

The Atlantic Monthly, Volume 07, No. 42, April, 1861 eBook

The Atlantic Monthly, Volume 07, No. 42, April, 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 07, No. 42, April, 1861 eBook.....	1
Contents.....	2
Table of Contents.....	9
Page 1.....	10
Page 2.....	11
Page 3.....	12
Page 4.....	13
Page 5.....	14
Page 6.....	15
Page 7.....	16
Page 8.....	17
Page 9.....	18
Page 10.....	19
Page 11.....	20
Page 12.....	21
Page 13.....	22
Page 14.....	24
Page 15.....	25
Page 16.....	26
Page 17.....	27
Page 18.....	28
Page 19.....	29
Page 20.....	30
Page 21.....	31
Page 22.....	33



[Page 23..... 35](#)

[Page 24..... 36](#)

[Page 25..... 37](#)

[Page 26..... 39](#)

[Page 27..... 41](#)

[Page 28..... 43](#)

[Page 29..... 44](#)

[Page 30..... 45](#)

[Page 31..... 47](#)

[Page 32..... 48](#)

[Page 33..... 49](#)

[Page 34..... 51](#)

[Page 35..... 53](#)

[Page 36..... 55](#)

[Page 37..... 57](#)

[Page 38..... 59](#)

[Page 39..... 61](#)

[Page 40..... 63](#)

[Page 41..... 64](#)

[Page 42..... 65](#)

[Page 43..... 66](#)

[Page 44..... 67](#)

[Page 45..... 68](#)

[Page 46..... 69](#)

[Page 47..... 70](#)

[Page 48..... 71](#)



[Page 49..... 72](#)

[Page 50..... 73](#)

[Page 51..... 74](#)

[Page 52..... 75](#)

[Page 53..... 76](#)

[Page 54..... 78](#)

[Page 55..... 79](#)

[Page 56..... 81](#)

[Page 57..... 82](#)

[Page 58..... 83](#)

[Page 59..... 85](#)

[Page 60..... 86](#)

[Page 61..... 87](#)

[Page 62..... 89](#)

[Page 63..... 91](#)

[Page 64..... 93](#)

[Page 65..... 94](#)

[Page 66..... 95](#)

[Page 67..... 97](#)

[Page 68..... 99](#)

[Page 69..... 101](#)

[Page 70..... 103](#)

[Page 71..... 105](#)

[Page 72..... 107](#)

[Page 73..... 109](#)

[Page 74..... 111](#)



[Page 75..... 113](#)

[Page 76..... 115](#)

[Page 77..... 116](#)

[Page 78..... 117](#)

[Page 79..... 118](#)

[Page 80..... 120](#)

[Page 81..... 121](#)

[Page 82..... 123](#)

[Page 83..... 125](#)

[Page 84..... 126](#)

[Page 85..... 128](#)

[Page 86..... 130](#)

[Page 87..... 131](#)

[Page 88..... 132](#)

[Page 89..... 133](#)

[Page 90..... 134](#)

[Page 91..... 135](#)

[Page 92..... 136](#)

[Page 93..... 137](#)

[Page 94..... 138](#)

[Page 95..... 139](#)

[Page 96..... 140](#)

[Page 97..... 141](#)

[Page 98..... 142](#)

[Page 99..... 143](#)

[Page 100..... 144](#)



[Page 101..... 145](#)
[Page 102..... 146](#)
[Page 103..... 147](#)
[Page 104..... 148](#)
[Page 105..... 149](#)
[Page 106..... 151](#)
[Page 107..... 152](#)
[Page 108..... 153](#)
[Page 109..... 154](#)
[Page 110..... 155](#)
[Page 111..... 156](#)
[Page 112..... 157](#)
[Page 113..... 158](#)
[Page 114..... 159](#)
[Page 115..... 161](#)
[Page 116..... 162](#)
[Page 117..... 164](#)
[Page 118..... 166](#)
[Page 119..... 168](#)
[Page 120..... 170](#)
[Page 121..... 172](#)
[Page 122..... 174](#)
[Page 123..... 175](#)
[Page 124..... 177](#)
[Page 125..... 179](#)
[Page 126..... 181](#)



[Page 127..... 183](#)

[Page 128..... 185](#)

[Page 129..... 187](#)

[Page 130..... 189](#)

[Page 131..... 191](#)

[Page 132..... 193](#)

[Page 133..... 195](#)

[Page 134..... 197](#)

[Page 135..... 198](#)

[Page 136..... 199](#)

[Page 137..... 200](#)

[Page 138..... 201](#)

[Page 139..... 203](#)

[Page 140..... 204](#)

[Page 141..... 206](#)

[Page 142..... 208](#)

[Page 143..... 209](#)

[Page 144..... 210](#)

[Page 145..... 211](#)

[Page 146..... 212](#)

[Page 147..... 213](#)

[Page 148..... 214](#)

[Page 149..... 216](#)

[Page 150..... 217](#)

[Page 151..... 218](#)

[Page 152..... 220](#)



[Page 153..... 221](#)

[Page 154..... 223](#)

[Page 155..... 224](#)

[Page 156..... 225](#)

[Page 157..... 227](#)

[Page 158..... 229](#)

[Page 159..... 231](#)

[Page 160..... 233](#)

[Page 161..... 234](#)

[Page 162..... 235](#)

[Page 163..... 236](#)

[Page 164..... 237](#)

[Page 165..... 238](#)

[Page 166..... 240](#)



Table of Contents

Section	Table of Contents	Page
Start of eBook		1
APRIL DAYS.		1
THE PROFESSOR'S STORY.		13
CHAPTER XXIX.		13
CHAPTER XXX.		19
CHAPTER XXXI.		27
CHAPTER XXXII		37
BUBBLES.		39
I.		39
II.		39
LIFE IN THE IRON-MILLS.		58
THE REIGN OF KING COTTON.		85
GLIMPSES OF GARIBALDI.		105
GARIBALDI AT POMPEII.		111
GARIBALDI AT "THE FRONT."		111
TWO OR THREE TROUBLES.		113
MARION DALE.		131
REVIEWS AND LITERARY NOTICES.		157
RECENT AMERICAN PUBLICATIONS		165



Page 1

APRIL DAYS.

“Can trouble dwell with April days?”

In Memoriam.

In our methodical New England life, we still recognize some magic in summer. Most persons reluctantly resign themselves to being decently happy in June, at least. They accept June. They compliment its weather. They complained of the earlier months as cold, and so spent them in the city; and they will complain of the later months as hot, and so refrigerate themselves on some barren sea-coast. God offers us yearly a necklace of twelve pearls; most men choose the fairest, label it June, and cast the rest away. It is time to chant a hymn of more liberal gratitude.

There are no days in the whole round year more delicious than those which often come to us in the latter half of April. On these days one goes forth in the morning, and an Italian warmth broods over all the hills, taking visible shape in a glistening mist of silvered azure, with which mingles the smoke from many bonfires. The sun trembles in his own soft rays, till one understands the old English tradition, that he dances on Easter-Day. Swimming in a sea of glory, the tops of the hills look nearer than their bases, and their glistening watercourses seem close to the eye, as is their liberated murmur to the ear. All across this broad interval the teams are ploughing. The grass in the meadow seems all to have grown green since yesterday. The blackbirds jangle in the oak, the robin is perched upon the elm, the song-sparrow on the hazel, and the bluebird on the apple-tree. There rises a hawk and sails slowly, the stateliest of airy things, a floating dream of long and languid summer-hours. But as yet, though there is warmth enough for a sense of luxury, there is coolness enough for exertion. No tropics can offer such a burst of joy; indeed, no zone much warmer than our Northern States can offer a genuine spring. There can be none where there is no winter, and the monotone of the seasons is broken only by wearisome rains. Vegetation and birds being distributed over the year, there is no burst of verdure nor of song. But with us, as the buds are swelling, the birds are arriving; they are building their nests almost simultaneously; and in all the Southern year there is no such rapture of beauty and of melody as here marks every morning from the last of April onward.

