were reconciled to the formal rules and proportions of the Roman orders. The Renaissance palaces and civil buildings of the South and West of Europe are so full of ingenuity, and the irrepressible inventive power of the artist moves with so much freedom and grace among the stubborn lines of that revived architecture, that we cannot but regard the results with a sort of scholastic pride and pleasure. We cannot but ask ourselves, If the spirit of those architects could obtain so much liberty under the restrictions of such an unnatural and unnecessary despotism, what would have been the result, if they had been put in possession of the very principles of Hellenic Art, instead of these dangerous and complex models of Rome, which were so far removed from the purity and simplicity of their origin? Up to a late day, the great aim of the Renaissance has been to interpret an advanced civilization with the sensuous line; and *so far as this line is capable of such expression*, the result has been satisfactory.

Page 104

Thus four more weary centuries were added to the fruitless slumbers of Ideal Beauty among the temples of Greece. Meanwhile, in turn, the Byzantine, the Northman, the Frank, the Turk, and finally the bombarding Venetian, left their rude invading footprints among her most cherished haunts, and defiled her very sanctuary with the brutal touch of barbarous conquest. But the kiss which was to dissolve this enchantment was one of Love; and not Love, but cold indifference, or even scorn, was in the hearts of the rude warriors. So she slept on undisturbed in spirit, though broken and shattered in the external type, and it was reserved for a distant future to be made beautiful by her disenchantment and awakening.

In 1672, a pupil of the artist Lebrun, Jacques Carrey, accompanied the Marquis Ollier de Nointee, ambassador of Louis XIV., to Constantinople. On his way he spent two months at Athens, making drawings of the Parthenon, then in an excellent state of preservation. These drawings, more useful in an archaeological than an artistic point of view, are now preserved in the Bibliotheque Imperiale of Paris. In 1676, two distinguished travellers, one a Frenchman, Dr. Spon, the other an Englishman, Sir George Wheler, tarried at Athens, and gave valuable testimony, in terms of boundless admiration, to the beauty and splendor of the temples of the Acropolis and its neighborhood, then quite unknown to the world. Other travellers followed these pioneers in the traces of that old civilization. But in 1687 Koenigsmark and his Venetian forces threw their hideous bombshells among the exquisite temples of the Acropolis, and, igniting thereby the powder-magazine with which the Turks had desecrated the Parthenon, tore into ruins that loveliest of the lovely creations of Hellas. It was not until the publishing of the famous work of Stuart and Revett on "The Antiquities of Athens," in 1762, that the world was made familiar with the external expressions of Greek Architecture. This publication at once created a curious revolution in the practice of architecture,—a revolution extending in its effects throughout Europe. A fever arose to reproduce Greek temples; and to such an extent was this vacant and thoughtless reproduction carried out, that at one time it bid fair to supplant the older Renaissance. The spirit of the new Renaissance, however, was one of mere imitation, and had not the elements of life and power to insure its ultimate success. No attempt was made to acclimate the exotic to suit the new conditions it was thus suddenly called upon to fulfil; for the *sentiment* which actuated it, and the Love with which it was created, were not understood. It was the mere setting up of old forms in new places; and the Grecian porticos and pediments and columns, which were multiplied everywhere from the models supplied by Stuart and Revett, and found their way profusely into this New World, still stare upon us gravely with strange alien looks.

Page 105

The impetuous current of modern life beats impatiently against that cumbrous solidity of peristyle which sheltered well in its day the serene philosophers of the Agora, but which is now the merest impediment in the way of modern traffic and modern necessities. But presently the spirit of formalism, engendered by the old Renaissance, took hold of the revived Greek lines, and stiffened them into acquiescence with a base mathematical system, which effectually deprived them of that life and reproductive power which belong only to a state of artistic freedom. They were reduced to rule and deadened in the very process of their revival.

So the Greek Ideal, though strangely transplanted thus into the noise of modern streets, was not awakened from its long repose by the clatter and roaring of our new civilization. As regarded the uses of life, it still slept in petrifications of Pentelic marble. And when those petrifications were repeated in modern quarries, it was merely the shell they gave; the spirit within had not yet broken through.

Greek lines, therefore, owed their earliest revival to the vagaries of a capricious taste, and the desire to give zest to the architecture of the day by their novelty. It was not for the sake of the new life there was in them, and of that pliable spirit of refinement so suited to the wise re-birth of ancient Love in Art. It is not surprising that some of the more modern masters of the old Renaissance, with whom that system had become venerable, from its universal use as the vehicle by which the greatest artists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries had expressed their thoughts and inspirations, regarded with peculiar distrust these outlandish innovations on the exclusive walks of their own architecture. For they saw only a few external forms which the beautiful principles of Hellenic Art had developed to fit an old civilization; the applicability of these primary principles to the refinement of the architectural expressions of a modern state of society they could not of course comprehend. About the year 1786, we find Sir William Chambers, the leading architect of his day in England, in his famous treatise on "The Decorative Part of Civil Architecture," giving elaborate and emphatic expression to his contempt of that Greek Art, which had presented itself to him in a guise well suited to cause misapprehension and error. "It must candidly be confessed," he says, "that the Grecians have been far excelled by other nations, not only in the magnitude and grandeur of their structures, but likewise in point of fancy, ingenuity, variety, and elegant selection." A heresy, indeed!

Page 106

Two distinguished German artists—the one, Schinkel of Berlin, born in 1781,—the other, Klenze of Munich, born in 1784—were children when Chambers uttered these treasonable sentiments concerning Greek Art. Later, at separate times, these artists visited Greece, and so filled themselves with the feeling and sentiment of the Art there, so consecrated their souls with the appreciative study of its divine Love, that the patient Ideal at last awoke from its long slumbers, entered into the breathing human temples thus prepared for it by the pure rites of Aphrodite, *and once more lived*. Thus in the opening years of the nineteenth century was a new and reasonable Renaissance, not of an antique type, but of a spirit which had the gift of immortal youth, and uttered oracles of prophecy to these chosen Pythians of Art.

Through Schinkel, the pure Hellenic style, only hinted at previously in the attempts of less inspired Germans, such as Langhaus, who embodied his crude conceptions in the once celebrated Brandenburg Gate, was fairly and grandly revived in the Hauptwache Theatre and the beautiful Museum and the Bauschule and Observatory of Berlin. He competed with Klenze in a series of designs for the new palace at Athens, rich with a truly royal array of courts, corridors, saloons, and colonnades. But the evil fate which ever hangs over the competitions of genius was baleful even here, and the barrack-like edifice of Guetner was preferred. His latest conception was a design of a summer palace at Orianda, in the Crimea, for the Empress of Russia, where the purity of the old Greek lines was developed into the poetry of terraces and hanging-gardens and towers, far-looking over the Black Sea. Schinkel was called the Luther of Architecture; and the spiritual serenity which he breathed into the pomp and ceremonious luxury of the Art of his day seems to give him some title to this distinction. Yet, with all the freedom and originality with which he wrought out the new advent, he was perhaps rather too timid than too bold in his reforms,—adhering too strictly to the original letter of Greek examples, especially with regard to the orders. He could not entirely shake off the old incubus of Rome.

And so, though in a less degree, with Klenze. When, in 1825, Louis of Bavaria came to the throne, he was appointed Government Architect, and in this capacity gave shape to the noble dreams of that monarch, in the famous Glyptothek, the Pinacothek, the palace, and those civil and ecclesiastical buildings which render Munich one of the most monumental cities of Europe. It was his confessed aim to take up the work of the Renaissance artists, having regard to our increased knowledge of that antique civilization of which the masters of the sixteenth century could study only the most complex developments, and those models of Rome which were farthest removed from the pure fountain-head of Greece. “To-day,” he said, “put in possession of the very principles

Page 107

of Hellenic Art, we can apply them to all our actual needs,—learning from the Greeks themselves to preserve our independence, and at the same time to be duly novel and unrestrained according to circumstances.” These are certainly noble sentiments; and one cannot but wish, that, when, in 1830, Klenze was called upon to prepare plans for the grand Walhalla of Bavaria, he had remembered his sublime theory and worked up to its spirit, instead of recalling the Parthenon in his exterior and the Olympian temple of Agrigentum in his interior. The last effort of this distinguished artist was the building of three superb palaces for the museum of the Emperor at St. Petersburg, finished in 1851.

The seed thus planted fell upon good ground and brought forth a hundred-fold. Then, throughout Germany, the scholastic formalism of the old Renaissance began to fall into disrepute, and a finer feeling for the eloquence of pure lines began to show itself. The strict limitations of the classic orders were no longer recognized as impassable; a sentiment of artistic freedom, a consciousness of enlarged resources, a far wider range of form and expression, were evident in town and country, in civil and ecclesiastical structures; and with all this delightful and refreshing liberty was mingled that peculiar refinement of line which was revived from Greece and was the secret of this change. It was not over monumental edifices alone that this calm and thoughtful spirit was breathed, but the most playful fancies of domestic architecture derived from it an increased grace and purity, and the study of Love moved over them, elegant and light-footed as Camilla.

“The flower she touched on dipped and rose,
And turned to look at her.”

This revival of Hellenic principles is now infusing life into modern German designs; and so well are these principles beginning to be understood, that architects do not content themselves with the mere reproduction of that narrow range of motives which was uttered in the temples of heroic Greece, but, under these new impulses, they gather in for their use all that has been done in ancient or modern Italy, in the Romanesque of Europe, in the Gothic period, in Saracenic or Arabic Art, in all the expressions of the old Renaissance. By the very necessity of the Greek line, they are rendered catholic and unexcluding in their choice of forms, but fastidious and hesitating in their interpretation of them into this new language of Art. Thus the good work is going on in Germany, and architecture *lives* there, thanks to those two illustrious pilgrims who brought back from the land of epics, not only the scallop-shells upon their shoulders, but in their hearts the consecration of Ideal Beauty.

Page 108

According to the usual custom, in the year 1827, a scholar of the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris, having achieved the distinguished honor of being named *Grand Pensionnaire* of Architecture for that year,—was sent to the Academie Francaise in the Villa Medici at Rome, to pursue his studies there for five years at the expense of the Government. This scholar was Henri Labrouste. While in Italy, his attention was directed to the Greek temples of Paestum. Trained, as he had been, in the strictest academic architecture of the Renaissance, he was struck by many points of difference between these temples and the Palladian formulae which had hitherto held despotic sway over his studies. In grand and minor proportions, in the disposition of triglyphs in the frieze, in mouldings and general sentiment, he perceived a remarkable freedom from the restraints of his school,—a freedom which, so far from detracting from the grandeur of the architecture, gave to it a degree of life and refinement which his appreciative eye now sought for in vain among the approved models of the Academy. Studying these new revelations with love and veneration, it was not long before the pure Hellenic spirit, confined in the severe peristyles and cellas of the Paestum temples, entered into his heart, with all its elastic capacities, all its secret and mysterious sympathies for the new life which had sprung up during its long imprisonment in those stained and shattered marbles. Labrouste, on his return to Paris, in 1830, surprised the grave professors of the Academy, Le Bas, Baltard, and the rest, by presenting to them, as the result of his studies, carefully elaborated drawings of the temples at Paestum. Witnessing, with pious horror, the grave departures from their rules contained in the drawings of their former favorite, they charged him with error, even as a copyist. True to their prejudices, their eyes did not penetrate beyond the outward type, and they at once began to find technical objections. They told him, never did such an absurdity occur in classic architecture as a triglyph on a corner! Palladio and the Italian masters never committed such an obvious crime against propriety, nor could an instance of it be found in all Roman antiquities. It was in vain that poor Labrouste upheld the accuracy of his work, and reminded the Academy that among the Roman models no instance had been found of a Doric corner,—that this order occurred only so ruined that no corner was left for examination, or in the grand circumferences of the Colosseum and the Theatre of Marcellus, where, from the nature of the case, no corner could be. The professors still maintained the integrity of their long-established ordinances, and, to disprove the assertions of the young pretender, even sent a commission to examine the temples in question. The result was a confirmation of the fact, the ridicule of Paris, the consequent branding of the young artist as an architectural heretic, and a continued persecution of him by the Ecole des Beaux Arts. Undaunted, however, Labrouste established an *atelier* in Paris, to which flocked many intelligent students, sympathizing with the courage which could be so strong in the conviction of truth as to brave in its defence the displeasure of the powerful hierarchy of the School.

Page 109

Thus was founded the new Renaissance in France; and, in this genial atmosphere, Greek lines began to exercise an influence far more thorough and healthy than had hitherto been experienced in the whole history of Art. To the lithe and elegant fancy of the French this Revelation was especially grateful. For the youth of this nation soon learned that in these newly opened paths, their invention and sentiment, so long straitened and confined within the severe limits of the old system, could move with the utmost freedom, and at the same time be preserved from licentious excess by the delicate spirit of the new lines. Thus natural fervor, grace, and fecundity of thought found here a most welcome outlet.

For some time the designs of the new school were not recognized in the competitions of the Ecole des Beaux Arts; but when, in the course of Nature, some two or three of the more strenuous and bigoted professors of Palladio's golden rules were removed from the scene of contest, the *Romantique* (for so the new system had been named) was received at length into the bosom of the architectural church, and now it may be justly deemed *the distinctive architectural expression of French Art*.

Labrouste was not alone in his efforts; but Duban and Constant Dufeux seconded him with genius and energy. Most of the important buildings which have been erected in France within the last six or eight years have either been unreservedly and frankly in the new style, or been refined by more limited applications of Hellenic principles. Even the revived Mediaeval school, which, under the distinguished leadership of M. Viollet le Duc and the lamented M. J.B.A. Lassus, has lately been strengthened to a remarkable degree in France, and which shared with the *Romantique* the displeasure of the Academy,—even this has tacitly acknowledged the power of Greek lines, and instinctively suffered them to purify, to a certain degree, the old grotesque Gothic license. Most of the modern buildings of Paris along the new Boulevards, around the tower of St. Jacques, and wherever else the activity of the Emperor has made itself felt in the improvements of the French capital, are by masters or pupils of the *Romantique* persuasion, and, in their design, are distinguished by that tenderness of Love and earnestness of Thought which are the fountains of living Art. One of the most remarkable peculiarities of this school is, that it brings out of every mind which studies and builds in it strong traits of individuality; so that every work appears as if its author had something particular to express in it,—something to say with especial grace and emphasis. The ordinary decorations of windows and doors are not made in conventional shapes, as of yore, but are highly idiosyncratic. The designer had a distinct thought about this window or that door,—and when he would use his thought to ornament these features, he idealized it with his Greek lines to make it architectural, just

Page 110

as a poet attunes his thought to the harmony and rhythm of verse. Antique prejudices, bent into rigid conformity with antique rubrics, are often shocked at the strange innovations of these new Dissenters from the faith of Palladio and Philibert Delorme,—shocked at the naked humanity in the new works, and would cover it with the conventional fig-leaves prescribed in the homilies of Vignola. Laymen, accustomed to the cold architectural proprieties of the old Renaissance, and habituated to the formalities of the five orders, the prudish decorum of Italian window-dressings and pediments and pilasters and scrolls, are apt to be surprised at such strange dispositions of unprecedented and heretical features, that the intention of the building in which they occur is at once patent to the most casual observer, and the story of its destination told with the eloquence of a poetical and monumental language. All great revolutions have proved how hard it is to break through the crust of custom, and this has been no exception to the rule; yet in justice it must be said that every intelligent mind, every eye possessing the “gifted simplicity of vision”, to use a happy phrase of Hawthorne’s, recognizes the truth and wisdom there are in the blessed renovations of the *Romantique*, and looks upon them as the sweeps of a besom clearing away the dust and cobwebs which ages of prejudice have spread thickly around the magnificent art of architecture.

Unlike the unwieldy and ponderous classic or Italian systems, whose pride cannot stoop to anything beneath the haughtiest uses of life without being broken into the whims of the grotesque and *Rococo*, the *Romantique* has already exhibited the graceful ease with which it may be applied to the most playful as well as the most serious employments of Art. It has decorated the perfumer’s shop on the Boulevards with the most delicate fancies woven out of the odor of flowers and the finest fabrics of Nature, and, in the hands of Labrouste, has built the great Bibliotheque *Ste. Genevieve*, the most important work with pure Greek lines, and perhaps the most exquisite, while it is one of the most serious, of modern buildings. The lore of the classics and the knowledge of the natural world, idealized and harmonized by affectionate study, are built up in its walls, and, internally and externally, it is a work of the highest Art. The *Romantique* has also been used with especial success in funereal monuments. Structures of this character, demanding earnestly in their composition the expression of human sentiment, have hitherto been in most cases unsatisfactory, as they have been built out of a narrow range of Renaissance, Egyptian and Gothic *motives*, originally invented for far different purposes, and, since then, *classified*, as it were, for use, and reduced to that inflexible system out of which have come the formal restrictions of modern architecture. Hence these *motives*

Page 111

have never come near enough to human life, in its individual characteristics, to be plastic for the expression of those emotions to which we desire to give the immortality of stone in memory of departed friends. The *Romantique*, however, confined to no rigid types of external form, out of its noble freedom is capable of giving "a local habitation and a name" to a thousand affections which hitherto have wandered unseen from heart to heart, or been palpable only in words and gestures which disturb our sympathies for a while and then die. Probably the most remarkable indication of this capacity, as yet shown, is contained in a tomb erected by Constant Dufeux in the Cimetiere du Sud, near Paris, for the late Admiral Dumont d'Urville. This structure contains in its outlines a symbolic expression of human life, death, and immortality, and in its details an architectural version of the character and public services of the distinguished deceased. The finest and most eloquent resources of color and the chisel are brought to bear on the work; and the whole, combined by a very sensitive and delicate feeling for proportion, thus embodies one of the most expressive elegies ever written. The tomb of Madame Delaroche, *nee* Vernet, in the Cimetiere Montmartre, by Duban, is another remarkable instance of this elastic capacity of Greek lines; and though taken frankly, in its general form, from a common Gothic type, its chaste and graceful freedom from Gothic restrictions in detail gives it a life and poetic expressiveness which must be exceedingly grateful to the Love which commanded its erection.