But days even earlier than these in April have a charm,—even days that seem raw and rainy, when the sky is dull and a bequest of March-wind lingers, chasing the squirrel from the tree and the children from the meadows. There is a fascination in walking through these bare early woods,—there is such a pause of preparation, winter’s work is so cleanly and thoroughly done. Everything is taken down and put away; throughout the leafy arcades the branches show no remnant of last year, save a few twisted leaves of oak and beech, a few empty seed-vessels of the tardy witch-hazel,

Page 2

and a few gnawed nutshells dropped coquettishly by the squirrels into the crevices of the bark. All else is bare, but prophetic: buds everywhere, the whole splendor of the coming summer concentrated in those hard little knobs on every bough; and clinging here and there among them, a brown, papery chrysalis, from which shall yet wave the superb wings of the Luna moth. An occasional shower patters on the dry leaves, but it does not silence the robin on the outskirts of the wood: indeed, he sings louder than ever, though the song-sparrow and the bluebird are silent.

Then comes the sweetness of the nights in latter April. There is as yet no evening-primrose to open suddenly, no cistus to drop its petals; but the May-flower knows the hour, and becomes more fragrant in the darkness, so that one can then often find it in the woods without aid from the eye. The pleasant night-sounds are begun; the hylas are uttering their shrill *peep* from the meadows, mingled soon with hoarser toads, who take to the water at this season to deposit their spawn. The tree-toads soon join them; but one listens in vain for bullfrogs, or katydids, or grasshoppers, or whippoorwills, or crickets: we must wait for them until the delicious June.

The earliest familiar token of the coming season is the expansion of the stiff catkins of the alder into soft, drooping tresses. These are so sensitive, that, if you pluck them at almost any time during the winter, a day's bright sunshine will make them open in a glass of water, and thus they eagerly yield to every moment of April warmth. The blossom of the birch is more delicate, that of the willow more showy, but the alders come first. They cluster and dance everywhere upon the bare boughs above the watercourses; the blackness of the buds is softened into rich brown and yellow; and as this graceful creature thus comes waving into the spring, it is pleasant to remember that the Norse Eddas fabled the first woman to have been named Embla, because she was created from an alder-bough.

The first wild-flower of the spring is like land after sea. The two which, throughout the Northern Atlantic States, divide this interest are the *Epigaea repens* (May-flower, ground-laurel, or trailing-arbutus) and the *Hepatica triloba* (liverleaf, liverwort, or blue anemone). Of these two, the latter is perhaps more immediately exciting on first discovery; because it does not, like the epigaea, exhibit its buds all winter, but opens its blue eyes almost as soon as it emerges from the ground. Without the rich and delicious odor of its compeer, it has an inexpressibly fresh and earthy scent, that seems to bring all the promise of the blessed season with it; indeed, that clod of fresh turf with the inhalation of which Lord Bacon delighted to begin the day must undoubtedly have been full of the roots of our little hepatica. Its healthy sweetness belongs to the opening year, like Chaucer's poetry; and one

Page 3

thinks that anything more potent and voluptuous would be less enchanting,—until one turns to the May-flower. Then comes a richer fascination for the senses. To pick the May-flower is like following in the footsteps of some spendthrift army which has scattered the contents of its treasure-chest among beds of scented moss. The fingers sink in the soft, moist verdure, and make at each instant some superb discovery unawares; again and again, straying carelessly, they clutch some new treasure; and, indeed, all is linked together in bright necklaces by secret threads beneath the surface, and where you grasp at one, you hold many. The hands go wandering over the moss as over the keys of a piano, and bring forth fragrance for melody. The lovely creatures twine and nestle and lay their glowing faces to the very earth beneath withered leaves, and what seemed mere barrenness becomes fresh and fragrant beauty. So great is the charm of the pursuit, that the epigaea is really the one wild-flower for which our country-people have a hearty passion. Every village child knows its best haunts, and watches for it eagerly in the spring; boys wreath their hats with it, girls twine it in their hair, and the cottage-windows are filled with its beauty.

In collecting these early flowers, one finds or fancies singular natural affinities. I flatter myself with being able always to find hepatica, if there is any within reach, for I was brought up with it ("Cockatoo he know me berry well"); but other persons, who were brought up with May-flower, and remember searching for it with their almost baby-fingers, can find that better. The most remarkable instance of these natural affinities was in the case of L.T. and his double anemones. L. had always a gift for wild-flowers, and used often to bring to Cambridge the largest white anemones that ever were seen, from a certain special hill in Watertown; they were not only magnificent in size and whiteness, but had that exquisite blue on the outside of the petals, as if the sky had bent down in ecstasy at last over its darlings, and left visible kisses there. But even this success was not enough, and one day he came with something yet choicer. It was a rue-leaved anemone (*A. thalictroides*); and, if you will believe it, each one of the three white flowers was *double*, not merely with that multiplicity of petals in the disk which is common with this species, but technically and horticulturally double, like the double-flowering almond or cherry,—the most exquisitely delicate little petals, seeming like lace-work. He had three specimens,—gave one to the Autocrat of Botany, who said it was almost or quite unexampled, and another to me. As the man in the fable says of the chameleon,—"I have it yet, and can produce it."



Page 4

Now comes the marvel. The next winter L. went to New York for a year, and wrote to me, as spring drew near, with solemn charge to visit his favorite haunt and find another specimen. Armed with this letter of introduction, I sought the spot, and tramped through and through its leafy corridors. Beautiful wood-anemones I found, to be sure, trembling on their fragile stems, deserving all their pretty names,—Wind-flower, Easter-flower, Pasque-flower, and homeopathic Pulsatilla; rue-leaved anemones I found also, rising taller and straighter and firmer in stem, with the whorl of leaves a little higher up on the stalk than one fancies it ought to be, as if there were a supposed danger that the flowers would lose their balance, and as if the leaves must be all ready to catch them. These I found, but the special wonder was not there for me. Then I wrote to L. that he must evidently come himself and search; or that, perhaps, as Sir Thomas Browne avers that “smoke doth follow the fairest,” so his little treasures had followed him towards New York. Judge of my surprise, when, on opening his next letter, out dropped, from those folds of metropolitan paper, a veritable double anemone. He had just been out to Hoboken, or some such place, to spend an afternoon, and, of course, his pets were there to meet him; and from that day to this, I have never heard of the thing happening to any one else.

May-Day is never allowed to pass in this community without profuse lamentations over the tardiness of our spring as compared with that of England and the poets. Yet it is very common to exaggerate this difference. Even so good an observer as Wilson Flagg is betrayed into saying that the epigaea and hepatica “seldom make their appearance until after the middle of April” in Massachusetts, and that “it is not unusual for the whole month of April to pass away without producing more than two or three species of wild-flowers.” But I have formerly found the hepatica in bloom at Mount Auburn, for three successive years, on the twenty-seventh of March; and last spring it was actually found, farther inland, where the season is later, on the seventeenth. The May-flower is usually as early, though the more gradual expansion of the buds renders it less easy to give dates. And there are nearly twenty species which I have noted, for five or six years together, as found before May-Day, and which may therefore be properly assigned to April. The list includes bloodroot, cowslip, houstonia, saxifrage, dandelion, chickweed, cinquefoil, strawberry, mouse-ear, bellwort, dog’s-tooth violet, five species of violet proper, and two of anemone. These are all common flowers, and easily observed; and the catalogue might be increased by rare ones, as the white corydalis, the smaller yellow violet, (*V. rotundifolia*,) and the claytonia or spring-beauty.



Page 5

But in England the crocus and the snowdrop—neither being probably an indigenous flower, since neither is mentioned by Chaucer—usually open before the first of March; indeed, the snowdrop was formerly known by the yet more fanciful name of “Fair Maid of February.” Chaucer’s daisy comes equally early; and March brings daffodils, narcissi, violets, daisies, jonquils, hyacinths, and marsh-marigolds. This is altogether in advance of our season, so far as the flowers give evidence,—though we have plucked snowdrops in February. But, on the other hand, it would appear, that, though a larger number of birds winter in England than in Massachusetts, yet the return of those which migrate is actually earlier among us. From journals kept during sixty years in England, and an abstract of which is printed in Hone’s “Every-Day Book,” it appears that only two birds of passage revisit England before the fifteenth of April, and only thirteen more before the first of May; while with us the song-sparrow and the bluebird appear about the first of March, and quite a number more by the middle of April. This is a peculiarity of the English spring which I have never seen explained or even mentioned.

After the epigaea and the hepatica have opened, there is a slight pause among the wild-flowers,—these two forming a distinct prologue for their annual drama, as the brilliant witch-hazel in October brings up its separate epilogue. The truth is, Nature attitudinizes a little, liking to make a neat finish with everything, and then to begin again with *eclat*. Flowers seem spontaneous things enough, but there is evidently a secret marshalling among them, that all may be brought out with due effect. As the country-people say that so long as any snow is left on the ground more snow may be expected, it must all vanish simultaneously at last,—so every seeker of spring-flowers has observed how accurately they seem to move in platoons, with little straggling. Each species seems to burst upon us with a united impulse; you may search for them day after day in vain, but the day when you find one specimen the spell is broken and you find twenty. By the end of April all the margins of the great poem of the woods are illuminated with these exquisite vignettes.

Most of the early flowers either come before the full unfolding of their leaves or else have inconspicuous ones. Yet Nature always provides for her bouquets the due proportion of green. The verdant and graceful sprays of the wild raspberry are unfolded very early, long before its time of flowering. Over the meadows spread the regular Chinese-pagodas of the equisetum, (horsetail or scouring-rush,) and the rich coarse vegetation of the veratrum, or American hellebore. In moist copses the ferns and osmundas begin to uncurl in April, opening their soft coils of spongy verdure, coated with woolly down, from which the humming-bird steals the lining of her nest.

Page 6

The early blossoms represent the aboriginal epoch of our history: the blood-root and the May-flower are older than the white man, older perchance than the red man; they alone are the true Native Americans. Of the later wild plants, many of the most common are foreign importations. In our sycophancy we attach grandeur to the name *exotic*: we call aristocratic garden-flowers by that epithet; yet they are no more exotic than the humbler companions they brought with them, which have become naturalized. The dandelion, the buttercup, duckweed, celandine, mullein, burdock, yarrow, whiteweed, nightshade, and most of the thistles,—these are importations. Miles Standish never crushed these with his heavy heel as he strode forth to give battle to the savages; they never kissed the daintier foot of Priscilla, the Puritan maiden. It is noticeable that these are all of rather coarser texture than our indigenous flowers; the children instinctively recognize this, and are apt to omit them, when gathering the more delicate native blossoms of the woods.

There is something touching in the gradual retirement before civilization of these delicate aborigines. They do not wait for the actual brute contact of red bricks and curbstones, but they feel the danger miles away. The Indians called the low plantain “the white man’s footstep”; and these shy creatures gradually disappear, the moment the red man gets beyond their hearing. Bigelow’s delightful “*Florula Bostoniensis*” is becoming a series of epitaphs. Too well we know it,—we who in happy Cambridge childhood often gathered, almost within a stone’s throw of Professor Agassiz’s new Museum, the arethusa and the gentian, the cardinal-flower and the gaudy rhexia,—we who remember the last secret hiding-place of the rhodora in West Cambridge, of the yellow violet and the *Viola debilis* in Watertown, of the *Convallaria trifolia* near Fresh Pond, of the *Hottonia* beyond Wellington’s Hill, of the *Cornus florida* in West Roxbury, of the *Clintonia* and the dwarf ginseng in Brookline,—we who have found in its one chosen nook the sacred *Andromeda polyfolia* of Linnaeus. Now vanished almost or wholly from city-suburbs, these fragile creatures still linger in more rural parts of Massachusetts; but they are doomed everywhere, unconsciously, yet irresistibly; while others still more shy, as the *Linnoea*, the yellow *Cypripedium*, the early pink *Azalea*, and the delicate white *Corydalis* or “Dutchman’s breeches,” are being chased into the very recesses of the Green and the White Mountains. The relics of the Indian tribes are supported by the legislature at Martha’s Vineyard, while these precursors of the Indian are dying unfriended away.



Page 7

And with these receding plants go also the special insects which haunt them. Who that knew that pure enthusiast, Dr. Harris, but remembers the accustomed lamentations of the entomologist over the departure of these winged companions of his lifetime? Not the benevolent Mr. John Beeson more tenderly mourns the decay of the Indians than he the exodus of these more delicate native tribes. In a letter which I happened to receive from him a short time previous to his death, he thus renewed the lament:—"I mourn for the loss of many of the beautiful plants and insects that were once found in this vicinity. *Clethra*, *Rhodora*, *Sanguinaria*, *Viola debilis*, *Viola acuta*, *Dracoena borealis*, *Rhexia*, *Cypripedium*, *Corallorhiza verna*, *Orchis spectabilis*, with others of less note, have been rooted out by the so-called hand of improvement. *Cicindela rugifrons*, *Helluo proeusta*, *Sphoeroderus stenostomus*, *Blethisa quadricollis*, (*Americana mi.*) *Carabus*, *Horia*, (which for several years occurred in profusion on the sands beyond Mount Auburn,) with others, have entirely disappeared from their former haunts, driven away, or exterminated perhaps, by the changes effected therein. There may still remain in your vicinity some sequestered spots, congenial to these and other rarities, which may reward the botanist and the entomologist who will search them carefully. Perhaps you may find there the pretty coccinella-shaped, silver-margined *Omophron*, or the still rarer *Panagoeus fasciatus*, of which I once took two specimens on Wellington's Hill, but have not seen it since." Is not this indeed handling one's specimens "gently as if you loved them," as Isaak Walton bids the angler do with his worm?

There is this merit, at least, among the coarser crew of imported flowers, that they bring their own proper names with them, and we know precisely whom we have to deal with. In speaking of our own native flowers, we must either be careless and inaccurate, or else resort sometimes to the Latin, in spite of the indignation of friends. There is something yet to be said on this point. In England, where the old household and monkish names adhere, they are sufficient for popular and poetic purposes, and the familiar use of scientific names seems an affectation. But here, where many native flowers have no popular names at all, and others are called confessedly by wrong ones, —where it really costs less trouble to use Latin names than English, the affectation seems the other way. Think of the long list of wild-flowers where the Latin name is spontaneously used by all who speak of the flower: as, *Arethusa*, *Aster*, *Cistus*, ("after the fall of the cistus-flower,") *Clematis*, *Clethra*, *Geranium*, *Iris*, *Lobdia*, *Rhodora*, *Spirtea*, *Tiarella*, *Trientalis*, and so on. Even those formed from proper names (the worst possible system of nomenclature) become tolerable at last, and we forget the man in the more attractive flower. Are those who pick the *Houstonia* to be supposed thereby to indorse the Texan President? Or are the deluded damsels who chew *Cassia*-buds to be regarded as swallowing the late Secretary of State? The names have long since been made over to the flowers, and every questionable aroma has vanished. When the godfather happens to be a botanist, there is a peculiar fitness in the association; the *Linæa*, at least, would not smell so sweet by any other name.