Paris thus affords us, in its modern architecture, a happy proof of the inevitable reforming and refining tendencies of the abstract lines of Greece, when properly understood and fairly applied. Under their influence old things have been made new, and the coldness and hardness of Academic Art have been warmed and softened into life. Through the agency of the *Romantique* school, perhaps more new and directly symbolic architectural expressions have been uttered within the last four years than within the last four centuries combined. Like the gestures of pantomime, which constitute an instinctive and universal language, these abstract lines, coming out of our humanity and rendered elegant by the idealization of study, are restoring to architecture its highest capacity of conveying thought in a monumental manner. One of the most dangerous results of that eclecticism which the advanced state of our archaeological knowledge has made the principal characteristic of modern design consists in the fatal facility thus afforded us of availing ourselves of vast resources of forms and combinations ready-made to suit almost all the exigencies of composition, as we have understood it. The public has thus been made so familiar with the set variations of classic orders and Palladian windows and cornices, with all manner of Gothic chamfers and cuspidations and foliations, and the other conventional

Page 112

symbols of architecture, which undeniably have more of *knowledge* than *love* in them, —so accustomed have the people become to these things, that the great art of which these have been the only language now almost invariably fails to strike any responsive chord in the human heart or to do any of that work which it is the peculiar province of the fine arts to accomplish. Instead of leading the age, it seems to lag behind it, and to content itself with reflecting into our eyes the splendor of the sun which has set, instead of facing the east and foretelling the glory which is coming. Architecture, properly conceived, should always contain within itself a direct appeal to the sense of fitness and propriety, the common-sense of mankind, which is ever ready to recognize reason, whether conveyed by the natural motions of the mute or the no less natural motions of lines. Now history has proved to us, as has been shown, how, when the eloquence of these simple, instinctive lines has been used as the primary element of design, great eras of Art have arisen, full of the sympathies of humanity, immortal records of their age. It cannot be denied, on the other hand, that our eclectic architecture, popularly speaking, is not comprehended, even by the most intelligent of cultivated people; and this is plainly because it is based on learning and archeology, instead of that natural love which scorns the limitations of any other *authorities and precedents* than those which can be found in the human heart, where the true architecture of our time is lying unsuspected, save in those half-conscious Ideals which yearn for free expression in Art.

Let our artists turn to Greece, and learn how, in the meditative repose of that antiquity, these Ideals arose to life beneficent with the baptism of grace, and became visible in the loveliness of a hundred temples. Let them there learn how in our own humanity is the essence of form as a language, and that *to create*, as true artists, we must know ourselves and our own distinctive capacities for the utterance of monumental history. After this sublime knowledge comes the necessity of the knowledge of precedent. The great Past supplies us with the raw material, with orders, colonnades and arcades, pediments, consoles, cornices, friezes and architraves, buttresses, battlements, vaults, pinnacles, arches, lintels, rustications, balustrades, piers, pilasters, trefoils, and all the innumerable conventionalities of architecture. It is plainly our duty not to revive and combine these in those cold and weary changes which constitute modern design, but to make them live and speak intelligibly to the people through the eloquent modifications of our own instinctive lines of Life and Beauty.

The riddle of the modern Sphinx is, How to create a new architecture? and we find the Oedipus who shall solve it concealed in our own hearts.

* * * * *

THE ORDEAL BY BATTLE.

Page 113

Virginia, which began by volunteering as peacemaker in our civil troubles, seems likely to end by being their battleground; as Mr. Pickwick, interfering between the belligerent rival editors, only brought upon his own head the united concussion of their carpet-bags. And as Dickens declares that the warriors engaged far more eagerly in that mimic strife, on discovering that all blows were to be received by deputy, so there is evidently an increased willingness to deal hard knocks on both sides, in the present case, so long as it is clear that only Virginia will take them. Maryland, under protection of our army, adroitly contrives to shift the scene of action farther South. The Gulf States, with profuse courtesies for the Old Dominion, consent to shift it farther North. The Southern Confederacy has talked about paying Richmond the “compliment” of selecting it for the seat of government;—as if a bully, about to be lynched in his own house by the crowd, should compliment his next-door neighbor by climbing in at his window. It is very pleasant to have a hospitable friend; but it is counting on his hospitality rather too strongly, when you make choice of his apartments to be tarred and feathered in.

Thus fades the fancy of an “independent neutrality” for the Old Dominion. It ought to fade;—for neutrality is a crime, where one’s mother’s life is at stake; and the Border theory of independence only reminds one of Pitt’s definition of an independent statesman, “a statesman not to be depended on”. How sad has been the decline of Virginia! How strange, that in 1790, of the ten American post-offices yielding more than a thousand dollars annually, that stately old commonwealth held five! Now “a poverty-stricken State”, by confession of her own newspapers,—beleaguered, blockaded,—with no imports but hungry and moneyless soldiers, and no exports save fugitives of all colors,—what has she to hope from the present warfare? Elsewhere riches have wings; in Virginia they are yet more transitory, having legs. Two hundred million dollars’ worth of her property has become unsalable, if not worthless, within two months. She has but two great staples: tobacco to send North, and slaves to send South. The slaves at present go only to the wrong point of the compass, at rates remunerative to themselves alone; and the tobacco-trade, for this season, will not even end in smoke.

But that which is now the condition of Virginia must ultimately be the condition of the other seceding States. The tide of Secession has already turned, and such tides never turn twice. The conspirators in Maryland and Missouri had but one opportunity, and it was lost; with it also went the whole cause of the Secessionists. For one week the North shuddered, knowing the defenceless condition of Washington. Now no Northern man shudders, except those whose Southern female cousins have not yet found a refuge with the household gods of the eminent Senator from Texas.

Page 114

The man who ever doubted that the first gun fired by the insurgents would instantly unite the nation against them knew as little of the American people as if he were editor of the London "Times." There is no chemical solvent like gunpowder. Even the Mexican War, utterly opposed to the moral convictions of the majority of Northern men, swept them away in such a current that the very party which opposed it could find no path to the Presidency but for its chief hero. Had the present outbreak occurred far less favorably than it has, had the discretion of President Lincoln been much less, or that of Mr. Davis much greater, still the unanimity would have been merely a question of time, and the danger of Washington would have reconciled all minor feuds. The Democratic party would inevitably have embraced the war, when once declared; Douglas would have made speeches for it, Buchanan subscribed money for it, and Butler joined in it; Bennett would still have floated triumphant on the tide of zeal, and Caleb Cushing still have offered to the Government his cavalry company of one. It is a grace not given to any American party, to stand out long against the enthusiasm of a war.

No doubt the Secession leaders have treated us very handsomely, as to amount of provocation. It is rare that any great contest begins by a blow so unequivocal as the bombardment of Fort Sumter; and rare in recent days for any set of belligerents to risk the ignominy of privateering. But, after all, it is the startling social theories announced by the new "government" which form the chief strength of its enemies. Either slavery is essential to a community, or it must be fatal to it,—there is no middle ground; and the Secessionists have taken one horn of the dilemma with so delightful a frankness as to leave us no possible escape from taking the other. Never, in modern days, has there been a conflict in which the contending principles were so clearly antagonistic. The most bigoted royal house in Europe never dreamed of throwing down the gauntlet for the actual ownership of man by man. Even Russia never fought for serfdom, and Austria has only enslaved nations, not individuals. In civil wars, especially, all historic divergences have been trivial compared to ours, so far as concerned the avowed principles of strife. In the French wars of the Fronde, the only available motto for anybody was the *Tout arrive en France*, "Anything may happen in France," which gayly recognized the absurd chaos of the conflict. In the English civil wars, the contending factions first disagreed upon a shade more or less of royal prerogative, and it took years to stereotype the hostility into the solid forms with which we now associate it. Even at the end of that contest, no one had ventured to claim such a freedom as our Declaration of Independence asserts, on the one side,—nor to recognize the possibility of such a barbarism as Jefferson Davis glorifies, on the other. The more strongly the Secessionists state their cause, the more glaringly it is seen to differ from any cause for which any sane person has taken up arms since the Roman servile wars. Their leaders may be exhibiting very sublime qualities; all we can say is, as Richardson said of Fielding's heroes, that their virtues are the vices of a decent man.

Page 115

We are now going through not merely the severest, but the only danger which has ever seriously clouded our horizon. The perils which harass other nations are mostly traditional for us. Apart from slavery, democratic government is long since *un fait accompli*, a fixed fact, and the Anglo-American race can no more revert in the direction of monarchy than of the Saurian epoch. Our geographical position frees us from foreign disturbance, and there is no really formidable internal trouble, slavery alone excepted. Let us come out of this conflict victorious in the field, escaping also the more serious danger of conquering ourselves by compromise, and the case of free government is settled past cavil. History may put up her spy-glass, like Wellington at Waterloo, saying, "The field is won. Let the whole line advance."

There has been a foolish suspicion that the North was strong in diplomacy and weak in war. The contrary is the case. We are proving ourselves formidable enough in war to cover our shortcomings in diplomacy. How narrowly we escaped demoralizing ourselves, at the last moment before Congress adjourned, by some concession which would have destroyed our consistency without strengthening our position! If we could even now bind our generals to imitate our Cabinet in its admirable and novel policy of silence,—to eschew pen and ink as carefully as if they were in training for the Presidency! The country is safe so long as they shut their mouths and open their batteries.

The ordeal by battle is a stern test of the solid power of a nation. There must always be some great quality to produce great military superiority,—skill, or daring, or endurance, or numbers, or wealth, or all together. Except the first two, neither of these special qualifications has been even claimed by the Secessionists; and these two have been taken for granted with such superfluous boastfulness as to yield strong internal evidence against the claim. Certainly their general strategy, up to this moment, has yielded not a single evidence of far-sighted judgment or conscious power, while it has shown decided glimpses of weakness and indecision. Indeed, how can an army like theirs be strong? Its members mostly unaccustomed to steady exertion or precise organization; without mechanic skill or invention; without cash or credit; fettered in their movements by the limited rolling stock of their scanty railways; tethered to their own homes by the fear of insurrection;—what element of solid strength have they, to set against these things? In the present state of the world, strong in peace is strong in war. In modern times an army of heroes is useless without facilities for arming, transporting, and feeding it, to say nothing of the more ignoble circumstance of pay. Considerations of simple political economy render it almost impossible for a slaveholding army to be strong collectively, nor do the habits of Southern life usually fit its members to be strong singly.

Page 116

In remembering the Battle of New Orleans, we forget that the Southwest was then a region of hardy pioneers, such as are now rather to be sought for in Kansas and California. The famous Tennessee riflemen of that day were not necessarily slaveholders, and their legitimate descendants are yet to be found among the brave men who rally round the nearest approach to Andrew Jackson whom the State now boasts,—a tolerable fac-simile both as to character and etymology,—Andrew Johnson. There is no need of disparaging the personal courage of any man, and the Southern army has some good officers,—too good, probably, in spite of themselves, to bring to bear their clearest judgment and their best energies in striking down the flag they have all sworn to die for. They have eminent foreign advisers also, or one at least; for Mr. W.H. Russell, self-appointed plenipotentiary near the Court of St. Jefferson, is said to have lent the aid of his valuable military experience to that commanding officer so appropriately named Captain Bragg. But, Bragg or no brag, it is almost a moral impossibility that a slaveholding army should be strong.

The Secessionists have suggested to us a fatal argument. “The superior race must control the inferior.” Very well; if they insist on invoking the ordeal by battle to decide which is the superior, let it be so. It will be found that they have made the common mistake of confounding barbarism with strength. Because the Southern masses are as ignorant of letters and of arts as the Scottish Highlanders, they infer themselves to be as warlike. But even the brave and hardy Highlanders proved powerless against the imperfect military resources of England, a century ago, and it is not easy to see why those who now parody them should fare better. The absence of the alphabet does not necessarily prove the presence of strength, nor is the ignorance of all useful arts the best preparation for the elaborate warfare of modern times. The nation is grown well weary of this sham “chivalry,” that would sell Bayard or Du Gueselin at auction, if it could be shown that the mother of either had a drop of marketable blood in her veins. It had always been charitably fancied that in South Carolina at least there was some remnant of more knightly honor, until a kind Providence sent Preston S. Brooks to dispel the illusion. It may be possible that even a brave man, in some moment of insane inconsistency, may commit some act which is the consummation of all cowardice; but it is utterly and absolutely impossible that any brave community should approve it. Time has long since carried the perpetrator of that dastardly outrage to a higher tribunal, but nothing can ever redeem the State of his birth from the crowning shame of its indorsement.

Page 117

It is not recorded whether the proverbial English army in Flanders lied as terribly as they swore; the genius of the nation did not take that direction. But if they did, they have now met their match in audacity of falsehood. Captain Bobadil in the play, who submitted a plan of killing off an army of forty thousand men by the prowess of twenty, each man to do his twenty *per diem* in successive single combats, might have raised his proposed score of heroes among any handful of Secessionists. There seems to be no one to stop these prodigious fellows as a party of Buford's men were once checked by their commander, in the writer's hearing, on their way down the Missouri River, in 1856. "Boys," quoth the contemptuous official, "you had better shut up. Whenever we came in sight of the enemy, you always took a vote whether to fight or run, and you always voted to run." Then the astounding tales they have told respecting our people, down to the last infamous fabrication of "Booty and Beauty," as the supposed war-cry for the placid Pennsylvanians! Booty, forsooth! In the words of the "Richmond Whig," "there is more rich spoil within a square mile of New York and Philadelphia than can be found in the whole of the poverty-stricken State of Virginia"; and the imaginary war-cry suggests Wilkes's joke about the immense plunder carried off by some freebooter from the complete pillage of seven Scotch isles: he reembarked with three-and-sixpence.

It might not be wise to claim that the probable lease of life for our soldiers is any longer than for the Secessionists, but it certainly looks as if ours would have the credit of dying more modestly. Indeed, the men of the Free States, as was the wont of their ancestors, have made up their minds to this fight with a slow reluctance which would have been almost provoking but for the astonishing promptness which marked their action when once begun. It is interesting to notice how clearly the future is sometimes foreseen by foreigners, while still veiled from the persons most concerned. Thus, twelve years before the Battle of Bunker's Hill, the Duc de Choiseul predicted and prepared for the separation of the American colonies from England. One month after that, the Continental Congress still clung to the belief that they should escape a division. And so, some seven years ago, the veteran French advocate Guepin, in a most able essay suggested by the "Burns affair" in Boston, prophesied civil war in America within ten years. "*Une grande lutte s'apprete donc*," he wrote; "A great contest is at hand."

Thus things looked to foreigners, both in 1775 and in 1854, while in both cases our people were yielding only step by step to the inevitable current which swept events along. It is the penalty of caution, that it sometimes appears, even to itself, like irresolution, or timidity. Not a foolish charge has been brought against Northern energy in this contest, that was not urged equally in the time of the Revolution.

Page 118

The royal troops thought Massachusetts as easy to subdue as the South Carolinians affect to think, and expressed it in almost the same language:—"Whenever it comes to blows, he that can run the fastest will think himself best off." The revolutionists admitted that "the people abroad have too generally got the idea that the Americans are all cowards and poltroons." A single regiment, it was generally asserted, could march triumphant through New England. The people took no pains to deny it. The guard in Boston captured thirteen thousand cartridges at a stroke. The people did not prevent it. A citizen was tarred and feathered in the streets by the royal soldiery, while the band played "Yankee Doodle." The people did not interfere. "John Adams writes, there is a great spirit in the Congress, and that we must furnish ourselves with artillery and arms and ammunition, but avoid war, if possible,—if possible." At last, one day, these deliberate people finally made up their minds that it was time to rise,—and when they rose, everything else fell. In less than a year afterwards, Boston being finally evacuated, one of General Howe's mortified officers wrote home to England, in words which might form a Complete Letter-Writer for every army-officer who has turned traitor, from Beauregard downward,—“Bad times, my dear friend. The displeasure I feel in the small share I have in our present insignificance is so great, that I do not know the thing so desperate I would not undertake, in order to change our situation.”

It is fortunate that the impending general contest has also been recently preceded by a local one, which, though waged under circumstances far less favorable to the North, yet afforded important hints by its results. It was worth all the cost of Kansas to have the lesson she taught, in passing through her ordeal. It was not the Emigrant Aid Society which gave peace at last to her borders, nor was it her shifting panorama of evanescent governors; it was the sheer physical superiority of her Free-State emigrants, after they took up arms. Kansas afforded the important discovery, as some Southern officers once naively owned at Leecompton, that "Yankees *would* fight." Patient to the verge of humiliation, the settlers rose at last only to achieve a victory so absurdly rapid that it was almost a new disappointment; the contest was not so much a series of battles as a succession of steeplechases, of efforts to get within shot,—Missouri, Virginia, and South Carolina invariably disappearing over one prairie-swell, precisely as the Sharp's rifles of the emigrants appeared on the verge of the next. The slaveholders had immense advantages: many of the settlers were in league with them to drive out the remainder; they had the General Government always aiding them, more or less openly, with money, arms, provisions, horses, men, and leaders; they had always the Missouri border to retreat upon, and the Missouri River to blockade.

Page 119

Yet they failed so miserably, that every Kansas boy at last had his story to tell of the company of ruffians whom he had set scampering by the casual hint that Brown or Lane was lurking in the bushes. The terror became such a superstition, that the largest army which ever entered Kansas—three thousand men, by the admission of both sides—turned back before a redoubt at Lawrence garrisoned by only two hundred, and retreated over the border without risking an engagement.

It is idle to say that these wore not fair specimens of Southern companies. They were composed of precisely the same material as the flower of the Secession army,—if flower it have. They were members of the first families, planters' sons and embryo Wigfalls. South Carolina sent them forth, like the present troops, with toasts and boasts and everything but money. They had officers of some repute; and they had enthusiasm with no limit except the supply of whiskey. Slavery was divine, and Colonel Buford was its prophet. The city of Atchison was before the dose of 1857 to be made the capital of a Southern republic. Kansas was to be conquered: "We will make her a Slave State, or form a chain of locked arms and hearts together, and die in the attempt." Yet in the end there were no chains, either of flesh or iron,—no chains, and little dying, but very liberal running away. Thus ended the war in Kansas. It seems impossible that Slavery should not make in this case a rather better fight, where all is at stake. But it is well to remember that no Border Ruffian of Secession can now threaten more loudly, swear more fiercely, or retreat more rapidly, than his predecessors did then.

One does not hear much lately of that pleasant fiction, so abundant a year or two ago, that North and South really only needed to visit each other and become better acquainted. How cordially these endearing words sounded, to be sure, from the lips of Southern gentlemen, as they sat at Northern banquets and partook unreluctantly of Northern wine! Can those be the gay cavaliers who are now uplifting their war-whoops with such a modest grace at Richmond and Montgomery? Can the privations of the camp so instantaneously dethrone Bacchus and set up Mars? It is to be regretted; they appeared more creditably in their cups, and one would gladly appeal from Philip sober to Philip drunk. Intimate intercourse has lost its charm. New York merchants more than ever desire an increased acquaintance with the coffers of their repudiating debtors; but so far as the knowledge of their peculiar moral traits is concerned, enough is as good as a feast. No Abolitionist has ever dared to pillory the slave-propagandists so conspicuously as they are doing it for themselves every day. Sumner's "Barbarism of Slavery" seemed tolerably graphic in its time, but how tamely it reads beside the "New Orleans Delta"!

A Scotchman once asked Dr. Johnson what opinion he would form of Scotland from what strangers had said of it.

Page 120

“Sir,” said the Doctor, “I should think it a region of the earth to be avoided, so far as convenient.”

“But how,” persisted the patriot, “if you listened to what its natives say of it?”

“Then, Sir,” roared Old Obstinacy, “I should avoid it altogether.”

Take the seceded States upon their own showing, and it is absurd to suppose that they can ever resume their former standing in the nation. Are there any stronger oaths than their generals have broken, any closer ties to honesty than their financiers have spurned, any deeds more damning than their legislatures have voted thanks for? No one supposes that the individual traitors can be restored to confidence, that Twiggs can re-dye his reputation, or any deep-sea-soundings fish up Maury’s drowned honor. But the influence of the States is gone with that of their representatives. They may worship the graven image of President Lincoln in Mobile; they may do homage to the ample stuffed regimentals of General Butler in Charleston; but it will not make the nation forget. Could their whole delegation resume its seat in Congress to-morrow, with the three-fifths representation intact, it would not help them. Can we ever trust them to build a ship or construct a rifle again? No time, no formal act can restore the past relations, so long as slavery shall live. It is easy for the Executive to pardon some convict from the penitentiary; but who can pardon him out of that sterner prison of public distrust which closes its disembodied walls around him, moves with his motions, and never suffers him to walk unconscious of it again? Henceforth he dwells as under the shadow of swords, and holds intercourse with men only by courtesy, not confidence. And so will they.

Not that the United States Government is yet prepared to avow itself anti-slavery, in the sense in which the South is pro-slavery. We conscientiously strain at gnats of Constitutional clauses, while they gulp down whole camels of treason. We still look after their legal safeguards long after they have hoisted them with their own petards. But both sides have trusted themselves to the logic of events, and there is no mistaking the direction in which that tends. In times like these, men care more for facts than for phrases, and reason quite as rapidly as they act. It is impossible to blink the fact that Slavery is the root of the rebellion; and so War is proving itself an Abolitionist, whoever else is. Practically speaking, the verdict is already entered, and the doom of the destructive institution pronounced, in the popular mind. Either the Secessionists will show fight handsomely, or they will fail to do so. If they fail to do it, they are the derision of the world forever,—since no one ever spares a beaten bully,—and thenceforward their social system must go down of itself. If, on the other hand, they make a resistance which proves formidable and costly, then the adoption of the John-Quincy-Adams

Page 121

policy of military emancipation is an ultimate necessity, and there is nobody more likely to put it in effective operation than a certain gentleman who lately wrote an eloquent letter to his Governor on the horrors of slave-insurrection. No doubt insurrection is a terrible thing, but so is all war, and every man of humanity approaches either with a shudder. But if the truth were told, it would be that the Anglo-Saxon habitually despises the negro because he is *not* an insurgent, for the Anglo-Saxon would certainly be one in his place. Our race does not take naturally to non-resistance, and has far more spontaneous sympathy with Nat Turner than with Uncle Tom. But be it as it may with our desires, the rising of the slaves, in case of continued war, is a mere destiny. We must take facts as they are.

Insurrection is one of the risks voluntarily assumed by Slavery,—and the greatest of them. The slaves know it, and so do the masters. When they seriously assert that they feel safe on this point, there is really no answer to be made but that by which Traddles in “David Copperfield” puts down Uriah Heep’s wild hypothesis of believing himself an innocent man. “But you don’t, you know,” quoth the straightforward Traddles; “therefore, if you please, we won’t suppose any such thing.” They cannot deceive us, for they do not deceive themselves. Every traveller who has seen the faces of a household suddenly grow pale, in a Southern city, when some street tumult struck to their hearts the fear of insurrection,—every one who has seen the heavy negro face brighten unguardedly at the name of John Brown, though a thousand miles away from Harper’s Ferry,—has penetrated the final secret of the military weakness which saved Washington for us and lost the war for them.

It is time to expose this mad inconsistency which paralyzes common sense on all Southern tongues, so soon as Slavery becomes the topic. These same negroes, whom we hear claimed, at one moment, as petted darlings whom no allurements can seduce, are denounced, next instant, as fiends whom a whisper can madden. Northern sympathizers are first ridiculed as imbecile, then lynched as destructive. Either position is in itself intelligible, but the combination is an absurdity. We can understand why the proprietor of a powder-house trembles at the sight of flint and steel; and we can also understand why some new journeyman, being inexperienced, may regard the peril without due concern. But we should decide either to be a lunatic, if he in one breath proclaimed his gunpowder to be incombustible, and at the next moment assassinated a visitor for lighting a cigar on the premises. A slave population is either contented and safe, or discontented and unsafe; it cannot at the same time be friendly and hostile, blissful and desperate.

Page 122

The result described is inevitable, should the Secessionists dare to tempt the ordeal by battle long enough. If it stop short of this, it will be because the prestige of Southern military power is so easily broken down that there is no temptation to declare the Adams policy. But even this consummation must have the most momentous results, and entirely modify the whole anti-slavery movement of the nation. Should the war cease to-morrow, it has inaugurated a new era in our nation's history. The folly of the Gulf States, in throwing away a political condition where the conservative sentiment stood by them only too well, must inevitably recoil on their own heads, whether the strife last a day or a generation. No man can estimate the new measures and combinations to which it is destined to give rise. There stands the Constitution, with all its severe conditions,—severe or weak, however, according to its interpretations;—which interpretations, again, will always prove plastic before the popular will. The popular will is plainly destined to a change; and who dare predict the results of its changing? The scrupulous may still hold by the letter of the bond; but since the South has confessedly prized all legal guaranties only for the sake of Slavery, the North, once free to act, will long to construe them, up to the very verge of faith, in the interest of Liberty. Was the original compromise, a Shylock bond?—the war has been our Portia. Slavery long ruled the nation politically. The nation rose and conquered it with votes. With desperate disloyalty, Slavery struck down all political safeguards, and appealed to arms. The nation has risen again, ready to meet it with any weapons, sure to conquer with any. Twice conquered, what further claim will this defeated desperado have? If it was a disturbing element before, and so put under restriction, shall it be spared when it has openly proclaimed itself a destroying element also? Is this to be the last of American civil wars, or only the first one? These are the questions which will haunt men's minds, when the cannon are all bushed, and the bells are pealing peace, and the sons of our hearth-stones come home. The watchword "Irrepressible Conflict" only gave the key, but War has flung the door wide open, and four million slaves stand ready to file through. It is merely a question of time, circumstance, and method. There is not a statesman so wise but this war has given him new light, nor an Abolitionist so self-confident but must own its promise better than his foresight. Henceforth, the first duty of an American legislator must be, by the use of all legitimate means, to weaken Slavery. *Delenda est Servitudo*. What the peace which the South has broken was not doing, the war which she has instituted must secure.

* * * * *

THE UNITED STATES AND EUROPE.

Page 123

The modern world differs from the world of antiquity in nothing more than in the existence of a brotherhood of nations, which was unknown to the ancients, who seem to have been incapable of understanding that it was impossible for either good or evil to be confined within certain limits. The attempts of the Persians to extend their dominion into Europe did for a time cause some faint approach to ideas and practices that are common to the moderns; but, as a general rule, every monarchy or people had its own system, to which it adhered until it was worn out by internal decay, or was overthrown by foreign conquest. It was owing to this exclusiveness, and to the inability of ancient statesmen to work out an international system, that the Romans were enabled to extend their dominion until it comprehended the best parts of the world. Had the rulers and peoples of Carthage, Macedonia, Greece, and Syria been capable of forming an alliance for common defence, the conquests of Rome in the East might have been early checked, and her efforts have been necessarily confined to the North and the West. But no international system then existed, and the rude attempts at mutual assistance that were occasionally made, as the conquering race strode forward, were of no avail; and the swords of the legionaries reaped the whole field. It is singular that what is so well known to the moderns, and was known to them at times when they were far inferior to the best races of antiquity, should have remained unknown to the latter. The chief reason of this want of combining power in men who have never been surpassed in ability is to be found in the then prevailing idea, that every stranger was an enemy. There was a total want of confidence in one another among the peoples of the ante-Christian period. Differences of race were augmented by differences in religion, and by the absence of strong business interests. Christianity had not been vouchsafed to man, and commerce had very imperfectly done its work, while war was carried on in the most ruthless and destructive manner.

The modern world differs in this matter entirely from the ancient world; and though the change is perfect only in Christendom, the effect of it is felt in countries where the Christian religion does not prevail, but into which Christian armies and Christian merchants have penetrated. Christendom is the leading portion of the world, and is fast giving law to lands in which Christianity is still hated. It is the policy of Christendom that orders the world. A Christian race rules over the whole of that immense country, or collection of countries, which is known as India. Another Christian race threatens to seize upon Persia. Christians from the extreme West of Europe have dictated the terms of treaties to the Tartar lords of China; and Christians from America have led the way in breaking through the exclusive system of Japan. Christian soldiers have for a year past acted as the police

Page 124

of Syria, Christianity's early home, but now held by the most bigoted and cruel of Mussulmans; and it is only the circumstance that they cannot agree upon a division of the spoil that prevents the five great powers of Europe—the representatives of the leading branches of the Christian religion—from partitioning the vast, but feeble Ottoman Empire. The Christian idea of man's brotherhood, so powerful in itself, is supported by material forces so vast, and by ingenuity and industry so comprehensive and so various in themselves and their results, that it must supersede all others, and be accepted in every country where there are people capable of understanding it. From the time of the first Crusade there has been a steady tendency to the unity of Christian countries; and notwithstanding all their conflicts with one another, and partly as one of the effects of those conflicts, they have "fraternized," until now there exists a mighty Christian Commonwealth, the members of which ought to be able to govern the world in accordance with the principles of a religion that is in itself peace. Under the influence of these principles, the Christian nations, though not in equal degrees, have developed their resources, and a commercial system has been created which has enlisted the material interests of men on the same side with the highest teachings of the purest religion. Selfishness and self-denial march under the same banner, and men are taught to do unto others as they would that others should do unto them, because the rule is as golden economically as it is morally. This teaching, however, it must be allowed, is very imperfectly done, and it encounters so many disturbing forces to its proper development that an observer of the course of Christian nations might be pardoned, if he were at times to suppose there is little of the spirit of Christianity in the ordering of the policy of Christendom, and also that the true nature of material interests is frequently misunderstood. Still, it is undeniable that there is a general bond of union in Christendom, and that no part of that division of the world can be injured or improved without all the other parts of it being thereby affected. What is known as "the business world" exists everywhere, but it is in Christendom that it has its principal seats, and in which its mightiest works are done. It forms one community of mankind; and what depresses or exalts one nation is felt by its effects in all nations. There cannot be a Russian war, or a Sepoy mutiny, or an Anglo-French invasion of China, or an emancipation of the serfs of Russia, without the effect thereof being sensibly experienced on the shores of Superior or on the banks of the Sacramento; and the civil war that is raging in the United States promises to produce permanent consequences to the inhabitants of Central India and of Central Africa. The wars, floods, plagues, and famines of the farthest East bear upon the people of the remotest West. The Oregon flows

Page 125

in sympathy with the Ganges; and a very mild winter in New England might give additional value to the ice-crop of the Neva. So closely identified are all nations at this time, that the hope that there may be no serious difficulties between the United States and the Western powers of Europe, as a consequence of the Federal Government's blockade of the Southern ports of the Union, is based as much upon the prospect of the European food-crops being small this year as upon the sense of justice that may exist in the bosoms of the rulers of France and England. If those crops should prove to be of limited amount, peace could be counted upon; if abundant, we might as well make ample preparation for a foreign war. Nations threatened with scarcity cannot afford to begin war, though they may find themselves compelled to wage it. A cold season in Europe would be the best security that we could have that we shall not be vexed with European intervention in our troubles; for then Europeans would desire to have the privilege of securing that portion of our food which should not be needed for home-consumption. This is the fair side of the picture that is presented by the bond of nations. There is another side to the picture, which is far from being so agreeable to us, and which may be called the Cotton side; and it is because England, and to a lesser degree France, is of opinion that American cotton must be had, that our civil troubles threaten to bring upon us, if not a foreign war, at least grave disputes and difficulties with those European nations with which we are most desirous of remaining on the best of terms, and to secure the friendship of which all Americans are disposed to make every sacrifice that is compatible with the preservation of national honor.

From the beginning of the troubles in this country that have led to civil war, the desire to know what course would be pursued by the principal nations of Europe toward the contending parties has been very strongly felt on both sides; but the feeling has been greater on the side of the rebels than on that of the nation, because the rebellion has depended even for the merest chance of success upon the favorable view of European governments, and the nation has got beyond the point of caring much for the opinions or the actions of those governments. The Union's existence depends not upon European friendship or enmity; but without the aid of the Old World, the new Confederacy could not look for success, had it received twice the assistance it did from the Buchanan administration, and were it formed of every Slaveholding State, with not a Union man in it to wound the susceptible minds of traitors by his presence. The belief among the friends of order was, that Europe would maintain a rigid neutrality, not so much from regard to this country as from disgust at the character of the Confederacy's polity, and at the opinions avowed by its officers, its orators, and its journals, opinions which had

Page 126

been most forcibly illustrated in advance by acts of the grossest robbery. That any civilized nation should be willing to afford any countenance, and exclusively on grounds of interest, to a band of ruffians who avowed opinions that could not now find open supporters in Bokhara or Barbary, was what the American people could not believe. Conscious that the Southern rebellion was utterly without provocation, and that it had been brought about by the arts of disappointed politicians, most of us were convinced that the rebels would be discountenanced by the rulers of every European state to whom their commissioners should apply either for recognition or for assistance. We knew the power of King Cotton was great, though much exaggerated in words by his servile subjects; but we did not, because we could not, believe that he was able to control the policy of old empires, to subvert the principle of honor upon which aristocracies profess to rely as their chief support, and to turn whole nations from the roads in which they had been accustomed to travel. That Cotton has done this we do not assert; but it has done not a little to show how feeble; the regard of certain classes in Europe for morality, when adherence to principle may possibly cause them some trouble, and perhaps lead to some loss. If the Southern plant has not become the tyrant of Europe, as for a long time it was of America, it has certainly done much in a brief time to unsettle English opinion, and to convert the Abolitionists of Great Britain, the men who could tax the whites of their empire in the annual interest of one hundred million dollars in order that the slavery of the blacks in that empire might come to an end, into the supporters of American slavery, and of its extension over this continent, which might be made into a Cotton paradise, if the supply of negroes from Africa should not be interrupted; and the logical conclusion from the position laid down by Lord John Russell is, that the slave-trade must be revived, as that is what his "belligerent" friends of the Southern Confederacy are contending for. The American people had long been taunted by the English with their subserviency to the slaveholding interest, and with their readiness to sacrifice the welfare of a weak and wronged race on the altars of Mammon. Whether these taunts were well deserved by us, we shall not stop to inquire; but it is the most melancholy of facts, that, no sooner have we given the best evidence which it is in our power to give of our determination to confine slavery within its present limits, and to put an end to the abuse of our Government's power by the slaveholders, than the Government of Great Britain, acting as the agent and representative of the British nation, places itself directly across our path, and prepares to tell us to stay our hand, and not dare to meddle with the institution of slavery, because from the success of that institution proceeds cotton, and upon the supply of cotton not being interfered with depend the welfare

Page 127

and the strength of the liberty-and-order loving and morality-and-religion worshipping race! So far as they have dared to do it, the British ministers have placed their country on the side of those men who have revolted in America because they saw that they could no longer make use of slavery to misgovern the Union; and we must wait to see how far they are to be supported by the opinion of that country, before a distinction can be made between the ministers and the people. Left to themselves, and unbiased by any of those selfish motives that go to make up the sum of politics, we have not the slightest doubt that the English people, in the proportion of ten to one, would decide in behalf of the supporters of freedom in this country; but we are by no means so sure that the ministers would not be sustained, were they to plunge their country into a third American War, and sustained, too, in sending fleets to raise our blockade of the American coast of Africa, and armies to fight the battles of Slavery in Virginia and the Carolinas, where British officers stole negroes eighty years ago, and sent them to the West India markets, and found that that kind of commerce flourished well in war. A war for the maintenance of American slavery, and to secure for slaveholders the full and perfect enjoyment of all the "rights" of their "peculiar" property, would be no worse than was the war which was waged against our ancestors of the Revolution, or than those wars which were carried on against Republican and Imperial France, ostensibly for the preservation of order, but really for the restoration of a despotism which cannot now find a single apologist on earth. There is often a wide distinction to be made between a nation and its government, as our own recent history but too deplorably proves; and the men who govern England may be enabled to do that now which has more than once been done by their predecessors, array their country in support of evil against that country's sense and wishes. We should be prepared for this, and should look the evil that threatens us fairly in the face, as the first thing to be done to prevent it from getting beyond the threatening-point. The words of Sir Boyle Roche, that the best way to avoid danger is to meet it plump, are strikingly applicable to our condition. If we would not have a foreign war on our hands before we shall have settled with the rebels, we should make it very clear to foreigners that to fight with us would be a sort of business that would be sure not to pay.