Page 8

In other cases the English name is a mere modification of the Latin one, and our ideal associations have really a scientific basis: as with Violet, Lily, Laurel, Gentian, Vervain. Indeed, our enthusiasm for vernacular names is like that for Indian names, one-sided: we enumerate only the graceful ones, and ignore the rest. It would be a pity to Latinize Touch-me-not, or Yarrow, or Gold-Thread, or Self-Heal, or Columbine, or Blue-Eyed-Grass,—though, to be sure, this last has an annoying way of shutting up its azure orbs the moment you gather it, and you reach home with a bare, stiff blade, which deserves no better name than *Sisyrinchium anceps*. But in what respect is Cucumber-Root preferable to Medeola, or Solomon's-Seal to Convallaria, or Rock-Tripe to Umbilicaria, or Lousewort to Pedicularis? In other cases the merit is divided: Anemone may dispute the prize of melody with Windflower, Campanula with Harebell, Neottia with Ladies'-Tresses, Uvularia with Bellwort and Strawbell, Potentilla with Cinquefoil, and Sanguinaria with Bloodroot. Hepatica may be bad, but Liverleaf is worse. The pretty name of May-flower is not so popular, after all, as that of Trailing-Arbutus, where the graceful and appropriate adjective redeems the substantive, which happens to be Latin and incorrect at the same time. It does seem a waste of time to say *Chrysanthemum leucanthemum* instead of Whiteweed; though, if the long scientific name were an incantation to banish the intruder, our farmers would gladly consent to adopt it.

But the great advantage of a reasonable use of the botanical name is, that it does not deceive us. Our primrose is not the English primrose, any more than it was our robin who tucked up the babes in the wood; our cowslip is not the English cowslip, it is the English marsh-marigold,—Tennyson's "wild marsh-marigold shines like fire in swamps and hollows gray." The pretty name of Azalea means something definite; but its rural name of Honeysuckle confounds under that name flowers without even an external resemblance,—Azalea, Diervilla, Lonicera, Aquilegia,—just as every bird which sings loud in deep woods is popularly denominated a thrush. The really rustic names of both plants and animals are very few with us,—the different species are many; and as we come to know them better and love them more, we absolutely require some way to distinguish them from their half-sisters and second-cousins. It is hopeless to try to create new popular epithets, or even to revive those which are thoroughly obsolete. Miss Cooper may strive in vain, with benevolent intent, to christen her favorite spring-blossoms "May-Wings" and "Gay-Wings," and "Fringe-Cup" and "Squirrel-Cup," and "Cool-Wort" and "Bead-Ruby"; there is no conceivable reason why these should not be the familiar appellations, except the irresistible fact that they are not. It is impossible to create a popular name: one might as well attempt to invent a legend or compose a ballad. *Nascitur, non fit.*

Page 9

As the spring comes on, and the densening outlines of the elm give daily a new design for a Grecian urn,—its hue, first brown with blossoms, then emerald with leaves,—we appreciate the vanishing beauty of the bare boughs. In our favored temperate zone, the trees denude themselves each year, like the goddesses before Paris, that we may see which unadorned loveliness is the fairest. Only the unconquerable delicacy of the beech still keeps its soft vestments about it: far into spring, when worn to thin rags and tatters, they cling there still; and when they fall, the new appear as by magic. It must be owned, however, that the beech has good reasons for this prudishness, and possesses little beauty of figure; while the elms, maples, chestnuts, walnuts, and even oaks, have not exhausted all their store of charms for us, until we have seen them disrobed. Only yonder magnificent pine-tree,—that pitch-pine, nobler when seen in perfection than white-pine, or Norwegian, or Norfolk Islander,—that pitch-pine, herself a grove, *una nemus*, holds her unchanging beauty throughout the year, like her half-brother, the ocean, whose voice she shares; and only marks the flowing of her annual tide of life by the new verdure that yearly submerges all trace of last year's ebb.

How many lessons of faith and beauty we should lose, if there were no winter in our year! Sometimes, in following up a watercourse among our hills, in the early spring, one comes to a weird and desolate place, where one huge wild grapevine has wreathed its ragged arms around a whole thicket and brought it to the ground,—swarming to the tops of hemlocks, clenching a dozen young maples at once and tugging them downward, stretching its wizard black length across the underbrush, into the earth and out again, wrenching up great stones in its blind, aimless struggle. What a piece of chaos is this! Yet come here again, two months hence, and you shall find all this desolation clothed with beauty and with fragrance, one vast bower of soft green leaves and graceful tendrils, while summer-birds chirp and flutter amid these sunny arches all the livelong day. “Out of the strong cometh forth sweetness.”

To the end of April, and often later, one still finds remains of snowbanks in sheltered woods, especially those consisting of evergreen trees; and this snow, like that upon high mountains, has become hardened by the repeated thawing and freezing of the surface, till it is more impenetrable than ice. But the snow that actually falls during April is usually only what Vermonters call “sugar-snow,”—falling in the night and just whitening the surface for an hour or two, and taking its name, not so much from its looks as from the fact that it denotes the proper weather for “sugaring,” namely, cold nights and warm days. Our saccharine associations, however, remain so obstinately tropical, that it seems almost impossible for the imagination to locate sugar in New England trees; though it is known that not the maple only, but the birch and the walnut even, afford it in appreciable quantities.

Page 10

Along our maritime rivers the people associate April, not with “sugaring,” but with “shadding.” The pretty *Amelanchier Canadensis* of Gray—the *Aronia* of Whittler’s song—is called Shad-bush or Shad-blow in Essex County, from its connection with this season; and there is a bird known as the Shad-spirit, which I take to be identical with the flicker or golden-winged woodpecker, whose note is still held to indicate the first day when the fish ascend the river. Upon such slender wings flits our New England romance!

In April the creative process described by Thales is repeated, and the world is renewed by water. The submerged creatures first feel the touch of spring, and many an equivocal career, beginning in the ponds and brooks, learns later to ignore this obscure beginning, and hops or flutters in the dusty daylight. Early in March, before the first male canker-moth appears on the elm-tree, the whirlwig beetles have begun to play round the broken edges of the ice, and the caddis-worms to crawl beneath it; and soon come the water-skater (*Gerris*) and the water-boatman (*Notonecta*). Turtles and newts are in busy motion when the spring-birds are only just arriving. Those gelatinous masses in yonder wayside-pond are the spawn of water-newts or tritons: in the clear transparent jelly are imbedded, at regular intervals, little blackish dots; these elongate rapidly, and show symptoms of head and tail curled up in a spherical cell; the jelly is gradually absorbed for their nourishment, until on some fine morning each elongated dot gives one vigorous wriggle, and claims thenceforward all the privileges attendant on this dissolution of the union. The final privilege is often that of being suddenly snapped up by a turtle or a snake: for Nature brings forth her creatures liberally, especially the aquatic ones, sacrifices nine-tenths of them as food for their larger cousins, and reserves only a handful to propagate their race, on the same profuse scale, next season.

It is surprising, in the midst of our Museums and Scientific Schools, how little we yet know of the common things before our eyes. Our *savans* still confess their inability to discriminate with certainty the egg or tadpole of a frog from that of a toad; and it is strange that these hopping creatures, which seem so unlike, should coincide so nearly in their juvenile career, while the tritons and salamanders, which border so closely on each other in their maturer state as sometimes to be hardly distinguishable, yet choose different methods and different elements for laying their eggs. The eggs of our salamanders or land-lizards are deposited beneath the moss on some damp rock, without any gelatinous envelope; they are but few in number, and the anxious mamma may sometimes be found coiled in a circle around them, like the symbolic serpent of eternity.



Page 11

The small number of birds yet present in early April gives a better opportunity for careful study,—more especially if one goes armed with that best of fowling-pieces, a small spy-glass: the best,—since how valueless for purposes of observation is the bleeding, gasping, dying body, compared with the fresh and living creature, as it tilts, trembles, and warbles on the bough before you! Observe that robin in the oak-tree's top: as he sits and sings, every one of the dozen different notes which he flings down to you is accompanied by a separate flirt and flutter of his whole body, and, as Thoreau says of the squirrel, "each movement seems to imply a spectator," and to imply, further, that the spectator is looking through a spy-glass. Study that song-sparrow: why is it that he always goes so ragged in spring, and the bluebird so neat? is it that the song-sparrow is a wild artist, absorbed in the composition of his lay, and oblivious of ordinary proprieties, while the smooth bluebird and his ash-colored mate cultivate their delicate warble only as a domestic accomplishment, and are always nicely dressed before sitting down to the piano? Then how exciting is the gradual arrival of the birds in their summer-plumage! to watch it is as good as sitting at the window on Easter Sunday to observe the new bonnets. Yonder, in that clump of alders by the brook, is the delicious jargoning of the first flock of yellow-birds; there are the little gentlemen in black and yellow, and the little ladies in olive-brown; "sweet, sweet, sweet" is the only word they say, and often they will so lower their ceaseless warble, that, though almost within reach, the little minstrels seem far away. There is the very earliest cat-bird, mimicking the bobolink before the bobolink has come: what is the history of his song, then? is it a reminiscence of last year? or has the little coquette been practising it all winter, in some gay Southern society, where cat-birds and bobolinks grow intimate, just as Southern fashionables from different States may meet and sing duets at Saratoga? There sounds the sweet, low, long-continued trill of the little hair-bird, or chipping-sparrow, a suggestion of insect sounds in sultry summer, and produced, like them, by a slight fluttering of the wings against the sides: by-and-by we shall sometimes hear that same delicate rhythm burst the silence of the June midnights, and then, ceasing, make stillness more still. Now watch that woodpecker, roving in ceaseless search, travelling over fifty trees in an hour, running from top to bottom of some small sycamore, pecking at every crevice, pausing to dot a dozen inexplicable holes in a row upon an apple-tree, but never once intermitting the low, querulous murmur of housekeeping anxiety: now she stops to hammer with all her little life at some tough piece of bark, strikes harder and harder blows, throws herself back at last, flapping her wings furiously as she brings down her whole strength again upon it; finally it yields, and grub after grub goes down her throat, till she whets her beak after the meal as a wild beast licks its claws, and off on her pressing business once more.

Page 12

It is no wonder that there is so little substantial enjoyment of Nature in the community, when we feed children on grammars and dictionaries only, and take no pains to train them to see that which is before their eyes. The mass of the community have “summered and wintered” the universe pretty regularly, one would think, for a good many years; and yet nine persons out of ten in the town or city, and two out of three even in the country, seriously suppose, for instance, that the buds upon trees are formed in the spring; they have had them before their eyes all winter, and never seen them. As large a proportion suppose, in good faith, that a plant grows at the base of the stem, instead of at the top: that is, if they see a young sapling in which there is a crotch at five feet from the ground, they expect to see it ten feet from the ground by-and-by,—confounding the growth of a tree with that of a man or animal. But perhaps the best of us could hardly bear the severe test unconsciously laid down by a small child of my acquaintance. The boy’s father, a college-bred man, had early chosen the better part, and employed his fine faculties in rearing laurels in his own beautiful nursery-gardens, instead of in the more arid soil of court-rooms or state-houses. Of course the young human scion knew the flowers by name before he knew his letters, and used their symbols more readily; and after he got the command of both, he was one day asked by his younger brother what the word *idiot* meant,—for somebody in the parlor had been saying that somebody else was an idiot. “Don’t you know?” quoth Ben, in his sweet voice: “an idiot is a person who doesn’t know an arbor-vitae from a pine,—he doesn’t know anything.” When Ben grows up to maturity, bearing such terrible tests in his unshrinking hands, who of us will be safe?

The softer aspects of Nature, especially, require time and culture before man can enjoy them. To rude races her processes bring only terror, which is very slowly outgrown. Humboldt has best exhibited the scantiness of finer natural perceptions in Greek and Roman literature, in spite of the grand oceanic anthology of Homer, and the delicate water-coloring of the Greek Anthology and of Horace. The Oriental and the Norse sacred books are full of fresh and beautiful allusions; but the Greek saw in Nature only a framework for Art, and the Roman only a camping-ground for men. Even Virgil describes the grotto of Aeneas merely as a “black grove” with “horrid shade,”—“*Horrenti atrum nemus imminet umbra.*” Wordsworth points out, that, even in English literature, the “Windsor Forest” of Anne, Countess of Winchelsea, was the first poem which represented Nature as a thing to be consciously enjoyed; and as she was almost the first English poetess, we might be tempted to think that we owe this appreciation, like some other good things, to the participation of woman in literature. But, on the other hand, it must be remembered that



Page 13

the voluminous Duchess of Newcastle, in her "Ode on Melancholy," describes among the symbols of hopeless gloom "the still moonshine night" and "a mill where rushing waters run about,"—the sweetest natural images. So woman has not so much to claim, after all. In our own country, the early explorers seemed to find only horror in its woods and waterfalls. Josselyn, in 1672, could only describe the summer splendor of the White Mountain region as "dauntingly terrible, being full of rocky hills, as thick as mole-hills in a meadow, and full of infinite thick woods." Father Hennepin spoke of Niagara, in the narrative still quoted in the guide-books, as a "frightful cataract"; though perhaps his original French phrase was softer. And even John Adams could find no better name than "horrid chasm" for the gulf at Egg Rock, where he first saw the sea-anemone.

But we are lingering too long, perhaps, with this sweet April of smiles and tears. It needs only to add that all her traditions are beautiful. Ovid says well, that she was not named from *aperire*, to open, as some have thought, but from *Aphrodite*, goddess of beauty. April holds Easter-time, St. George's Day, and the Eve of St. Mark's. She has not, like her sister May in Germany, been transformed to a verb and made a synonyme for joy,—"*Deine Seele malet den trueben Herbst*"—but April was believed in early ages to have been the birth-time of the world. According to Venerable Bede, the point was first accurately determined at a council held at Jerusalem about A.D. 200, when, after much profound discussion, it was finally decided that the world's birthday occurred on Sunday, April eighth,—that is, at the vernal equinox and the full moon. But April is certainly the birth-time of the year, at least, if not of the planet. Its festivals are older than Christianity, older than the memory of man. No sad associations cling to it, as to the month of June, in which month, says William of Malmesbury, kings are wont to go to war,—"*Quando solent reges ad arma procedere*,"—but it holds the Holy Week, and it is the Holy Month. And in April Shakspeare was born, and in April he died.