That war may follow from the course which England has elected to pursue toward the parties to our civil conflict will not appear a strange view of affairs to those who know something of the history of Great Britain and the United States in the early part of this century. That which the British Government is now doing bears strong resemblance to the course which the same Government, with different ministers, pursued toward the United States during the war with

Page 128

Napoleon I., and which led to the contest of 1812,—a contest which Franklin had predicted, and which he said would be our War of *Independence*, as that of 1775-83 had been our War of *Revolution*. The same ignorance of America, and the same disposition to insult, to annoy, and to injure Americans, that were so common under the ministries of Pitt, Portland, and Perceval, and which move both our mirth and our indignation when we read of them long after the tormentors and the tormented have gone to their last repose, are exhibited by the Palmerston Ministry,—though it is but justice to Lord Palmerston to say, that he has borne himself more manfully toward us than have his associates. England treats us as she would not dare to treat any European power, making an exception in our case to her general policy, which has been, since 1815, to truckle before her contemporaries. She has crouched before France repeatedly, when she had much better ground for fighting her than she now has for taking preliminary steps to fight us. We are not entitled to the same treatment that she thinks is due to the nations of the continent of Europe. She cannot rid herself of the feeling that we still are colonists, and that the rules which apply to her intercourse with old nations cannot apply to her intercourse with us, the United States having been a portion of the British Empire within the recollection of persons yet living. No sooner, therefore, had a state of things arisen here that seemed to warrant a renewal of the insulting treatment that was a thing of course in 1807, than we were made to see how hollow were those professions of friendship for America that were not uncommon in the mouths of British statesmen during the ten or twelve years that preceded the advent of Secession. So long as we were deemed powerful, we received assurances of “the most distinguished consideration”; but we have at last ascertained that those assurances were as false as they are when they are appended to the letter of some diplomatist who is engaged in the work of cheating some one who is neither better nor worse than himself. It is positively mortifying to think how shockingly we have been taken in, and that the “cordial understanding” that had, apparently, been growing up between the two nations was a misunderstanding throughout, though we were sincere in desiring its existence. Perhaps, when the evidences of the strength that we possess, in spite of Secession, shall have all been placed before the rulers of England, they will be found less ready to quarrel with the American people than they were a month ago. A nation that is capable of placing a quarter of a million of men in the field in sixty days, and of giving to that immense force a respectable degree of consistency and organization, is worth being conciliated after having been insulted. But would any amount of conciliation suffice to restore the feeling that existed here when the Prince of Wales was our guest? We fear that it would not, and

Page 129

that for some years to come the sentiment in America toward England will be as hostile as it was in the last generation, when it was in the power of any politician to make political capital by assailing the mother-land. The belief is created that England in her heart hates us as profoundly as ever she did, that the forty-six years' peace has produced no change in her feeling with respect to us, and that she is watching ever for an opportunity to gratify the grudge of which we are the object. Practically it will matter very little whether this belief shall be well founded or not, so long as English ministers, whether from want of judgment or from any other cause, shall omit no occasion for the insulting and annoying of the United States. An opinion that is sincerely held by the people of a powerful nation is in itself a fact of the first importance, no matter whether it be founded in truth or not; and if the blundering of another powerful nation shall help to maintain that opinion, that nation would have no right to complain of any consequences that should follow from its inability to comprehend the condition of its neighbor. This country will not submit to the degradation which England would inflict upon it, and which no other European nation appears inclined to aid the insular empire in inflicting. Even Spain, proverbially foolish in her foreign policy, and seemingly unable to get within a hundred years of the present time, observes a decorum in the premises to which Great Britain is a stranger.

The manner of proceeding on the part of the British Government, and the arguments which have been put forward in justification of its pro-slavery policy, are serious aggravations of its original offence. The first declaration of Lord John Russell, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, was to the effect that England would not show any favor to the Secessionists. His subordinate (Lord Wodehouse, Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs) was even more emphatic than his chief in speaking to the same purpose. Suddenly, the Foreign Secretary turned about, with a facility and promptness for which men had not been prepared even by his rapid changes on the questions of the Russian War and Italian Nationality, and said that the Southern Confederacy would be recognized as a belligerent, which is, to all intents and purposes of a practical character, the same thing as acknowledging it to be a nation. What was the cause of this sudden change? We have only to look at the dates of the events that, followed the fall of Fort Sumter to find an answer. Lord John Russell believed that the capital of the United States had fallen into the hands of the rebels, and he was anxious to please the masters of the cotton-fields by showing them that he had not waited to hear of their victory to behold their virtues. There was some excuse for his belief that the raid upon Washington had succeeded; for down to the 27th of April there was but too much reason for supposing that that city

Page 130

was in serious danger of becoming the prey of the Confederates, who might have taken it, if they had been half as forward in their preparations for war as they were supposed to have been by the chiefs of the British Government. But this belief that the rebels had delivered an effective blow at the Union only places the meanness of Lord John Russell and his associates in a worse light than we could view it in, if they had acted solely upon principle. Their political opinions had pledged them to oppose the principles of the Secessionists; but they were in a hurry to give all the support they could to those principles, because they had come to the conclusion that victory was to be with the Secessionists. They desired to appropriate the merit of being the first of European statesmen to welcome the destroyers of the American Union into the family of nations. Had the event justified their expectations, they would have gained much by their action, and would have enjoyed whatever of glory the European world might have been disposed to accord to the allies of American pirates.

The Royal Proclamation of May 13th, in which the neutrality of England is peremptorily laid down, and all British subjects are forbidden to take any part in the war "between the Government of the United States of America and certain States calling themselves the Confederate States of America," is a paper in many respects most offensive to the people of this country, though probably it was better in its intention than it is in its execution. That part of it which most concerns us is the recognition of "any blockade lawfully and actually established by or on behalf of either of the said contending parties." It is important to us that the British Government has admitted our right to blockade the ports of the rebels, provided we shall do so in force; and though Lord Derby has exhibited his ignorance of our naval power by saying that we cannot enforce the blockade we have declared and instituted, we shall show to the world, before the next cotton-crop shall be ready for exportation, that we are fully up to the work that is demanded of us, by having at least one hundred vessels, strongly armed and well manned, employed in watching every part of the Southern coast to which any foreign ship would think of going with a cargo or for the purpose of receiving one. The naval strength of the Union is as capable of vast and effective development as its military strength; and there is no reason why we should not have afloat, and ready for action, by the beginning of autumn, fleets sufficient to close up the Confederate ports as thoroughly as the Allies closed those of Russia in 1854-6, and the advanced guard of other fleets to be made ready to contend with the forces that insolent foreign nations may send into the waters of America for the purpose of fighting the battles of the slaveholders.

Page 131

With the single exception of the admission of the right of blockade, the Royal Proclamation is unfriendly to the United States. It admits the right of the Confederacy's Government to issue letters of marque, from which it follows that American ships captured by cruisers of the rebels could be taken into English ports, and there sold, after having been condemned by prize courts sitting at any one of the places belonging to the Confederacy. This is no light aid to the pirates; for there are English ports on every sea, and on almost every one of the ocean's tributaries. Vessels belonging to America, and captured by the Confederacy's privateers in the Mediterranean, could be taken into Gibraltar, into Valetta, and into Corfu, all of which are English ports. Those captured in the Mexican Gulf and the Caribbean could be sent into any one of the many ports that belong to England in the West Indies. If captured in the North Atlantic, or the Baltic, or any other of the waters of Northern Europe, they could be sent into the ports of England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland. In the South Atlantic are St. Helena and Cape Town, which would afford shelter to Mr. Davis's privateers and their prizes. In the East Indies British ports are numerous, from Aden to the last places wrested from the Chinese, and they would be all open to the enterprise of the Confederacy's cruisers. In the Pacific are the English harbors on the Northwest Coast; and in Australia there are British ports that ought, considering their origin, to be particularly friendly to men who should enter the navy of the Secessionists. England has in advance provided places for the transaction of all the business that shall be necessary to render privateering profitable to the "lawless brood" of the whole world. Into all of her thousand seaports could the lucky Confederates go, and dispose of their captures, just as the old Buccaneers used to sell their prizes in the ports of the English colonies. Nor could all the efforts of all the navies of the world prevent privateers from preying upon our commerce, as they are to be commissioned in foreign countries, and will sail from the ports of those countries. The East Indian seas, the Levant, and the Caribbean are the old homes and haunts of pirates; and under the encouragement which England is disposed to afford to piracy, for the especial benefit of Slavery, the buccaneering business could not fail to flourish exceedingly. True, our Government would not allow privateers to be fitted out in our ports, during the Russian War, to prey upon the commerce of France and England; but what of that? One good turn does *not* deserve another, according to the public morality of nations so orderly and pious as are England and France.

Page 132

According to the Royal Proclamation, the blockade of any one of the Northern ports by one of the ships of the Secessionists would be as lawful an act as the blockade of Charleston by a dozen of the Union's cruisers; and England allows that a privateer from Pensacola could seize an English ship that should be engaged in bringing arras to New York or Philadelphia. Thus are the two "parties" to the war placed on the same footing by the decision of the English Government, though the one party is a nation having treaties with England, and engaged in maintaining the cause of order, and the other is only a band of conspirators, who have established their power through the institution of a system of terror, much after the fashion of Monsieur Robespierre and his associates, whose conduct was so offensive to all Britons seven-and-sixty years ago. But Montgomery is much farther from England than Paris, and the French had no cotton to tempt the British statesmen of 1793-4 to strike an account between manufacturing and morality. Distance and time appear to have united their powers to make things appear fair in the eyes of Russell that inexpressibly horrible to those of "the monster Pitt."

The Royal Proclamation forbids Englishmen affording the Union assistance in any way. No British gunmaker can sell us a weapon, no English merchant can use one of his ships to send us the cannon and rifles we have purchased in his country, and no English subject of any degree can lawfully carry a despatch for our Government. Never was there—a more forbidding state-paper put forth; and the arid language of the Proclamation is rendered doubly disagreeable by the purpose for which it is employed. We are placed by its terms on the level of the men of Montgomery, who must be vastly pleased to see that they are held in as much esteem in England as are the constitutional authorities of the United States. If we were to seek for a contrast to this extraordinary document, we should find it in the proclamation put forth by our own Government at the time of the "Canadian Rebellion," and in which it was *not* sought to convey the impression that we had the right to regard rebels and loyalists as men entitled to the same treatment at our hands. It is a source of pride to Americans, that nothing in their own history can be quoted in justification of the cold-blooded conduct of the British Government.

It has been sought to defend the action of England by referring to precedents. We are reminded by Lord John Russell of the acknowledgment of the Greeks as belligerents by England; and others have pointed to her acknowledgment of the Belgians, and of those Spanish—Americans who had revolted against the rule of Old Spain. We cannot go into an extended examination of these precedents, for the purpose of showing that they do not apply to the present case; but we may say, and an examination into the facts will be found to justify our assertion, that England

Page 133

was in no such hurry to acknowledge the Greeks, the Belgians, and the Spanish-Americans as she has been to acknowledge the Secessionists. Years elapsed after the beginning of the struggle in Greece before the English Government professed to regard the parties to that memorable conflict even with indifference. The British historian of the Greek Revolution, writing of the year 1821, says,—“Among the European Governments, England was probably, next to Austria, the one most hostile to Greece at that period, when her foreign policy was guided by a spirit akin to that of Metternich; the hired organs of Ministry were loud in defence of Islam, and gall dropped from their pens on the Christian cause.” And when, some years later, England did profess neutrality between the “parties” to the war, it was less to prevent the Greeks from falling into the hands of the Turks than to prevent the Turks from falling into the hands of the Russians. Another object she had in view was the suppression of that horrible piracy which then raged in the Hellenic seas. She was then as anxious to suppress piracy because it was injurious to her commerce, as, apparently, she is now anxious to promote it because its existence would be injurious to our commerce. The famous Treaty of London, made in 1827, the parties to which were Russia, France, and England, was justified on the ground of “the necessity of putting an end to the sanguinary contest which, by delivering up the Greek provinces and the isles of the Archipelago to the disorders of anarchy, produces daily fresh impediments to the commerce of the European states, and gives occasion to piracies which not only expose the subjects of the contracting powers to considerable losses, but render necessary burdensome measures of suppression and protection.” In the autumn of the same year, an Order in Council decreed that “the British ships in the Mediterranean should seize every vessel they saw under the Greek flag, or armed and fitted out at a Greek port, except such as were under the immediate orders of the Greek Government.” The object of this strong measure was the suppression of piracy. Thus England had to interfere to put down the Greek pirates; and if she means to insist upon there being any resemblance between the case of the Greeks and that of the Secessionists, (President Lincoln to appear as the Grand Turk, or Sultan Mahmoud II., the destroyer of the Janizaries,) we should not object, so far as relates to the finale of the piece, which is very likely, through her most injudicious action, to produce a large crop of Selims and Abdallahs, by whom any amount of sea-roving will be done, but as much at Britain’s expense as at ours.

Page 134

The case of Belgium is not at all to the point, the Dutch being by no means anxious that the foolish arrangement made at Vienna, by which Holland and Belgium had been formally united, should be continued, though the House of Orange was averse to the loss of so much of its dominions. The disputes that followed the expulsion of the Dutch from Belgium were about details, and the whole matter was finally settled by the action of the Great Powers, and England was not then in a condition to decide it, had it been left for her decision. The makers of the Kingdom of the Netherlands destroyed their own work, after it had been found to be a bad job, and had had fifteen years and upward of fair trial. England had no choice in the matter,—especially as the effect of determined opposition on her part would have thrown Belgium into the arms of France, and have brought about a French war, which would have extended to the whole of Europe, with the revolutionists in every country for the allies of France. Louis Philippe either would have been overthrown very speedily after his elevation, or he would have been enabled to wear his new crown only by placing the old *bonnet rouge* above it.

That England recognized the Spanish-Americans is true; but why did she recognize them? Because she had to choose between doing that and allowing the Holy Alliance to enter upon the reconquest of the Spanish colonies. Mr. Canning declared that he had called a new world into existence to redress the balance of the old,—and that, if France, as the tool of the Holy Alliance, should have Spain, it should not be “Spain—with the Indies.” This was in 1823, though it was not until 1826 that Mr. Canning made use of the language quoted; and so serious was the matter, that our country was prepared to make common cause with England in resisting the interference of the Allies and their dependants in the affairs of Spanish-America. The question was one which did not relate to English interests alone, but concerned those of the whole world; and it was not decided with reference to the interests of any one country, but after it had been ascertained that its decision would closely and immediately affect the welfare of Christendom. England had to choose between diplomatic resistance to the Continental Powers and the support of a policy which she could not adopt without degrading herself. Naturally she elected to resist, and she did so with success. The Spanish-American countries, however, were freed from the rule of Spain long before she recognized them, and Spain had not the means of subduing them. England, therefore, did not acknowledge them as against Spain, but as against France, and in opposition to the Holy Alliance, the decrees of which France was engaged in enforcing at the expense of the Spanish Constitutionalists, and which process of enforcement the French Government was prepared to extend to Peru and Mexico, and to the whole of that part of America which had belonged to

Page 135

the Spanish Bourbons. Mr. Canning's conduct was statesmanlike, but it was also spiteful; and had England been in the condition to send sixty thousand men to Spain, probably the recognition of the independence of Spanish-America would have been much longer delayed. He had to strike a blow at a mighty enemy, and he delivered it skilfully at that enemy's only exposed point, where it told at once, and where it is telling to this day. But his action affords no precedent to the present rulers of England for the treatment of our case, for he moved not until after the colonies had achieved their independence. Now the British Government proclaims its purpose to acknowledge the Southern Confederacy in less than a month after the beginning of the attack on Fort Sumter, and in about a week after it had heard of the fall of that ill-used fortress! Is there not some difference between the two cases?

England did not admit the Poles to the honors she has allowed to the American Secessionists, after their revolt from the Czar, in 1830-31, though their cause was popular in that country, and they had achieved such successes over the Russian armies as the Secessionists have not won over the armies of the Union. Neither did she acknowledge the Hungarians, in 1849, though they had actually won their independence, which they would have preserved but for the intervention of Russia. It was not for her interest that Austria should be weakened. Is it for her interest that the United States should be weakened? Is it the purpose of her Government to give our rebels encouragement, step by step, in order that the American nation may be thrown back to the place it held twenty years ago?

The Cottonocracy of England, and those who for reasons of political interest support them, proceed erroneously, we think, when they assume that American cotton is the chief necessary of English life, and that without a full supply of it there must ensue great suffering throughout the British Empire. That it would be better for England to receive her cotton without interruption may be admitted, without its following that she must be ruined if there should be a discontinuance of the American cotton-trade. Men are so accustomed to think that that which is must ever continue to be, or all will be lost, that it is not surprising that British manufacturers should suppose change in this instance to be ruin. They are quite ready to innovate on the British Constitution, because in that way they hope to obtain political power, and to injure the landed aristocracy; but the idea of change in modes of business strikes them with terror, and hence all their wonted sagacity is now at fault. Lancashire is to become a Sahara, because President Lincoln, in accordance with the demands of twenty million Americans, proclaims the ports of the rebels under blockade, and enforces that blockade with a fleet quite sufficient to satisfy even Lord John Russell's notions as to effectiveness. We have never believed,

Page 136

and we do not now believe, that it is in the power of any part of America thus to control the condition of England. We would not have it so, if we could, as we are sure that the power would be abused. If America really possessed the ability to rule England that her cotton-manufacturers assert she possesses, all Englishmen should rejoice that events have occurred here that promise to work out their country's deliverance from so degrading a vassalage. But it is not so, and England will survive the event of our conflict, no matter what that event may be. The nation that triumphed over the Continental System of Napoleon, and which was not injured by our Embargo Acts of fifty years ago, should be ashamed to lay so much stress upon the value of our cotton-crop, when it has its choice of the lands of the tropics from which to draw the raw material it requires. As to France, it would be most impolitic in her to seek our destruction, unless she wishes to see the restoration of England's maritime supremacy. The French navy, great and powerful as it now is, can be regarded only as the result of a skilful and most costly forcing process, carried on by Bourbons, Orleanists, Republicans, and Imperialists, during forty-six years of maritime peace. It could not be maintained against the attacks of England, which is a naval country by position and interest. We never could be the rival of France, but we could always be relied upon to throw our weight on her side in a maritime war; and while our policy would never allow of our having a very large navy in time of peace, we have in abundance all the elements of naval power. Nor should England be indifferent to the aid which we could afford her, were she to be assailed by the principal nations of Continental Europe. Strike the American Union out of the list of the nations, or cause it to be sensibly weakened, or treat it so as to revive in force the old American hatred of England, and it is possible that the predictions of those who see in Napoleon III. only the Avenger of Napoleon I. may be justified by the event.