THE PROFESSOR'S STORY.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE WHITE ASH.

When Helen returned to Elsie's bedside, it was with a new and still deeper feeling of sympathy, such as the story told by Old Sophy might well awaken. She understood, as never before, the singular fascination and as singular repulsion which she had long felt in Elsie's presence. It had not been without a great effort that she had forced herself to become the almost constant attendant of the sick girl; and now she was learning, but not for the first time, the blessed truth which so many good women have found out for

themselves, that the hardest duty bravely performed soon becomes a habit, and tends in due time to transform itself into a pleasure.



Page 14

The old Doctor was beginning to look graver, in spite of himself. The fever, if such it was, went gently forward, wasting the young girl's powers of resistance from day to day; yet she showed no disposition to take nourishment, and seemed literally to be living on air. It was remarkable that with all this her look was almost natural, and her features were hardly sharpened so as to suggest that her life was burning away. He did not like this, nor various other unobtrusive signs of danger which his practised eye detected. A very small matter might turn the balance which held life and death poised against each other. He surrounded her with precautions, that Nature might have every opportunity of cunningly shifting the weights from the scale of death to the scale of life, as she will often do, if not rudely disturbed or interfered with.

Little tokens of good-will and kind remembrance were constantly coming to her from the girls in the school and the good people in the village. Some of the mansion-house people obtained rare flowers which they sent her, and her table was covered with fruits—which tempted her in vain. Several of the school-girls wished to make her a basket of their own handiwork, and, filling it with autumnal flowers, to send it as a joint offering. Mr. Bernard found out their project accidentally, and, wishing to have his share in it, brought home from one of his long walks some boughs full of variously tinted leaves, such as were still clinging to the stricken trees. With these he brought also some of the already fallen leaflets of the white ash, remarkable for their rich olive-purple color, forming a beautiful contrast with some of the lighter-hued leaves. It so happened that this particular tree, the white ash, did not grow upon The Mountain, and the leaflets were more welcome for their comparative rarity. So the girls made their basket, and the floor of it they covered with the rich olive-purple leaflets. Such late flowers as they could lay their hands upon served to fill it, and with many kindly messages they sent it to Miss Elsie Venner at the Dudley mansion-house.

Elsie was sitting up in her bed when it came, languid, but tranquil, and Helen was by her, as usual, holding her hand, which was strangely cold, Helen thought, for one who—was said to have some kind of fever. The school-girls' basket was brought in with its messages of love and hopes for speedy recovery. Old Sophy was delighted to see that it pleased Elsie, and laid it on the bed before her. Elsie began looking at the flowers and taking them from the basket, that she might see the leaves. All at once she appeared to be agitated; she looked at the basket,—then around, as if there were some fearful presence about her which she was searching for with her eager glances. She took out the flowers, one by one, her breathing growing hurried, her eyes staring, her hands trembling,—till, as she came near the bottom of the basket, she flung out all the rest with a hasty movement, looked upon the olive-purple leaflets as if paralyzed for a moment, shrunk up, as it were, into herself in a curdling terror, dashed the basket from her, and fell back senseless, with a faint cry which chilled the blood of the startled listeners at her bedside.



Page 15

“Take it away!—take it away!—quick!” said Old Sophy, as she hastened to her mistress’s pillow. “It’s the leaves of the tree that was always death to her,—take it away! She can’t live wi’ it in the room!”

The poor old woman began chafing Elsie’s hands, and Helen to try to rouse her with hartshorn, while a third frightened attendant gathered up the flowers and the basket and carried them out of the apartment. She came to herself after a time, but exhausted and then wandering. In her delirium, she talked constantly as if she were in a cave, with such exactness of circumstance that Helen could not doubt at all that she had some such retreat among the rocks of The Mountain, probably fitted up in her own fantastic way, where she sometimes hid herself from all human eyes, and of the entrance to which she alone possessed the secret.

All this passed away, and left her, of course, weaker than before. But this was not the only influence the unexplained paroxysm had left behind it. From this time forward there was a change in her whole expression and her manner. The shadows ceased flitting over her features, and the old woman, who watched her from day to day and from hour to hour as a mother watches her child, saw the likeness she bore to her mother coming forth more and more, as the cold glitter died out of the diamond eyes, and the scowl disappeared from the dark brows and low forehead.

With all the kindness and indulgence her father had bestowed upon her, Elsie had never felt that he loved her. The reader knows well enough what fatal recollections and associations had frozen up the springs of natural affection in his breast. There was nothing in the world he would not do for Elsie. He had sacrificed his whole life to her. His very seeming carelessness about restraining her was all calculated; he knew that restraint would produce nothing but utter alienation. Just so far as she allowed him, he shared her studies, her few pleasures, her thoughts; but she was essentially solitary and uncommunicative. No person, as was said long ago, could judge him,—because his task was not merely difficult, but simply impracticable to human powers. A nature like Elsie’s had necessarily to be studied by itself, and to be followed in its laws where it could not be led.

Every day, at different hours, during the whole of his daughter’s illness, Dudley Venner had sat by her, doing all he could to soothe and please her: always the same thin film of some emotional non-conductor between them; always that kind of habitual regard and family-interest, mingled with the deepest pity on one side and a sort of respect on the other, which never warmed into outward evidences of affection.

It was after this occasion, when she had been so profoundly agitated by a seemingly insignificant cause, that her father and Old Sophy were sitting, one at one side of her bed and one at the other. She had fallen into a light slumber. As they were looking at her, the same thought came into both their minds at the same moment. Old Sophy spoke for both, as she said, in a low voice,—



Page 16

“It’s her mother’s look,—it’s her mother’s own face right over again,—she never look’ so before,—the Lord’s hand is on her! His will be done!”

When Elsie woke and lifted her languid eyes upon her father’s face, she saw in it a tenderness, a depth of affection, such as she remembered at rare moments of her childhood, when she had won him to her by some unusual gleam of sunshine in her fitful temper.

“Elsie, dear,” he said, “we were thinking how much your expression was sometimes like that of your sweet mother. If you could but have seen her, so as to remember her!”

The tender look and tone, the yearning of the daughter’s heart for the mother she had never seen, save only with the unfixed, undistinguishing eyes of earliest infancy, perhaps the under-thought that she might soon rejoin her in another state of being,—all came upon her with a sudden overflow of feeling which broke through all the barriers between her heart and her eyes, and Elsie wept. It seemed to her father as if the malign influence,—evil spirit it might almost be called,—which had pervaded her being, had at last been driven forth or exorcised, and that these tears were at once the sign and the pledge of her redeemed nature. But now she was to be soothed, and not excited. After her tears she slept again, and the look her face wore was peaceful as never before.

Old Sophy met the Doctor at the door and told him all the circumstances connected with the extraordinary attack from which Elsie had suffered. It was the purple leaves, she said. She remembered that Dick once brought home a branch of a tree with some of the same leaves on it, and Elsie screamed and almost fainted then. She, Sophy, had asked her, after she had got quiet, what it was in the leaves that made her feel so bad. Elsie couldn’t tell her,—didn’t like to speak about it,—shuddered whenever Sophy mentioned it.

This did not sound so strangely to the old Doctor as it does to some who listen to this narrative. He had known some curious examples of antipathies, and remembered reading of others still more singular. He had known those who could not bear the presence of a cat, and recollected the story, often told, of a person’s hiding one in a chest when one of these sensitive individuals came into the room, so as not to disturb him; but he presently began to sweat and turn pale, and cried out that there must be a cat hid somewhere. He knew people who were poisoned by strawberries, by honey, by different meats,—many who could not endure cheese,—some who could not bear the smell of roses. If he had known all the stories in the old books, he would have found that some have swooned and become as dead men at the smell of a rose,—that a stout soldier has been known to turn and run at the sight or smell of rue,—that cassia and even olive-oil have produced deadly faintings in certain individuals,—in short, that almost everything has seemed to be a poison to somebody.



Page 17

“Bring me that basket, Sophy,” said the old Doctor, “if you can find it.”

Sophy brought it to him,—for he had not yet entered Elsie’s apartment.

“These purple leaves are from the white ash,” he said. “You don’t know the notion that people commonly have about that tree, Sophy?”

“I know they say the Ugly Things never go where the white ash grows,” Sophy answered. “Oh, Doctor dear, what I’m thinkin’ of a’n’t true, is it?”

The Doctor smiled sadly, but did not answer. He went directly to Elsie’s room. Nobody would have known by his manner that he saw any special change in his patient. He spoke with her as usual, made some slight alteration in his prescriptions, and left the room with a kind, cheerful look. He met her father on the stairs.

“Is it as I thought?” said Dudley Venner.

“There is everything to fear,” the Doctor said, “and not much, I am afraid, to hope. Does not her face recall to you one that you remember, as never before?”

“Yes,” her father answered,—“oh, yes! What is the meaning of this change which has come over her features, and her voice, her temper, her whole being? Tell me, oh, tell me, what is it? Can it be that the curse is passing away, and my daughter is to be restored to me,—such as her mother would have had her,—such as her mother was?”

“Walk out with me into the garden,” the Doctor said, “and I will tell you all I know and all I think about this great mystery of Elsie’s life.”

They walked out together, and the Doctor began:—

“She has lived a twofold being, as it were,—the consequence of the blight which fell upon her in the dim period before consciousness. You can see what she might have been but for this. You know that for these eighteen years her whole existence has taken its character from that influence which we need not name. But you will remember that few of the lower forms of life last as human beings do; and thus it might have been hoped and trusted with some show of reason, as I have always suspected you hoped and trusted, perhaps more confidently than myself, that the lower nature which had become ingrafted on the higher would die out and leave the real woman’s life she inherited to outlive this accidental principle which had so poisoned her childhood and youth. I believe it is so dying out; but I am afraid,—yes, I must say it, I fear it has involved the centres of life in its own decay. There is hardly any pulse at Elsie’s wrist; no stimulants seem to rouse her; and it looks as if life were slowly retreating inwards, so that by-and-by she will sleep as those who lie down in the cold and never wake.”



Page 18

Strange as it may seem, her father heard all this not without deep sorrow, and such marks of it as his thoughtful and tranquil nature, long schooled by suffering, claimed or permitted, but with a resignation itself the measure of his past trials. Dear as his daughter might become to him, all he dared to ask of Heaven was that she might be restored to that truer self which lay beneath her false and adventitious being. If he could once see that the icy lustre in her eyes had become a soft, calm light,—that her soul was at peace with all about her and with Him above,—this crumb from the children's table was enough for him, as it was for the Syro-Phoenician woman who asked that the dark spirit might go out from her daughter.

There was little change the next day, until all at once she said in a clear voice that she should like to see her master at the school, Mr. Langdon. He came accordingly, and took the place of Helen at her bedside. It seemed as if Elsie had forgotten the last scene with him. Might it be that pride had come in, and she had sent for him only to show how superior she had grown to the weakness which had betrayed her into that extraordinary request, so contrary to the instincts and usages of her sex? Or was it that the singular change which had come over her had involved her passionate fancy for him and swept it away with her other habits of thought and feeling? Or perhaps, rather, that she felt that all earthly interests were becoming of little account to her, and wished to place herself right with one to whom she had displayed a wayward movement of her unbalanced imagination? She welcomed Mr. Bernard as quietly as she had received Helen Darley. He colored at the recollection of that last scene, when he came into her presence; but she smiled with perfect tranquillity. She did not speak to him of any apprehension; but he saw that she looked upon herself as doomed. So friendly, yet so calm did she seem through all their interview, that Mr. Bernard could only look back upon her manifestation of feeling towards him on their walk from the school as a vagary of a mind laboring under some unnatural excitement, and wholly at variance with the true character of Elsie Venner, as he saw her before him in her subdued, yet singular beauty. He looked with almost scientific closeness of observation into the diamond eyes; but that peculiar light which he knew so well was not there. She was the same in one sense as on that first day when he had seen her coiling and uncoiling her golden chain, yet how different in every aspect which revealed her state of mind and emotion! Something of tenderness there was, perhaps, in her tone towards him; she would not have sent for him, had she not felt more than an ordinary interest in him. But through the whole of his visit she never lost her gracious self-possession. The Dudley race might well be proud of the last of its daughters, as she lay dying, but unconquered by the feeling of the present or the fear of the future.



Page 19

As for Mr. Bernard, he found it very hard to look upon her and listen to her unmoved. There was nothing that reminded him of the stormy-browed, almost savage girl he remembered in her fierce loveliness,—nothing of all her singularities of air and of costume. Nothing? Yes, one thing. Weak and suffering as she was, she had never parted with one particular ornament, such as a sick person would naturally, as it might be supposed, get rid of at once. The golden cord which she wore round her neck at the great party was still there. A bracelet was lying by her pillow; she had unclasped it from her wrist.

Before Mr. Bernard left her, she said,—“I shall never see you again. Some time or other, perhaps, you will mention my name to one whom you love. Give her this from your scholar and friend Elsie.”

He took the bracelet, raised her hand to his lips, then turned his face away; in that moment he was the weaker of the two.

“Good-bye,” she said; “thank you for coming.”

His voice died away in his throat, as he tried to answer her. She followed him with her eyes as he passed from her sight through the door, and when it closed after him sobbed tremulously once or twice,—but stilled herself, and met Helen, as she entered, with a composed countenance.

“I have had a very pleasant visit from Mr. Langdon,” Elsie said. “Sit by me, Helen, awhile without speaking; I should like to sleep, if I can,—and to dream.”

CHAPTER XXX.

THE GOLDEN CORD IS LOOSED.

The Reverend Chauncy Fairweather, hearing that his parishioner's daughter, Elsie, was very ill, could do nothing less than come to the mansion-house and tender such consolations as he was master of. It was rather remarkable that the old Doctor did not exactly approve of his visit. He thought that company of every sort might be injurious in her weak state. He was of opinion that Mr. Fairweather, though greatly interested in religious matters, was not the most sympathetic person that could be found; in fact, the old Doctor thought he was too much taken up with his own interests for eternity to give himself quite so heartily to the need of other people as some persons got up on a rather more generous scale (our good neighbor Dr. Honeywood, for instance) could do. However, all these things had better be arranged to suit her wants; if she would like to talk with a clergyman, she had a great deal better see one as often as she liked, and run the risk of the excitement, than have a hidden wish for such a visit and perhaps find herself too weak to see him by-and-by.