* * * * *

WASHINGTON AS A CAMP.

OUR BARRACKS AT THE CAPITOL.

We marched up the hill, and when the dust opened there was our Big Tent ready pitched.

It was an enormous tent,—the Sibley pattern modified. A simple soul in our ranks looked up and said,—“Tent! canvas! I don't see it: that's marble!” Whereupon a simpler soul informed us,—“Boys, that's the Capitol.”

And so it was the Capitol,—as glad to see the New York Seventh Regiment as they to see it. The Capitol was to be our quarters, and I was pleased to notice that the top of the dome had been left off for ventilation.

Page 137

The Seventh had had a wearisome and anxious progress from New York, as I have chronicled in the June "Atlantic." We had marched from Annapolis, while "rumors to right of us, rumors to left of us, volleyed and thundered." We had not expected that the attack upon us would be merely verbal. The truculent citizens of Maryland notified us that we were to find every barn a Concord and every hedge a Lexington. Our Southern brethren at present repudiate their debts; but we fancied they would keep their warlike promises. At least, everybody thought, "They will fire over our heads, or bang blank cartridges at us." Every nose was sniffing for the smell of powder. Vapor instead of valor nobody looked for. So the march had been on the *qui vive*. We were happy enough that it was over, and successful.

Successful, because Mumbo Jumbo was not installed in the White House. It is safe to call Jeff. Davis Mumbo Jumbo now. But there is no doubt that the luckless man had visions of himself receiving guests, repudiating debts, and distributing embassies in Washington, May 1, 1861. And as to La' Davis, there seems to be documentary evidence that she meant to be "At Home" in the capital, bringing the first strawberries with her from Montgomery for her May-day *soiree*. Bah! one does not like to sneer at people who have their necks in the halter; but one happy result of this disturbance is that the disturbers have sent themselves to Coventry. The Lincoln party may be wanting in finish. Finish comes with use. A little roughness of manner, the genuine simplicity of a true soul like Lincoln, is attractive. But what man of breeding could ever stand the type Southern Senator? But let him rest in such peace as he can find! He and his peers will not soon be seen where we of the New York Seventh were now entering.

They gave us the Representatives Chamber for quarters. Without running the gauntlet of caucus primary and election, every one of us attained that sacred shrine.

In we marched, tramp, tramp. Bayonets took the place of buncombe. The frowzy creatures in ill-made dress-coats, shimmering satin waistcoats, and hats of the tile model, who lounge, spit, and vociferate there, and name themselves M.C., were off. Our neat uniforms and bright barrels showed to great advantage, compared with the usual costumes of the usual *dramatis personae* of the scene.

It was dramatic business, our entrance there. The new Chamber is gorgeous, but ineffective. Its ceiling is flat, and panelled with transparencies. Each panel is the coat-of-arms of a State, painted on glass. I could not see that the impartial sunbeams, tempered by this skylight, had burned away the insignia of the malecontent States. Nor had any rampant Secessionist thought to punch any of the seven lost Pleiads out from that firmament with a long pole. Crimson and gold are the prevailing hues of the decorations. There is no unity and breadth of coloring. The desks of the members radiate in double files from a white marble tribune at the centre of the semicircle.

Page 138

In came the new actors on this scene. Our presence here was the inevitable sequel of past events. We appeared with bayonets and bullets because of the bosh uttered on this floor; because of the bills—with treasonable stump-speeches in their bellies—passed here; because of the cowardice of the poltroons, the imbecility of the dodgers, and the arrogance of the bullies, who had here cooperated to blind and corrupt the minds of the people. Talk had made a miserable mess of it. The *ultima ratio* was now appealed to.

Some of our companies were marched up-stairs into the galleries. The sofas were to be their beds. With their white cross-belts and bright breastplates, they made a very picturesque body of spectators for whatever happened in the Hall, and never failed to applaud in the right or the wrong place at will.

Most of us were bestowed in the amphitheatre. Each desk received its man. He was to scribble on it by day, and sleep under it by night. When the desks were all taken, the companies overflowed into the corners and into the lobbies. The staff took committee-rooms. The Colonel reigned in the Speaker's parlor.

Once in, firstly, we washed.

Such a wash merits a special paragraph. I compliment the M.C.s, our hosts, upon their water-privileges. How we welcomed this chief luxury after our march! And thenceforth how we prized it! For the clean face is an institution which requires perpetual renovation at Washington. "Constant vigilance is the price" of neatness. When the sky here is not travelling earthward in rain, earth is mounting skyward in dust. So much dirt must have an immoral effect.

After the wash we showed ourselves to the eyes of Washington, marching by companies, each to a different hotel, to dinner. This became one of the ceremonies of our barrack-life. We liked it. The Washingtonians were amused and encouraged by it. Three times a day, with marked punctuality, our lines formed and tramped down the hill to scuffle with awkward squads of waiters for fare more or less tolerable. In these little marches, we encountered by-and-by the other regiments, and, most soldierly of all, the Rhode Island men, in blue flannel blouses and *bersagliere* hats. But of them hereafter.

It was a most attractive post of ours at the Capitol. Spring was at its freshest and fairest. Every day was more exquisite than its forerunner. We drilled morning, noon, and evening, almost hourly, in the pretty square east of the building. Old soldiers found that they rattled through the manual twice as alert as ever before. Recruits became old soldiers in a trice. And as to awkward squads, men that would have been the veriest louts and lubbers in the piping times of peace now learned to toe the mark, to whisk their eyes right and their eyes left, to drop the butts of their muskets without crushing their corns, and all the mysteries of flank and file,—and so became full-fledged heroes before they knew it.

Page 139

In the rests between our drills we lay under the young shade on the sweet young grass, with the odors of snowballs and horse-chestnut blooms drifting to us with every whiff of breeze, and amused ourselves with watching the evolutions of our friends of the Massachusetts Eighth, and other less experienced soldiers, as they appeared upon the field. They, too, like ourselves, were going through the transformations. These sturdy fellows were then in a rough enough chrysalis of uniform. That shed, they would look worthy of themselves.

But the best of the entertainment was within the Capitol. Some three thousand or more of us were now quartered there. The Massachusetts Eighth were under the dome. No fear of want of air for them. The Massachusetts Sixth were eloquent for their State in the Senate Chamber. It was singularly fitting, among the many coincidences in the history of this regiment, that they should be there, tacitly avenging the assault upon Sumner and the attempts to bully the impregnable Wilson.

In the recesses, caves, and crypts of the Capitol what other legions were bestowed I do not know. I daily lost myself, and sometimes when out of my reckoning was put on the way by sentries of strange corps, a Reading Light Infantry man, or some other. We all fraternized. There was a fine enthusiasm among us: not the soldierly rivalry in discipline that may grow up in future between men of different States acting together, but the brotherhood of ardent fellows first in the field and earnest in the cause.

All our life in the Capitol was most dramatic and sensational.

Before it was fairly light in the dim interior of the Representatives Chamber, the *reveilles* of the different regiments came rattling through the corridors. Every snorer's trumpet suddenly paused. The impressive sound of the hushed breathing of a thousand sleepers, marking off the fleet moments of the night, gave way to a most vociferous uproar. The boy element is large in the Seventh Regiment. Its slang dictionary is peculiar and unabridged. As soon as we woke, the pit began to chaff the galleries, and the galleries the pit. We were allowed noise nearly *ad libitum*. Our riotous tendencies, if they existed, escaped by the safety-valve of the larynx. We joked, we shouted, we sang, we mounted the Speaker's desk and made speeches,—always to the point; for if any but a wit ventured to give tongue, he was coughed down without ceremony. Let the M.C.s adopt this plan and silence their dunces.

With all our jollity we preserved very tolerable decorum. The regiment is *assez bien compose*. Many of its privates are distinctly gentlemen of breeding and character. The tone is mainly good, and the *esprit de corps* high. If the Colonel should say, "Up, boys, and at 'em!" I know that the Seventh would do brilliantly in the field. I speak now of its behavior in-doors. This certainly did it credit. Our thousand did the Capitol little harm that a corporal's guard of Biddies with mops and tubs could not repair in a forenoon's campaign.

Page 140

Perhaps we should have served our country better by a little Vandalism. The decorations of the Capitol have a slight flavor of the Southwestern steamboat saloon. The pictures (now, by the way, carefully covered) would most of them be the better, if the figures were bayoneted and the backgrounds sabred out. Both—pictures and decorations—belong to that bygone epoch of our country when men shaved the moustache, dressed like parsons, said “Sir,” and chewed tobacco,—a transition epoch, now become an historic blank.

The home-correspondence of our legion of young heroes was illimitable. Every one had his little tale of active service to relate. A decimation of the regiment, more or less, had profited by the tender moment of departure to pop the question and to receive the dulcet “Yes.” These lucky fellows were of course writing to Dulcinea regularly, three meals of love a day. Mr. Van Wyck, M.C., and a brace of colleagues were kept hard at work all day giving franks and saving threepennies to the ardent scribes. Uncle Sam lost certainly three thousand cents a day in this manner.

What crypts and dens, caves and cellars there are under that great structure! And barrels of flour in every one of them this month of May, 1861. Do civilians eat in this proportion? Or does long standing in the “Position of a Soldier” (*vide* “Tactics” for a view of that graceful *pose*) increase a man’s capacity for bread and beef so enormously?

It was infinitely picturesque in these dim vaults by night. Sentries were posted at every turn. Their guns gleamed in the gaslight. Sleepers were lying in their blankets wherever the stones were softest. Then in the guard-room the guard were waiting their turn. We have not had much of this scenery in America, and the physiognomy of volunteer military life is quite distinct from anything one sees in European service. The People have never had occasion until now to occupy their Palace with armed men.

THE FOLLOWING IS THE OATH.

We were to be sworn into the service of the United States the afternoon of April 26th. All the Seventh, raw men and ripe men, marched out into the sweet spring sunshine. Every fellow had whitened his belts, burnished his arms, curled his moustache, and was scowling his manliest for Uncle Sam’s approval.

We were drawn up by companies in the Capitol Square for mustering in.

Presently before us appeared a gorgeous officer, in full fig. “Major McDowell!” somebody whispered, as we presented arms. He is a General, or perhaps a Field Marshal, now. Promotions come with a hop, skip, and jump, in these times, when demerit resigns and merit stands ready to step to the front.

Page 141

Major-Colonel-General McDowell, in a soldierly voice, now called the roll, and we all answered, "Here!" in voices more or less soldierly. He entertained himself with this ceremony for an hour. The roll over, we were marched and formed in three sides of a square along the turf. Again the handsome officer stepped forward, and recited to us the conditions of our service. "In accordance with a special arrangement, made with the Governor of New York," says the Major, "you are now mustered into the service of the United States, to serve for thirty days, unless sooner discharged"; and continues he, "The oath will now be read to you by the magistrate."

Hereupon a gentleman *en mufti*, but wearing a military cap with an oil-skin cover, was revealed. Until now he had seemed an impassive supernumerary. But he was biding his time, and—with due respect be it said—saving his wind, and now in a Stentorian voice he ejaculated,—

"The following is the oath!"

Per se this remark was not comic. But there was something in the dignitary's manner which tickled the regiment. As one man the thousand smiled, and immediately adopted this new epigram among its private countersigns.

But the good-natured smile passed away as we listened to the impressive oath, following its title.

We raised our right hands, and, clause by clause, repeated the solemn obligation, in the name of God, to be faithful soldiers of our country. It was not quite so comprehensive as the beautiful knightly pledge administered by King Arthur to his comrades, and transmitted to our time by Major-General Tennyson of the Parnassus Division. We did not swear, as they did of yore, to be true lovers as well as loyal soldiers. *Ca va sans dire* in 1861,—particularly when you were engaged to your Amanda the evening before you started, as was the case with many a stalwart brave and many a mighty man of a corporal or sergeant in our ranks.

We were thrilled and solemnized by the stately ceremony of the oath. This again was most dramatic. A grand public recognition of a duty. A reavowal of the fundamental belief that our system was worthy of the support, and our Government of the confidence, of all loyal men. And there was danger in the middle distance of our view into the future, —danger of attack, or dangerous duty of advance, just enough to keep any trifler from feeling that his pledge was mere holiday business.

So, under the cloudless blue sky, we echoed in unison the sentences of the oath. A little low murmur of rattling arms, shaken with the hearty utterance, made itself heard in the pauses. Then the band crashed in magnificently.

Page 142

We were now miserable mercenaries, serving for low pay and rough rations. Read the Southern papers and you will see us described. "Mudsills,"—that, I believe, is the technical word. By repeating a form of words after a gentleman in a glazed cap and black raiment, we had suffered change into base assassins, the offscouring of society, starving for want of employment, and willing to "imbrue our coarse fists in fraternal blood" for the sum of eleven dollars a month, besides hard tack, salt junk, and the hope of a Confederate States bond apiece for bounty, or free loot in the treasuries of Florida, Mississippi, and Arkansas, after the war. How carefully from that day we watched the rise and fall of United States stocks! If they should go low among the nineties, we felt that our eleven dollars *per mensem* would be imperilled.

We stayed in our palace for a week or so after April 26th, the day of the oath. That was the most original part of our duty thus far. New York never had so unanimous a deputation on the floor of the Representatives Chamber before, and never a more patriotic one. Take care, Gentlemen Members of Congress! look to your words and your Acts honestly and wisely in future! don't palter with Liberty again! it is not well that soldiers should get into the habit of thinking they are always to unravel the snarls and cut the knots twisted and tied by clumsy or crafty fingers. The traitor States already need the *main de fer*,—yes, and without the *gant de velours*. Let us beware, and keep ourselves worthy of the boon of self-government, man by man! I do not wish to hear, "Order arms!" and "Charge bayonets!" in the Capitol. But this present defence of Free Speech and Free Thought ends, let us hope, that danger forever.

When we had been ten days in our showy barracks we began to quarrel with luxury. What had private soldiers to do with the desks of law-givers? Why should we be allowed to revel longer in the dining-rooms of Washington hotels, partaking the admirable dainties there?

The May sunshine, the birds and the breezes of May, invited us to Camp,—the genuine thing, under canvas. Besides, Uncles Sam and Abe wanted our room for other company. Washington was filling up fast with uniforms. It seemed as if all the able-bodied men in the country were moving, on the first of May, with all their property on their backs, to agreeable, but dusty lodgings on the Potomac.

We also made our May move. One afternoon, my company, the Ninth, and the Engineers, the Tenth, were detailed to follow Captain Viele, and lay out a camp on Meridian Hill.

CAMP CAMERON.

As we had the first choice, we got, on the whole, the best site for a camp. We occupy the villa and farm of Dr. Stone, two miles due north of Willard's Hotel. I assume that hotel as a peculiarly American point of departure, and also because it is the hub of

Washington,—the centre of an eccentric, having the White House at the end of its shorter, and the Capitol at the end of its longer radius,—moral, so they say, as well as geometrical.

Page 143

Sundry dignitaries, Presidents and what not, have lived here in times gone by. Whoever chose the site ought to be kindly remembered for his good taste. The house stands upon the pretty terrace commanding the plain of Washington. From the upper windows we can see the Potomac opening southward like a lake, and between us and the water ambitious Washington stretching itself along and along, like the shackly files of an army of recruits.

Oaks love the soil of this terrace. There are some noble ones on the undulations before the house. It may be permitted even for one who is supposed to think of nothing but powder and ball to notice one of these grand trees. Let the ivy-covered stem of the Big Oak of Camp Cameron take its place in literature! And now enough of scenery. The landscape will stay, but the troops will not. There are trees and slopes of green-sward elsewhere, and shrubbery begins to blossom in these bright days of May before a thousand pretty homes. The tents and the tent-life are more interesting for the moment than objects which cannot decamp.

The old villa serves us for head-quarters. It is a respectable place, not without its pretensions. Four granite pillars, as true grit as if the two Presidents Adams had lugged them on their shoulders all the way from Quincy, Mass., make a carriage-porch. Here is the Colonel in the big west parlor, the Quartermaster and Commissary in the rooms with sliding-doors on the east, the Hospital upstairs, and so on. Other rooms, numerous as the cells in a monastery, serve as quarters for the Engineer Company. These dens are not monastic in aspect. The house is, of course, a Certosa, so far as the gentler sex are concerned; but no anchorites dwell here at present. If the Seventh disdained everything but soldiers' fare,—which it does not,—common civility would require that it should do violence to its disinclination for comfort and luxury, and consume the stores sent down by ardent patriots in New York. The cellars of the villa overflow with edibles, and in the greenhouse is a most appetizing array of barrels, boxes, cans, and bottles, shipped here that our Sybarites might not sigh for the flesh-pots of home. Such trash may do very well to amuse the palate in these times of half-peace, half-hostility; but when

“war, which for a space does fail,
Shall doubly thundering swell the gale,”

then every soldier should drop gracefully to the simple ration, and cease to dabble with frying-pans. Cooks to their aprons, and soldiers to their guns!

Our tents are pitched on a level clover-field sloping to the front for our parade-ground. We use the old wall tent without a fly. It is necessary to live in one of these awhile to know the vast superiority of the Sibley pattern. Sibley's tent is a wrinkle taken from savage life. It is the Sioux buffalo-skin, lodge, or *Tepee*, improved,—a cone truncated at the top and fitted with a movable apex for ventilation. A single tent-pole, supported upon a hinged tripod of iron, sustains the structure. It is compacter, more commodious,

healthier, and handsomer than the ancient models. None other should be used in permanent encampments. For marching troops, the French *Tente d'abri* is a capital shelter.

Page 144

Still our fellows manage to be at home as they are. Some of our model tents are types of the best style of temporary cottages. Young housekeepers of limited incomes would do well to visit and take heed. A whole elysium of household comfort can be had out of a teapot,—tin; a brace of cups,—tin; a brace of plates,—tin; and a frying-pan.

In these days of war everybody can see a camp. Every one who stays at home has a brother or a son or a lover quartered in one of the myriad tents that have blossomed with the daffodil-season all over our green fields of the North. I need not, then, describe our encampment in detail,—its guard-tent in advance,—its guns in battery,—its flagstaff,—its companies quartered in streets with droll and fanciful names,—its officers' tents in the rear, at right angles to the lines of company-tents,—its kitchens, armed with Captain Viele's capital army cooking-stoves,—its big marquees, "The White House" and "Fort Pickens," for the lodging and messing of the new artillery company,—its barbers' shops,—its offices. The same, more or less well arranged, can be seen in all the rendezvous where the armies are now assembling. Instead of such description, then, let me give the log of a single day at our camp.

JOURNAL OF A DAY AT CAMP CAMERON, BY PRIVATE W., COMPANY I.

BOOM!

I would rather not believe it; but it is—yes, it is—the morning gun, uttering its surly "Hullo!" to sunrise.

Yes,—and, to confirm my suspicions, here rattle in the drums and pipe in the fifes, wooing us to get up, *get up*, with music too peremptory to be harmonious.

I rise up *sur mon seant* and glance about me. I, Private W., chance, by reason of sundry chances, to be a member of a company recently largely recruited and bestowed all together in a big marquee. As I lift myself up, I see others lift themselves up on those straw bags we kindly call our mattresses. The tallest man of the regiment, Sergeant K., is on one side of me. On the other side I am separated from two of the fattest men of the regiment by Sergeant M., another excellent fellow, prime cook and prime forager.

We are all presently on our pins,—K. on those lengthy continuations of his, and the two stout gentlemen on their stout supporters. The deep sleepers are pulled up from those abysses of slumber where they had been choking, gurgling, strangling, death-rattling all night. There is for a moment a sound of legs rushing into pantaloons and arms plunging into jackets.

Then, as the drums and fifes whine and clatter their last notes, at the flap of our tent appears our orderly, and fierce in the morning sunshine gleams his moustache,—one

month's growth this blessed day. "Fall in, for roll-call!" he cries, in a ringing voice. The orderly can speak sharp, if need be.

We obey. Not "Walk in!" "March in!" "Stand in!" is the order; but "Fall in!" as sleepy men must. Then the orderly calls off our hundred. There are several boyish voices which reply, several comic voices, a few mean voices, and some so earnest and manly and alert that one says to himself, "Those are the men for me, when work is to be done!" I read the character of my comrades every morning in each fellow's monosyllable "Here!"

Page 145

When the orderly is satisfied that not one of us has run away and accepted a Colonelcy from the Confederate States since last roll-call, he notifies those unfortunates who are to be on guard for the next twenty-four hours of the honor and responsibility placed upon their shoulders. Next he tells us what are to be the drills of the day. Then, "Right face! Dismissed! Break ranks! March!"

With ardor we instantly seize tin basins, soap, and towels, and invade a lovely oak-grove at the rear and left of our camp. Here is a delicious spring into which we have fitted a pump. The sylvan scene becomes peopled with "National Guards Washing,"—a scene meriting the notice of Art as much as any "Diana and her Nymphs." But we have no Poussin to paint us in the dewy sunlit grove. Few of us, indeed, know how picturesque we are at all times and seasons.

After this *beau ideal* of a morning toilet comes the ante-prandial drill. Lieutenant W. arrives, and gives us a little appetizing exercise in "Carry arms!" "Support arms!" "By the right flank, march!" "Double quick!"

Breakfast follows. My company messes somewhat helter-skelter in a big tent. We have very tolerable rations. Sometimes luxuries appear of potted meats and hermetical vegetables, sent us by the fond New Yorkers. Each little knot of fellows, too, cooks something savory. Our table-furniture is not elegant, our plates are tin, there is no silver in our forks; but *a la guerre, comme a la guerre*. Let the scrubs grow! Lucky fellows, if they suffer no worse hardships than this!

By-and-by, after breakfast, come company-drills, bayonet-practice, battalion-drills, and the heavy work of the day. Our handsome Colonel, on a nice black nag, manoeuvres his thousand men of the line-companies on the parade for two or three hours. Two thousand legs step off accurately together. Two thousand pipe-clayed cross-belts—whitened with infinite pains and waste of time, and offering a most inviting mark to a foe—restrain the beating bosoms of a thousand braves, as they—the braves, not the belts—go through the most intricate evolutions unerringly. Watching these battalion movements, Private W., perhaps, goes off and inscribes in his journal,—“Any clever, prompt man, with a mechanical turn, an eye for distance, a notion of time, and a voice of command, can be a tactician. It is pure pedantry to claim that the manoeuvring of troops is difficult: it is not difficult, if the troops are quick and steady. But to be a general, with patience and purpose and initiative,—ah!” thinks Private W., “for that you must have the man of genius; and already in this war he begins to appear out of Massachusetts and elsewhere.”

Private W. avows without fear that about noon, at Camp Cameron, he takes a hearty dinner, and with satisfaction. Private W. has had his feasts in cot and chateau in Old World and New. It is the conviction of said private that nowhere and no-when has he expected his ration with more interest, and remembered it with more affection, than here.

Page 146

In the middle hours of the day it is in order to get a pass to go to Washington, or to visit some of the camps, which now, in the middle of May, begin to form a cordon around the city. Some of these I may criticize before the end of this paper. Our capital seems arranged by Nature to be protected by fortified camps on the circuit of its hills. It may be made almost a Verona, if need be. Our brother regiments have posts nearly as charming as our own in these fair groves and on these fair slopes on either side of us.

In the afternoon, comes target-practice, skirmishing-drill, more company- or recruit-drill, and, at half-past five, our evening parade. Let me not forget tent-inspection, at four, by the officer of the day, when our band plays deliciously.

At evening parade all Washington appears. A regiment of ladies, rather indisposed to beauty, observe us. Sometimes the Dons arrive,—Secretaries of State, of War, of Navy, —or military Dons, bestriding prancing steeds, but bestriding them as if “’twas *not* their habit often of an afternoon.” All which,—the bad teeth, pallid skins, and rustic toilets of the fair, and the very moderate horsemanship of the brave,—privates, standing at ease in the ranks, take note of, not cynically, but as men of the world.

Wondrous gymnasts are some of the Seventh, and after evening parade they often give exhibitions of their prowess to circles of admirers. Muscle has not gone out, nor nerve, nor activity, if these athletes are to be taken as the types or even as the leaders of the young city-bred men of our time. All the feats of strength and grace of the gymnasiums are to be seen here, and show to double advantage in the open air.

Then comes sweet evening. The moon rises. It seems always full moon at Camp Cameron. Every tent becomes a little illuminated pyramid. Cooking-fires burn bright along the alleys. The boys lark, sing, shout, do all those merry things that make the entertainment of volunteer service. The gentle moon looks on, mild and amused, the fairest lady of all that visit us.

At last, when the songs have been sung and the hundred rumors of the day discussed, at ten the intrusive drums and scolding fifes get together and stir up a concert, always premature, called tattoo. The Seventh Regiment begins to peel for bed: at all events, Private W. does; for said W. takes, when he can, precious good care of his cuticle, and never yields to the lazy and unwholesome habit of soldiers,—sleeping in the clothes. At taps—half-past ten—out go the lights. If they do not, presently comes the sentry’s peremptory command to put them out. Then, and until the dawn of another day, a cordon of snorers inside of a cordon of sentries surrounds our national capital. The outer cordon sounds its “All’s well”; and the inner cordon, slumbering, echoes it.

And that is the history of any day at Camp Cameron. It is monotonous, it is not monotonous, it is laborious, it is lazy, it is a bore, it is a lark, it is half war, half peace, and totally attractive, and not to be dispensed with from one’s experience in the nineteenth century.

Page 147

OUR ADVANCE INTO VIRGINIA.

Meantime the weeks went on. May 23d arrived. Lovely creatures with their taper fingers had been brewing a flag for us. Shall I say that its red stripes were celestial rosy as their cheeks, its white stripes virgin white as their brows, its blue field cerulean as their eyes, and its stars scintillating as the beams of the said peepers? Shall I say this? If I were a poet, like Jeff. Davis and each and every editor of each and every newspaper in our misbehaving States, I might say it. And involuntarily I have said it.

So the young ladies of New York—including, I hope, her who made my sandwiches for the march hither—had been making us a flag, as they have made us havelocks, pots of jelly, bundles of lint, flannel dressing-gowns, embroidered slippers for a rainy day in camp, and other necessities of the soldier's life.

May 23d was the day we were to get this sweet symbol of good-will. At evening parade appeared General Thomas, as the agent of the ladies, the donors, with a neat speech on a clean sheet of paper. He read it with feeling; and Private W., who has his sentimental moments, avows that he was touched by the General's earnest manner and patriotic words. Our Colonel responded with his neat speech, very *apropos*. The regiment then made its neat speech, nine cheers and a roar of tigers,—very brief and pointed.

There had been a note of preparation in General Thomas's remarks,—a "*Virginia, cave canem!*" And before parade was dismissed, we saw our officers holding parley with the Colonel.

Something in the wind! As I was strolling off to see the sunset and the ladies on parade, I began to hear great irrepressible cheers bursting from the streets of the different companies.

"Orders to be ready to march at a moment's notice!"—so I learned presently from dozens of overjoyed fellows. "Harper's Ferry!" says one. "Alexandria!" shouts a second. "Richmond!" only Richmond will content a third. And some could hardly be satisfied short of the hope of a breakfast in Montgomery.

What a happy thousand were the line-companies! How their suppressed ardors stirred! No want of fight in these lads! They may be rather luxurious in their habits, for camp-life. They may be a little impatient of restraint. They may have—as the type regiment of militia—the type faults of militia on service. But a desire to dodge a fight is not one of these faults.

Every man in camp was merry, except two hundred who were grim. These were the two artillery companies, ordered to remain in guard of our camp. They swore as if Camp Cameron were Flanders.

I by rights belonged with these malecontent and objurgating gentlemen; but a chronicler has privileges, and I got leave to count myself into the Eighth Company, my old friend Captain Shumway's. We were to move, about midnight, in light marching order, with one day's rations.

Page 148

It has been always full moon at our camp. This night was full moon at its fullest,—a night more perfect than all perfection, mild, dewy, refulgent. At one o'clock the drum beat; we fell into ranks, and marched quietly off through the shadowy trees of the lane, into the highway.

ACROSS THE LONG BRIDGE.

I have heretofore been proud of my individuality, and resisted, so far as one may, all the world's attempts to merge me in the mass. *In pluribus unum* has been my motto. But whenever I march with the regiment, my pride is that I lose my individuality, that I am merged, that I become a part of a machine, a mere walking gentleman, a No. 1 or a No. 2, front rank or rear rank, file-leader or file-closer. The machine is so steady and so mighty, it moves with such musical cadence and such brilliant show, that I enjoy it entirely as the *unum* and lose myself gladly as a *pluribus*.

Night increases this fascination. The outer world is vague in the moonlight. Objects out of our ranks are lost. I see only glimmering steel and glittering buttons and the light-stepping forms of my comrades. Our array and our step connect us. We move as one man. A man made up of a thousand members and each member a man is a grand creature,—particularly when you consider that he is self-made. And the object of this self-made giant, men-man, is to destroy another like himself, or the separate pigmy members of another such giant. We have failed to put ourselves—heads, arms, legs, and wills—together as a unit for any purpose so thoroughly as to snuff out a similar unit. Up to 1861, it seems that the business of war compacts men best.

Well, the Seventh, a compact projectile, was now flinging itself along the road to Washington. Just a month ago, "in such a night as this," we made our first promenade through the enemy's country. The moon of Annapolis,—why should we not have our ominous moon, as those other fellows had their sun of Austerlitz?—the moon of Annapolis shone over us. No epithets are too fine or too complimentary for such a luminary, and there was no dust under her rays.

So we pegged along to Washington and across Washington,—which at that point consists of Willard's Hotel, few other buildings being in sight. A hag in a nightcap reviewed us from an upper window as we tramped by.

Opposite that bald block, the Washington Monument, and opposite what was of more importance to us, a drove of beeves putting beef on their bones in the seedy grounds of the Smithsonian Institution, we were halted while the New Jersey brigade—some three thousand of them—trudged by, receiving the complimentary fire of our line as they passed. New Jersey is not so far from New York but that the dialects of the two can understand each other. Their respective slangs, though peculiar, are of the same

genus. By the end of this war, I trust that these distinctions of locality will be quite annulled.

Page 149

We began to feel like an army as these thousands thronged by us. This was evidently a movement in force. We rested an hour or more by the road. Mounted officers galloping along down the lines kept up the excitement.

At last we had the word to fall in again and march. It is part of the simple perfection of the machine, a regiment, that, though it drops to pieces for a rest, it comes together instantly for a start, and nobody is confused or delayed. We moved half a mile farther, and presently a broad pathway of reflected moonlight shone up at us from the Potomac.

No orders, at this, came from the Colonel, "Attention, battalion! Be sentimental!" Perhaps privates have no right to perceive the beautiful. But the sections in my neighborhood murmured admiration. The utter serenity of the night was most impressive. Cool and quiet and tender the moon shone upon our ranks. She does not change her visage, whether it be lovers or burglars or soldiers who use her as a lantern to their feet.

The Long Bridge thus far has been merely a shabby causeway with waterways and draws. Shabby,—let me here pause to say that in Virginia shabbiness is the grand universal law, and neatness the spasmodic exception, attained in rare spots, an *aeon* beyond their Old Dominion age.

The Long Bridge has thus far been a totally unhistoric and prosaic bridge. Roads and bridges are making themselves of importance and shining up into sudden renown in these times. The Long Bridge has done nothing hitherto except carry passengers on its back across the Potomac. Hucksters, planters, dry-goods drummers, Members of Congress, *et ea genera omnia*, have here gone and come on their several mercenary errands, and, as it now appears, some sour little imp—the very reverse of a "sweet little cherub"—took toll of every man as he passed,—a heavy toll, namely, every man's whole store of Patriotism and Loyalty. Every man—so it seems—who passed the Long Bridge was stripped of his last dollar of *Amor Patriae*, and came to Washington, or went home, with a waistcoat-pocket full of bogus in change. It was our business now to open the bridge and see it clear, and leave sentries along to keep it permanently free for Freedom.

There is a mile of this Long Bridge. We seemed to occupy the whole length of it, with our files opened to diffuse the weight of our column. We were not now the tired and sleepy squad which just a moon ago had trudged along the railroad to the Annapolis Junction, looking up a Capital and a Government, perhaps lost.

By the time we touched ground across the bridge, dawn was breaking,—a good omen for poor old sleepy Virginia. The moon, as bright and handsome as a new twenty-dollar piece, carried herself straight before us,—a splendid oriflamme.

Lucky is the private who marches with the van! It may be the post of more danger, but it is also the post of less dust. My throat, therefore, and my eyes and beard, wore the less Southern soil when we halted half a mile beyond the bridge, and let sunrise overtake us.

Page 150

Nothing men can do—except picnics, with ladies in straw flats with feathers—is so picturesque as soldiering. As soon as the Seventh halt anywhere, or move anywhere, or camp anywhere, they resolve themselves into a grand *tableau*.

Their own ranks should supply their own Horace Vernet. Our groups were never more entertaining than at this halt by the roadside on the Alexandria road. Stacks of guns make a capital framework for drapery, and red blankets dot in the lights most artistically. The fellows lined the road with their gay array, asleep, on the rampage, on the lounge, and nibbling at their rations.

By-and-by, when my brain had taken in as much of the picturesque as it could stand, it suffered the brief congestion known as a nap. I was suddenly awaked by the rattle of a horse's hoofs. Before I had rubbed my eyes the rider was gone. His sharp tidings had stayed behind him. Ellsworth was dead,—so he said hurriedly, and rode on. Poor Ellsworth! a fellow of genius and initiative! He had still so much of the boy in him, that he rattled forward boyishly, and so died. *Si monumentum requiris*, look at his regiment. It was a brilliant stroke to levy it; and if it does worthily, its young Colonel will not have lived in vain.

As the morning hours passed, we learned that we were the rear-guard of the left wing of the army advancing into Virginia. The Seventh, as the best organized body, acted as reserve to this force. It didn't wish to be in the rear; but such is the penalty of being reliable for an emergency. Fellow-soldier, be a scalawag, be a bashi-bazouk, be a Billy-Wilsoner, if you wish to see the fun in the van!

When the road grew too hot for us, on account of the fire of sunshine in our rear, we jumped over the fence into the Race-Course, a big field beside us, and there became squatter sovereigns all day. I shall be a bore, if I say again what a pretty figure we cut in this military picnic, with two long lines of blankets draped on bayonets for parasols.

The New Jersey brigade were meanwhile doing workie work on the ridge just beyond us. The road and railroad to Alexandria follow the general course of the river southward along the level. This ridge to be fortified is at the point where the highway bends from west to south. The works were intended to serve as an advanced *tete du pont*,—a bridge-head, with a very long neck connecting it with the bridge. That fine old Fabius, General Scott, had no idea of flinging an army out broadcast into Virginia, and, in the insupposable case that it turned tail, leaving it no defended passage to run away by.

This was my first view of a field-work in construction,—also, my first hand as a laborer at a field-work. I knew glacis and counterscarp on paper; also, on paper, superior slope, banquette, and the other dirty parts of a redoubt. Here they were, not on paper. A slight wooden scaffolding determined the shape of the simple work; and when I arrived, a thousand Jerseymen were working, not at all like Jerseymen,—with picks, spades, and

shovels, cutting into Virginia, digging into Virginia, shovelling up Virginia, for Virginia's protection against pseudo-Virginians.

Page 151

I swarmed in for a little while with our Paymaster, picked a little, spaded a little, shovelled a little, took a hand to my great satisfaction at earth-works, and for my efforts I venture to suggest that Jersey City owes me its freedom in a box, and Jersey State a basket of its finest Clicquot.

Is my gentle reader tired of the short marches and frequent halts of the Seventh? Remember, gentle reader, that you must be schooled by such alphabetical exercises to spell bigger words—skirmish, battle, defeat, rout, massacre—by-and-by.

Well,—to be Xenophontic,—from the Race-Course that evening we marched one stadium, one parasang, to a cedar-grove up the road. In the grove is a spring worthy to be called a fountain, and what I determined by infallible indications to be a *lager-bier* saloon. Saloon no more! War is no respecter of localities. Be it Arlington House, the seedy palace of a Virginia Don,—be it the humbler, but seedy, pavilion where the tired Teuton washes the dust of Washington away from his tonsils,—each must surrender to the bold soldier-boy. Exit Champagne and its goblet; exit *lager* and its mug; enter whiskey-and-water in a tin pot. Such are the horrors of civil war!

And now I must cut short my story, for graver matters press. As to the residence of the Seventh in the cedar-grove for two days and two nights,—how they endured the hardship of a bivouac on soft earth and the starvation of coffee *sans* milk,—how they digged manfully in the trenches by gangs all these two laborious days,—with what supreme artistic finish their work was achieved,—how they chopped off their corns with axes, as they cleared the brushwood from the glaxis,—how they blistered their hands,—how they chafed that they were not lunging with battailous steel at the breasts of the minions of the oligarchs,—how Washington, seeing the smoke of burning rubbish, and hearing dropping shots of target-practice, or of novices with the musket shooting each other by accident,—how Washington, alarmed, imagined a battle, and went into panic accordingly,—all this, is it not written in the daily papers?

On the evening of the 26th, the Seventh travelled back to Camp Cameron in a smart shower. Its service was over. Its month was expired. The troops ordered to relieve it had arrived. It had given the other volunteers the benefit of a month's education at its drills and parades. It had enriched poor Washington to the tune of fifty thousand dollars. Ah, Washington! that we, under Providence and after General Butler, saved from the heel of Secession! Ah, Washington, why did you charge us so much for our milk and butter and strawberries? The Seventh, then, after a month of delightful duty, was to be mustered out of service, and take new measures, if it would, to have a longer and a larger share in the war.

ARLINGTON HEIGHTS.

I took advantage of the day of rest after our return to have a gallop about the outposts. Arlington Heights had been the spot whence the alarmists threatened us daily with big thunder and bursting bombs. I was curious to see the region that had had Washington under its thumb.

Page 152

So Private W., tired of his foot-soldiering, got a quadruped under him, and felt like a cavalier again. The horse took me along the tow-path of the Cumberland Canal, as far as the redoubts where we had worked our task. Then I turned up the hill, took a look at the camp of the New York Twenty-Fifth at the left, and rode along for Arlington House.

Grand name! and the domain is really quite grand, but ill-kept. Fine oaks make beauty without asking favors. Fine oaks and a fair view make all the beauty of Arlington. It seems that this old establishment, like many another old Virginian, had claimed its respectability for its antiquity, and failed to keep up to the level of the time. The road winds along through the trees, climbing to fairer and fairer reaches of view over the plain of Washington. I had not fancied that there was any such lovely site near the capital. But we have not yet appreciated what Nature has done for us there. When civilization once makes up its mind to colonize Washington, all this amphitheatre of hills will blossom with structures of the sublimest gingerbread.

Arlington House is the antipodes of gingerbread, except that it is yellow, and disposed to crumble. It has a pompous propylon of enormous stuccoed columns. Any house smaller than Blenheim would tail on insignificantly after such a frontispiece. The interior has a certain careless, romantic, decayed-gentleman effect, wholly Virginian. It was enlivened by the uniforms of staff-officers just now, and as they rode through the trees of the approach and by the tents of the New York Eighth, encamped in the grove to the rear, the *tableau* was brilliantly warlike. Here, by the way, let me pause to ask, as a horseman, though a foot-soldier, why generals and other gorgeous fellows make such guys of their horses with trappings. If the horse is a screw, cover him thick with saddle-cloths, girths, cruppers, breast-bands, and as much brass and tinsel as your pay will enable you to buy; but if not a screw, let his fair proportions be seen as much as may be, and don't bother a lover of good horseflesh to eliminate so much uniform before he can see what is beneath.

From Arlington I rode to the other encampments,—the Sixty-Ninth, Fifth, and Twenty-Eighth, all of New York,—and heard their several stories of alarms and adventures. This completed the circuit of the new fortification of the Great Camp. Washington was now a fortress. The capital was out of danger, and therefore of no further interest to anybody. The time had come for myself and my regiment to leave it by different ways.

“PARTANT POUR LA SYRIE.”

I should have been glad to stay and see my comrades through to their departure; but there was a Massachusetts man down at Fortress Monroe, Butler by name,—has any one heard of him?—and to this gentleman it chanced that I was to report myself. So I packed my knapsack, got my furlough, shook hands with my fellows, said good-bye to Camp Cameron, and was off, two days after our month's service was done.

Page 153

FAREWELL TO THE SEVENTH.

Under Providence, Washington owes its safety, 1st, To General Butler, whose genius devised the circumvention of Baltimore and its rascal rout, and whose utter bravery executed the plan;—he is the Grand Yankee of this little period of the war. 2d, To the other Most Worshipful Grand Yankees of the Massachusetts regiment who followed their leader, as he knew they would, discovered a forgotten colony called Annapolis, and dashed in there, asking no questions. 3d, And while I gladly yield the first places to this General and his men, I put the Seventh in, as last, but not least, in saving the capital. Character always tells. The Seventh, by good, hard, faithful work at drill, had established its fame as the most thorough militia regiment in existence. Its military and moral character were excellent. The mere name of the regiment carried weight. It took the field as if the field were a ball-room. There were myriads eager to march; but they had not made ready beforehand. Yes, the Seventh had its important share in the rescue. Without our support, whether our leaders tendered it eagerly or hesitatingly, General Butler's position at Annapolis would have been critical, and his forced march to the capital a forlorn hope,—heroic, but desperate.

So, honor to whom honor is due.

Here I must cut short my story. So good-bye to the Seventh, and thanks for the fascinating month I have passed in their society. In this pause of the war our camp-life has been to me as brilliant as a permanent picnic.

Good-bye to Company I, and all the fine fellows, rough and smooth, cool old hands and recruits verdant but ardent! Good-bye to our Lieutenants, to whom I owe much kindness! Good-bye, the Orderly, so peremptory on parade, so indulgent off! Good-bye, everybody!

And so in haste I close.

BETWEEN SPRING AND SUMMER.

(A BIRTHDAY POEM, WITH ROSES.)

To her whose birth and being
Touch summer out of spring,
These roses, reaching forward
From May to June, I bring.

To her whose fragrant friendship
Sweetens the life I live,



These flowers, Love's message hinting
With perfumed breath, I give.

The violet and the lily
Shall stand for these and those;
But give her roses only
Whose soul suggests the rose,—

Whose Life's idea ranges
Through all of sweet and bright,
A vernal flow of feeling,
A summer day of light.

I bless the child whose coming
Sheds grace around us, where
Her voice falls soft as music,
Her step drops light as air:

Fair grace, to good related
In her, sweet sisters twin;
As in this House of Roses
The fruits and flowers are kin.

* * * * *

Page 154

ELLSWORTH.

The beginnings of great periods have often been marked and made memorable by striking events. Out of the cloud that hangs around the vague inceptions of revolutions, a startling incident will sometimes flash like lightning, to show that the warring elements have begun their work. The scenes that attended the birth of American nationality formed a not inaccurate type of those that have opened the crusade for its perpetuation. The consolidation of public sentiment which followed the magnificent defeat at Bunker's Hill, in which the spirit of indignant resistance was tempered by the pathetic interest surrounding the fate of Warren, was but a foreshadowing of the instant rally to arms which followed the fall of the beleaguered fort in Charleston harbor, and of the intensity of tragic pathos which has been added to the stern purpose of avenging justice by the murder of Colonel Ellsworth.

Ephraim Elmer Ellsworth was born in the little village of Mechanicsville, on the left bank of the Hudson, on the 23d day of April, 1837. When he was very young, his father, through no fault of his own, lost irretrievably his entire fortune, in the tornado of financial ruin that in those years swept from the sea to the mountains. From this disaster he never recovered. Misfortune seems to have followed him through life, with the insatiable pertinacity of the Nemesis of a Greek tragedy. And now in his old age, when for a moment there seemed to shine upon his path the sunshine that promised better days, he finds that suddenly withdrawn, and stands desolate, "stabbed through the heart's affections, to the heart." His younger son died some years ago, of small-pox, in Chicago, and the murder at Alexandria leaves him with his sorrowing wife, lonely, amid the sympathy of the world.

The days of Elmer's childhood and early youth—were passed at Troy and in the city of New York, in pursuits various, but energetic and laborious. There is little of interest in the story of these years. He was a proud, affectionate, sensitive, and generous boy, hampered by circumstance, but conscious of great capabilities,—not morbidly addicted to day-dreaming, but always working heartily for something beyond. He was still very young—when he went to Chicago, and associated himself in business with Mr. Devereux of Massachusetts.[A] They managed for a little while, with much success, an agency for securing patents to inventors. Through the treachery of one in whom they had reposed great confidence they suffered severe losses which obliged them to close their business, and Devereux went back to the East. The next year of Ellsworth's life was a miracle of endurance and uncomplaining fortitude. He read law with great assiduity, and supported himself by copying, in the hours that should have been devoted to recreation. He had no pastimes and very few friends. Not a soul beside himself and the baker

Page 155

who gave him his daily loaf knew how he was living. During all that time, he never slept in a bed, never ate with friends at a social board. So acute was his sense of honor, so delicate his ideas of propriety, that, although himself the most generous of men, he never would accept from acquaintances the slightest favors or courtesies which he was unable to return. He told me once of a severe struggle between inclination and a sense of honor. At a period of extreme hunger, he met a friend in the street who was just starting from the city. He accompanied his friend into a restaurant, wishing to converse with him, but declined taking any refreshment. He represented the savory fragrance of his friend's dinner as almost maddening to his famished senses, while he sat there pleasantly chatting, and deprecating his friend's entreaties to join him in his repast, on the plea that he had just dined.

[Footnote A: Arthur F. Devereux, Esq., now in command of the Salem Zouave Corps, Eighth Massachusetts Regiment, distinguished for the gallant part borne by it in opening the route to Washington through Annapolis, and in the rescue of the frigate *Constitution*, "Old Ironsides," from the hands of the rebels.]

What would have killed an ordinary man did not injure Ellsworth. His iron frame seemed incapable of dissolution or waste. Circumstance had no power to conquer his spirit. His hearty good-humor never gave way. His sense of honor, which was sometimes even fantastic in its delicacy, freed him from the very temptation to wrong. He knew there was a better time coming for him. Conscious of great mental and bodily strength, with that bright outlook that industry and honor always give a man, he was perfectly secure of ultimate success. His plans mingled in a singular manner the bright enthusiasm of the youthful dreamer and the eminent practicality of the man of affairs. At one time, his mind was fixed on Mexico,—not with the licentious dreams that excited the ragged *Condottieri* who followed the fated footsteps of the "gray-eyed man of Destiny," in the wild hope of plunder and power,—nor with the vague reverie in which fanatical theorists construct impossible Utopias on the absurd framework of Icarias or Phalansteries. His clear, bold, and thoroughly executive mind planned a magnificent scheme of commercial enterprise, which, having its centre of operations at Guaymas, should ramify through the golden wastes that stretch in silence and solitude along the tortuous banks of the Rio San Jose. This was to be the beginning and the ostensible end of the enterprise. Then he dreamed of the influence of American arts and American energy penetrating into the twilight of that decaying nationality, and saw the natural course of events leading on, first, Emigration, then Protection, and at last Annexation. Yet there was no thought of conquest or rapine. The idea was essentially American and Northern. He never wholly lost that dream. One day last winter, when some one was discussing the propriety of an amputation of the States that seemed thoroughly diseased, Ellsworth swept his hand energetically over the map of Mexico that hung upon the wall, and exclaimed,—"*There* is an unanswerable argument against the recognition of the Southern Confederacy."

Page 156

But the central idea of Ellsworth's short life was the thorough reorganization of the militia of the United States. He had studied with great success the theory of national defence, and, from his observation of the condition of the militia of the several States, he was convinced that there was much of well-directed effort yet lacking to its entire efficiency. In fact, as he expressed it, a well-disciplined body of five thousand troops could land anywhere on our coast and ravage two or three States before an adequate force could get into the field to oppose them. To reform this defective organization, he resolved to devote whatever of talent or energy was his. This was very large undertaking for a boy, whose majority and moustache were still of the substance of things hoped for. But nothing that he could propose to himself ever seemed absurd. He attacked his work with his usual promptness and decision.

The conception of a great idea is no proof of a great mind; a man's calibre is shown by the way in which he attempts to realize his idea. A great design planted in a little mind frequently bursts it, and nothing is more pitiable than the spectacle of a man staggering into insanity under a thought too large for him. Ellsworth chose to begin his work simply and practically. He did not write a memorial to the President, to be sent to the Secretary of War, to be referred to the Chief Clerk, to be handed over to File-Clerk No. 99, to be glanced at and quietly thrust into a pigeon-hole labelled "Crazy and trashy." He did not haunt the anteroom of Congressman Somebody, who would promise to bring his plan before the House, and then, bowing him out, give general orders to his footman, "Not at home, hereafter, to that man." He did not float, as some theorists do, ghastly and seedy, around the *Adyta* of popular editors, begging for space and countenance. He wisely determined to keep his theories to himself until he could illustrate them by living examples. He first put himself in thorough training. He practised the manual of arms in his own room, until his dexterous precision was something akin to the sleight of a juggler. He investigated the theory of every movement in an anatomical view, and made several most valuable improvements on Hardee. He rearranged the manual so that every movement formed the logical groundwork of the succeeding one. He studied the science of fence, so that he could hold a rapier with De Villiers, the most dashing of the Algerine swordsmen. He always had a hand as true as steel, and an eye like a gerfalcon. He used to amuse himself by shooting ventilation-holes through his window-panes. Standing ten paces from the window, he could fire the seven shots from his revolver and not shiver the glass beyond the circumference of a half-dollar.

I have seen a photograph of his arm taken at this time. The knotted coil of thews and sinews looks like the magnificent exaggerations of antique sculpture.

Page 157

His person was strikingly prepossessing. His form, though slight,—exactly the Napoleonic size,—was very compact and commanding; the head statuesquely poised, and crowned with a luxuriance of curling black hair; a hazel eye, bright, though serene, the eye of a gentleman as well as a soldier; a nose such as you see on Roman medals; a light moustache just shading the lips, that were continually curving into the sunniest smiles. His voice, deep and musical, instantly attracted attention; and his address, though not without soldierly brusqueness, was sincere and courteous. There was one thing his backwoods detractors could never forgive: he always dressed well; and sometimes wore the military insignia presented to him by different organizations. One of these, a gold circle, inscribed with the legend, NON NOBIS, SED PRO PATRIA, was driven into his heart by the slug of the Virginian assassin.

He had great tact and executive talent, was a good mathematician, possessed a fine artistic eye, sketched well and rapidly, and in short bore a deft and skilful hand in all gentlemanly exercise.

No one ever possessed greater power of enforcing the respect and fastening the affections of men. Strangers soon recognized and acknowledged this power; while to his friends he always seemed like a Paladin or Cavalier of the dead days of romance and beauty. He was so generous and loyal, so stainless and brave, that Bayard himself would have been proud of him. The grand bead-roll of the virtues of the Flower of Kings contains the principles that guided his life; he used to read with exquisite appreciation these lines:—

“To reverence the King as if he were Their conscience, and their conscience as their King,— To break the heathen and uphold the Christ,— To ride abroad redressing human wrongs,— To speak no slander, no, nor listen to it,— To lead sweet lives in purest chastity,— To love one maiden only, cleave to her, And worship her by years of noble deeds, Until they won her”;

and the rest,—

“high thoughts, and amiable words,
And courtliness, and the desire of fame,
And love of truth, and all that makes a man.”

Such, in person and character, was Ellsworth, when he organized, on the 4th day of May, 1859, the United States Zouave Cadets of Chicago.

This company was the machine upon which he was to experiment. Disregarding all extant works upon tactics, he drew up a simpler system for the use of his men. Throwing aside the old ideas of soldierly bearing, he taught them to use vigor, promptness, and ease. Discarding the stiff buckram strut of martial tradition, he educated them to move with the loafing *insouciance* of the Indian, or the graceful ease

of the panther. He tore off their choking collars and binding coats, and invented a uniform which, though too flashy and conspicuous for actual service, was very bright and dashing for holiday occasions, and left the wearer perfectly free to fight, strike, kick, jump, or run.

Page 158

He drilled these young men for about a year at short intervals. His discipline was very severe and rigid. Added to the punctilio of the martinet was the rigor of the moralist. The slightest exhibition of intemperance or licentiousness was punished by instant degradation and expulsion. He struck from the rolls at one time twelve of his best men for breaking the rule of total abstinence. His moral power over them was perfect and absolute. I believe anyone of them would have died for him.

In two or three principal towns of Illinois and Wisconsin he drilled other companies: in Springfield, where he made the friends who best appreciated what was best in him; and in Rockford, where he formed an attachment which imparted a coloring of tender romance to all the days of his busy life that remained. This tragedy would not have been perfect without the plaintive minor strain of Love in Death.

His company took the Premium Colors at the United States Agricultural Pair, and Ellsworth thought it was time to show to the people some fruit of his drill. They issued their soldierly *defi* and started on their *Marche de Triomphe*. It is useless to recall to those who read newspapers the clustering glories of that bloodless campaign. Hardly had they left the suburbs of Chicago when the murmur of applause began. New York, secure in the championship of half a century, listened with quiet metropolitan scorn to the noise of the shouting provinces; but when the crimson phantasms marched out of the Park, on the evening of the 15th of July, New York, with metropolitan magnanimity, confessed herself utterly vanquished by the good thing that had come out of Nazareth. There was no resisting the Zouaves. As the erring Knight of the Round Table said,—

“men went down before his spear at a touch,
But knowing he was Lancelot; his great name conquered.”

There were one or two Southern companies that issued insulting defiances, but, after a little expenditure of epistolary valor, prudently, though ingloriously, stayed afar,—as is usual in New Gascony. With these exceptions, the heart of the nation went warmly out to these young men. Their endurance, their discipline, their alertness, their *elan*, surprised the sleepy drill-masters out of their propriety, and waked up the people to intense and cordial admiration. Chicago welcomed them home proudly, covered with tan and dust and glory.

Ellsworth found himself for his brief hour the most talked-of man in the country. His pictures sold like wildfire in every city of the land. School-girls dreamed over the graceful wave of his curls, and shop-boys tried to reproduce the *Grand Seigneur* air of his attitude. Zouave corps, brilliant in crimson and gold, sprang up, phosphorescently, in his wake, making bright the track of his journey. The leading journals spoke editorially of him, and the comic papers caricatured his drill.

Page 159

So one thing was accomplished. He had gained a name that would entitle him hereafter to respectful attention, and had demonstrated the efficiency of his system of drill. The public did not, of course, comprehend the resistless moral power which he exercised,—imperiously moulding every mind as he willed,—inspiring every soul with his own unrelenting energy. But the public recognized success, and that for the present was enough.

He quietly formed a regiment in the upper counties of Illinois, and made his best men the officers of it. He tendered its services to Governor Yates immediately on his inauguration, “for any service consistent with honor.” This was the first positive tender made of an organized force in defence of the Constitution. He seemed to recognize more clearly than others the certainty of the coming struggle. It was the soldierly instinct that heard “the battle afar off, the thunder of the captains, and the shouting.”

Still intent upon the great plan of militia reform, he came to Springfield. He hoped, in case of the success of Mr. Lincoln in the canvass then pending, to be able to establish in the War Department a Bureau of Militia, which would prove a most valuable auxiliary to his work. His ideas were never vague or indefinite. Means always presented themselves to him, when he contemplated ends. The following were the duties of the proposed bureau, which may serve as a guide to some future reformer: I copy from his own exquisitely neat and clear memorandum, which lies before me:—

“First. The gradual concentration of all business pertaining to the militia now conducted by the several bureaus of this Department.

“Second. The collection and systematizing of accurate information of the number, arm, and condition of the militia of all classes of the several States, and the compilation of yearly reports of the same for the information of this Department.

“Third. The compilation of a report of the actual condition of the militia and the working of the present systems of the General Government and the various States.

“Fourth. The publication and distribution of such information as is important to the militia, and the conduct of all correspondence relating to militia affairs.

“Fifth. The compilation of a system of instruction for light troops for distribution to the several States, including everything pertaining to the instruction of the militia in the school of the soldier,—company and battalion, skirmishing, bayonet, and gymnastic drill, adapted for self-instruction.

“Sixth. The arrangement of a system of organization, with a view to the establishment of a uniform system of drill, discipline, equipment, and dress, throughout the United States.”

His plan for this purpose was very complete and symmetrical. Though enthusiastic, he was never dreamy. His idea always went forth fully armed and equipped.

Page 160

Nominally, he was a student of law in the office of Lincoln and Herndon, but in effect he passed his time in completing his plans of militia reform. He made in October many stirring and earnest speeches for the Republican candidates. He was very popular among the country people. His voice was magnificent in melody and volume, his command of language wonderful in view of the deficiencies of his early education, his humor inexhaustible and hearty, and his manner deliberate and impressive, reminding his audiences in Central Illinois of the earliest and best days of Senator Douglas.

When the Legislature met, he prepared an elaborate military bill, the adoption of which would have placed the State in an enviable attitude of defence. The stupid jealousy of colonels and majors who had won bloodless glory, on both sides, in the Mormon War, and the malignant prejudice instigated by the covert treason that lurked in Southern Illinois, succeeded in staving off the passage of the bill, until it was lost by the expiration of the term. Many of these men are now in the ranks, shouting the name of Ellsworth as a battle-cry.

He came to Washington in the escort of the President elect. Hitherto he had been utterly independent of external aid. The time was come when he must wait for the cooperation of others, for the accomplishment of his life's great purpose. He wished a position in the War Department, which would give him an opportunity for the establishment of the Militia Bureau. He was a strange anomaly at the capital. He did not care for money or luxury. Though sensitive in regard to his reputation, for the honor of his work, his motto always was that of the sage Merlin,—“I follow use, not fame.” An office-seeker of this kind was an eccentric and suspicious personage. The hungry thousands that crowded and pushed at Willard's thought him one of them, only deeper and slier. The simplicity and directness of his character, his quick sympathy and thoughtless generosity, and his delicate sense of honor unfitted him for such a scramble as that which degrades the quadrennial rotations of our Departments. He withdrew from the contest for the position he desired, and the President, who loved him like a younger brother, made him a lieutenant in the army, intending to detail him for special service.

The jealousy of the staff-officers of the regular army, who always discover in any effective scheme of militia reform the overthrow of their power, and who saw in the young Zouave the promise of brilliant and successful innovation, was productive of very serious annoyance and impediment to Ellsworth. In the midst of this, he fell sick at Willard's. While he lay there, the news from the South began to show that the rebels were determined upon war, and the rumors on the street said that a wholesome North-westerly breeze was blowing from the Executive Mansion. These indications were more salutary to Ellsworth than any medicine. We were talking one night of

Page 161

coming probabilities, and I spoke of the doubt so widely existing as to the loyalty of the people. He rejoined, earnestly,—“I can only speak for myself. You know I have a great work to do, to which my life is pledged; I am the only earthly stay of my parents; there is a young woman whose happiness I regard as dearer than my own: yet I could ask no better death than to fall next week before Sumter. I am not better than other men. You will find that patriotism is not dead, even if it sleeps.”

Sumter fell, and the sleeping awoke. The spirit of Ellsworth, cramped by a few weeks' intercourse with politicians, sprang up full-statured in the Northern gale. He cut at once the meshes of red tape that had hampered and held him, threw up his commission, and started for New York without orders, without assistance, without authority, but with the consciousness that the President would sustain him. The rest the world knows. I will be brief in recalling it.

In an incredibly short space of time he enlisted and organized a regiment, eleven hundred strong, of the best fighting material that ever went to war. He divided it, according to an idea of his own, into groups of four comrades each, for the campaign. He exercised a personal supervision over the most important and the most trivial minutiae of the regimental business. The quick sympathy of the public still followed him. He became the idol of the Bowery and the pet of the Avenue. Yet not one instant did he waste in recreation or lionizing. Indulgent to all others, he was merciless to himself. He worked day and night, like an incarnation of Energy. When he arrived with his men in Washington, he was thin, hoarse, flushed, but entirely contented and happy, because busy and useful.

Of the bright enthusiasm and the quenchless industry of the next few weeks what need to speak? Every day, by his unceasing toil and care, by his vigor, alertness, activity, by his generosity, and by his relentless rigor when duty commanded, he grew into the hearts of his robust and manly followers, until every man in the regiment feared him as a Colonel should be feared, and loved him as a brother should be loved.

On the night of the twenty-third of May, he called his men together, and made a brief, stirring speech to them, announcing their orders to advance on Alexandria. “Now, boys, go to bed, and wake up at two o'clock for a sail and a skirmish.” When the camp was silent, he began to work. He wrote many hours, arranging the business of the regiment. He finished his labor as the midnight stars were crossing the zenith. As he sat in his tent by the shore, it seems as if the mystical gales from the near eternity must have breathed for a moment over his soul, freighted with the odor of amaranths and asphodels. For he wrote two strange letters: one to her who mourns him faithful in death; one to his parents. There is nothing braver or more pathetic. With the prophetic instinct of love, he assumed the office of consoler for the stroke that impended.

Page 162

In the dewy light of the early dawn he occupied the first rebel town. With his own hand he tore down the first rebel flag. He added to the glories of that morning the seal of his blood.

The poor wretch who stumbled upon an immortality of infamy by murdering him died at the same instant. The two stand in the light of that event—clearly revealed—types of the two systems in conflict to-day: the one, brave, refined, courtly, generous, tender, and true; the other, not lacking in brute courage, reckless, besotted, ignorant, and cruel.

Let the two systems, Freedom and Slavery, stand thus typified forever, in the red light of that dawn, as on a Mount of Transfiguration. I believe that may solve the dark mystery why Ellsworth died.

REVIEWS AND LITERARY NOTICES.

Chambers's Encyclopaedia: A Dictionary of Universal Knowledge for the People; on the Basis of the Latest Edition of the German Conversations-Lexicon. Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott & Co. Vols. I. and II.

An Encyclopaedia is both a luxury and a necessity. Few readers now collect a library, however scant, without including one of some sort. Many of them, even in the absence of all other books, of themselves constitute a complete library. The Britannica, Edinburgh, Metropolitana, English, Penny, London, Oxford, and that of Kees, are most elaborate works, extending respectively to about a score of heavy volumes, averaging eight or nine hundred pages each. Such publications must necessarily be expensive. They are, moreover, to be regarded rather as a collection of exhaustive treatises,—great prominence being given to the physical and mathematical sciences, and to general history. For instance, in the Britannica, the publication of the eighth edition of which is just completed, the length of some of the articles is as follows: Astronomy, 155 quarto pages; Chemistry, 88; Electricity, 104; Hydrodynamics, 119; Optics, 176; Mammalia, 120; Ichthyology, 151; Entomology, 265; Britain, 300; England, 136; France, 284. Each one of these papers is equal to a large octavo volume; some of them would occupy several volumes; and the entire work, containing a collection of such articles, can be regarded in no other light than as an attempted exhibition of the sum of human knowledge, commending itself, of course, to professional and highly educated minds, but far transcending, in extent and costliness, the requirements and the means of the great class of general readers. For the wants of this latter class a different sort of work is desirable, which shall be cheaper in price, less exhaustive in its method, and more diversified in its range. In these particulars the Germans seem to have hit upon the happy medium in their famous "Conversations-Lexicon," which has passed through a great many editions, and been translated into the principal languages of Europe. This is taken as the type, and in some respects as

Page 163

the basis, of the present publication,—there being engrafted upon it new contributions from leading authors of this and other countries, together with such extensive improvements, revisals, rewritings, additions, and modifications throughout, as to constitute a substantially new work, exhibiting in combination the results of the best labors of the German, English, and American mind. In the departments of statistics, geography, history, and science, the articles are all within readable limits, accurate, and up to the times; while in the biographical and literary articles there is a freshness and originality of criticism, and a vivacity of style, seldom met with in this class of publications.

The peculiar merit of this Encyclopaedia is its convenient adaptedness to popular use. The subjects treated of are broken up and distributed alphabetically under their proper heads, so as to facilitate reference. We are thus furnished with a dictionary of facts and events, where we may readily find whatever properly appertains to any particular point, without being compelled to explore an entire treatise. This, by the way, makes it a sort of hand-book even for those who possess the more voluminous works. As a necessary result of such a method of treatment, it will be found, upon an actual count and comparison, to contain more separate titles than any other Encyclopaedia ever published. Although the articles are generally brief, it must not be supposed that they are meagre, for they will be found to present a clear and comprehensive view of the existing information upon the particular topic, with a mastery which arises only from familiarity. Montesquieu said that Tacitus abridged all because he knew all; and no reader can peruse a number of this Encyclopaedia without being convinced that the success in preparing the perspicuous abridgments it contains is due to thorough knowledge. Its excellence is not confined, however, to the letter-press; for we are furnished with a series of colored maps, embodying the results of the most recent explorations, and also with a profusion of admirable woodcuts, illustrating the subject wherever pictorial exposition may aid the verbal. It will be recollected that no other Encyclopaedia published in this country has the advantage of illustrations.

The character of Messrs. William and Robert Chambers of itself gives ample assurance that the work is prepared and executed in a superior manner; but when we superadd to this the fact that they have spared no labor or expense, but have devoted to it all the resources of their experience, enterprise, and skill, in order to make the work, in all its departments, their crowning contribution to the cause of knowledge, we are the more ready to believe that it actually is all that it claims to be. The American edition by J.B. Lippincott & Co., of Philadelphia, is published in numbers simultaneously with the Edinburgh and London edition, and in an unexceptionable style of typography. Its low price brings it within the reach of almost every reader. Indeed, when we consider the size of the volumes, the number of illustrations and maps, the mechanical execution, and the compensation to the writers, we are at a loss to conceive how it can be profitably furnished at so cheap a rate.

Page 164

The Recreations of a Country Parson. Boston: Ticknor & Fields. 12mo.

The essays of which this volume is made up were originally contributed to "Fraser's Magazine." The "Recreations" they record are therefore those of an English, and not an American "Parson"; but there is nothing in them which a parson of any church or denomination would feel inclined to repudiate, on the score either of their fineness of mental perception or healthiness of moral sense. The author tells us, that, in writing these essays, he has not been rapt away into heroic times and distant scenes, but has written of daily work and worry amid daily work and worry: and herein lies the charm of his discourses. He has one of those sensible, elastic, cheerful natures whose ideal qualities are not perverted by fretfulness and discontent. That most wicked of Byronisms, which consists in depreciating the duties of common life in order to exalt the claims of a kind of spiritualized sensuality and poetic self-importance, he instinctively avoids. The thirteen shrewd, suggestive, and practical essays which compose the present volume are transcripts of his own experience and meditations, and teem with facts and observations such as might be expected from the clear insight of a man who has mingled with his fellow-men, and who is curiously critical of the non-romantic phenomena of their daily life. The essays on the Art of Putting Things, on Petty Malignity and Petty Trickery, on Tidiness, on Nervous Fears, on Hurry and Leisure, on Work and Play, on Dulness, and on Growing Old, are full of fresh and delicate perceptions of the ordinary facts of human experience. His best and brightest remarks surprise us with the unexpectedness of homely common sense, as flashed on a world of organized illusions. The entire absence of rhetoric in the author's mode of "putting things" adds to its effectiveness. He attempts to reveal the common,—one of the rarest of revelations; and shows what heroic qualities are needed to overcome the superficial circumstances of our life, and transmute them into occasions for that humble, obscure heroism which God alone apprehends and rewards. The freedom of the writer from all the stereotyped phraseology of sanctity in doing this work, and his innocent sympathy with everything cheerful, pleasurable, and lovable in Nature and human nature, only add to the power of his teachings. These "Recreations" of the "Parson" will, to the generality of readers, produce more beneficent results than could have been produced, had he given us his most carefully prepared sermons,—for they connect religion with life. Nobody can read the volume without feeling the moral and religious purpose which underlies its graceful and genial exhibition of human character and manners. The common objection to clergymen is, that they are ignorant of the world. No sagacious reader of the present book can doubt that this parson, at least, is an exception to the general rule; for he palpably knows more of the world than most men who have made it a special study.

Page 165

RECENT AMERICAN PUBLICATIONS

RECEIVED BY THE EDITORS OF THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY.

Afloat and Ashore. By J. Fenimore Cooper. Illustrated by Darley. New York. W.A. Townsend & Co. 12mo. pp. 549. \$1.50.

Silas Marner, the Weaver of Raveloe. By the Author of "Adam Bede." New York. Harper & Brothers. 12mo. pp. 265. 75 cts.

The Works of Francis Bacon, Baron of Verulam. Collected and edited by James Spedding, M.A., Robert Leslie Ellis, M.A., and Douglas Denon Heath. Volume I. Boston. Brown & Taggard. 12mo. pp. 539. \$1.50.

History of Latin Christianity, including that of the Popes to the Pontificate of Nicolas V. By Henry Hart Milman, D.D., Dean of St. Paul's. Volume VIII. New York. Sheldon & Co. 12mo. pp. 561. \$1.50.

Chambers's Encyclopedia: A Dictionary of Universal Knowledge for the People, on the Basis of the Latest Edition of the German Conversations—Lexicon. Illustrated. Parts XXIX., XXX. Philadelphia. J.B. Lippincott & Co. 8vo. paper, pp. 55, 65. 15 cts. each.

The New American Cyclopedia: A Popular Dictionary of General Knowledge. Edited by George Ripley and Charles A. Dana. Vol. XII. New York. D. Appleton & Co. 8vo. pp. 788. \$3.00.

The Life of George Washington. By Washington Irving. In Five Volumes. Vol. V. Illustrated. New York. G.P. Putnam & Co. 12mo. pp. 434. \$1.50.

The Crayon Miscellany. By Washington Irving. New Illustrated Edition. Complete in One Volume. New York. G.P. Putnam. 12mo. pp. 379. \$1.50.

Another Letter to a Young Physician; to which are appended some other Medical Papers. By James Jackson, II. D. Boston. Ticknor and Fields. 13mo. pp. 179. 80 cts.

The Partisan Leader: A Key to the Disunion Conspiracy. By Beverly Tucker, of Virginia. Secretly published in Washington in the Year 1836, but afterwards suppressed. New York. Rudd & Carleton. 18mo. paper, pp. 195. 50 cts.

Exercises at the Consecration of the Flag of the Union, by the Old South Society in Boston, May 1st. 1861. Boston. Alfred Mudge & Son. 8vo. paper, pp. 16. 20 cts.

The Life and Military and Civic Services of Lieutenant-General Winfield Scott. Complete up to the Present Period. By O.J. Victor. New York. Beadle & Co. 18mo. pp. 118. 25 cts.

The Zouave Drill. Being a Complete Manual of Arms for the Use of the Rifled Musket; containing also the Complete Manual of the Sword and Sabre. By Colonel E.E. Ellsworth. With a Biography of his Life. Philadelphia. T.E. Peterson & Brothers. 16mo. paper, pp. 62. 25 cts.

The Soldier's Guide. A Complete Manual and Drill-Book for the Use of Volunteers and Militia. Revised, corrected, and adapted to the Discipline of the Soldier of the Present Day. By an Officer in the United States Army. Philadelphia. T.B. Peterson & Brothers. 16mo. pp. 63. paper, 25 cts. boards, 40 cts.

Page 166

The Soldier's Companion, for the Use of all Officers, Volunteers, and Militia in the United States, in the Camp, Field, or on the March. Compiled from the Latest Authorities. Philadelphia. T.B. Peterson & Brothers. 16mo. paper, pp. 77. 25 cts.

The Volunteer's Text-Book. Containing the whole of "The Soldier's Guide," as well as all of "The Soldier's Companion," with Valuable Information for the Use of Officers of all Grades, compiled from the Latest Authorities, issued under Orders of Simon Cameron, Secretary of War, and Lieutenant-General Winfield Scott. Philadelphia. T.B. Peterson & Brothers. 16mo. paper, pp. 154. 50 cts.

United States Infantry Tactics, for the Instruction, Exercise, and Manoeuvres of the United States Infantry, including Infantry of the Line, Light Infantry, and Riflemen. Prepared under the Direction of the War Department, and authorized and adopted by the Secretary of War, May 1, 1861. Philadelphia. J.B. Lippincott & Co. 32mo. pp. 450. \$1.25.

A Manual of Military Surgery; or, Hints on the Emergencies of Field, Camp, and Hospital Practice. Illustrated with Woodcuts. By S.D. Gross, M.D., Professor of Surgery in the Jefferson Medical College of Philadelphia. Philadelphia. J.B. Lippincott & Co. 24mo. pp. 186. 50 cts.