Page 20

The old Doctor knew by sad experience that dreadful mistake against which all medical practitioners should be warned. His experience may well be a guide for others. Do not overlook the desire for spiritual advice and consolation which patients sometimes feel, and, with the frightful *mauvaise honte* peculiar to Protestantism, alone among all human beliefs, are ashamed to tell. As a part of medical treatment, it is the physician's business to detect the hidden longing for the food of the soul, as much as for any form of bodily nourishment. Especially in the higher walks of society, where this unutterably miserable false shame of Protestantism acts in proportion to the general acuteness of the cultivated sensibilities, let no unwillingness to suggest the sick person's real need suffer him to languish between his want and his morbid sensitiveness. What an infinite advantage the Mussulmans and the Catholics have over many of our more exclusively spiritual sects in the way they keep their religion always by them and never blush for it! And besides this spiritual longing, we should never forget that

“On some fond breast the parting soul relies,”

and the minister of religion, in addition to the sympathetic nature which we have a right to demand in him, has trained himself to the art of entering into the feelings of others.

The reader must pardon this digression, which introduces the visit of the Reverend Chauncy Fairweather to Elsie Venner. It was mentioned to her that he would like to call and see how she was, and she consented,—not with much apparent interest, for she had reasons of her own for not feeling any very deep conviction of his sympathy for persons in sorrow. But he came, and worked the conversation round to religion, and confused her with his hybrid notions, half made up of what he had been believing and teaching all his life, and half of the new doctrines which he had veneered upon the surface of his old belief. He got so far as to make a prayer with her,—a cool, well-guarded prayer, which compromised his faith as little as possible, and which, if devotion were a game played against Providence, might have been considered a cautious and sagacious move.

When he had gone, Elsie called Old Sophy to her.

“Sophy,” she said, “don't let them send that cold-hearted man to me any more. If your old minister comes to see you, I should like to hear him talk. He looks as if he cared for everybody, and would care for me. And, Sophy, if I should die one of these days, I should like to have that old minister come and say whatever is to be said over me. It would comfort Dudley more, I know, than to have that hard man here, when you're in trouble: for some of you will be sorry when I'm gone,—won't you, Sophy?”

The poor old black woman could not stand this question. The cold minister had frozen Elsie until she felt as if nobody cared for her or would regret her,—and her question had betrayed this momentary feeling.



Page 21

“Don’ talk so! don’ talk so, darlin’!” she cried, passionately. “When you go, Ol’ Sophy’ll go; ‘n’ where you go, Ol’ Sophy’ll go: ‘n’ we’ll both go t’ th’ place where th’ Lord takes care of all his children, whether their faces are white or black. Oh, darlin’, darlin’! if th’ Lord should let me die fus’, you shall fin’ all ready for you when you come after me. On’y don’ go ‘n’ leave poor Ol’ Sophy all ‘lone in th’ world!”

Helen came in at this moment and quieted the old woman with a look. Such scenes were just what were most dangerous, in the state in which Elsie was lying: but that is one of the ways in which an affectionate friend sometimes unconsciously wears out the life which a hired nurse, thinking of nothing but her regular duties and her wages, would have spared from all emotional fatigue.

The change which had come over Elsie’s disposition was itself the cause of new excitements. How was it possible that her father could keep away from her, now that she was coming back to the nature and the very look of her mother, the bride of his youth? How was it possible to refuse her, when she said to Old Sophy that she should like to have her minister come in and sit by her, even though his presence might perhaps prove a new source of excitement?

But the Reverend Doctor did come and sit by her, and spoke such soothing words to her, words of such peace and consolation, that from that hour she was tranquil as never before. All true hearts are alike in the hour of need; the Catholic has a reserved fund of faith for his fellow-creature’s trying moment, and the Calvinist reread those springs of human brotherhood and chanty in his soul which are only covered over by the iron tables inscribed with the harder dogmas of his creed. It was enough that the Reverend Doctor knew all Elsie’s history. He could not judge her by any formula, like those which have been moulded by past ages out of their ignorance. He did not talk with her as if she were an outside sinner, worse than himself. He found a bruised and languishing soul, and bound up its wounds. A blessed office,—one which is confined to no sect or creed, but which good men in all times, under various names and with varying ministries, to suit the need of each age, of each race, of each individual soul, have come forward to discharge for their suffering fellow-creatures.

After this there was little change in Elsie, except that her heart beat more feebly every day,—so that the old Doctor himself, with all his experience, could see nothing to account for the gradual failing of the powers of life, and yet could find no remedy which seemed to arrest its progress in the smallest degree.

“Be very careful,” he said, “that she is not allowed to make any muscular exertion. Any such effort, when a person is so enfeebled, may stop the heart in a moment; and if it stops, it will never move again.”

Helen enforced this rule with the greatest care. Elsie was hardly allowed to move her hand or to speak above a whisper. It seemed to be mainly the question now, whether



this trembling flame of life would be blown out by some light breath of air, or whether it could be so nursed and sheltered by the hollow of these watchful hands that it would have a chance to kindle to its natural brightness.



Page 22

—Her father came in to sit with her in the evening. He had never talked so freely with her as during the hour he had passed at her bedside, telling her little circumstances of her mother's life, living over with her all that was pleasant in the past, and trying to encourage her with some cheerful gleams of hope for the future. A faint smile played over her face, but she did not answer his encouraging suggestions. The hour came for him to leave her with those who watched by her.

“Good-night, my dear child,” he said, and, stooping down, kissed her cheek.

Elsie rose by a sudden effort, threw her arms round his neck, kissed him, and said, “Good-night, my dear father!”

The suddenness of her movement had taken him by surprise, or he would have checked so dangerous an effort. It was too late now. Her arms slid away from him like lifeless weights,—her head fell back upon her pillow,—a long sigh breathed through her lips.

“She is faint,” said Helen, doubtfully; “bring me the hartshorn, Sophy.”

The old woman had started from her place, and was now leaning over her, looking in her face, and listening for the sound of her breathing.

“She's dead! Elsie's dead! My darlin' 's dead!” she cried aloud, filling the room with her utterance of anguish.

Dudley Venner drew her away and silenced her with a voice of authority, while Helen and an assistant plied their restoratives. It was all in vain.

The solemn tidings passed from the chamber of death through the family. The daughter, the hope of that old and honored house, was dead in the freshness of her youth, and the home of its solitary representative was hereafter doubly desolate.

A messenger rode hastily out of the avenue. A little after this the people of the village and the outlying farm-houses were startled by the sound of a bell.

One,—two,—three,—four,—

They stopped in every house, as far as the wavering vibrations reached, and listened—

—five,—six,—seven,—

It was not the little child which had been lying so long at the point of death; that could not be more than three or four years old—

—eight,—nine,—ten,—and so on to fifteen,—sixteen,—seventeen,—eighteen—



The pulsations seemed to keep on,—but it was the brain, and not the bell, that was throbbing now.

“Elsie’s dead!” was the exclamation at a hundred firesides.

“Eighteen year old,” said old Widow Peake, rising from her chair. “Eighteen year ago I laid two gold eagles on her mother’s eyes,—he wouldn’t have anything but gold touch her eyelids,—and now Elsie’s to be straightened,—the Lord have mercy on her poor sinful soul!”

Dudley Venner prayed that night that he might be forgiven, if he had failed in any act of duty or kindness to this unfortunate child of his, now freed from all the woes born with her and so long poisoning her soul. He thanked God for the brief interval of peace which had been granted her, for the sweet communion they had enjoyed in these last days, and for the hope of meeting her with that other lost friend in a better world.



Page 23

Helen mingled a few broken thanks and petitions with her tears: thanks that she had been permitted to share the last days and hours of this poor sister in sorrow; petitions that the grief of bereavement might be lightened to the lonely parent and the faithful old servant.

Old Sophy said almost nothing, but sat day and night by her dead darling. But sometimes her anguish would find an outlet in strange sounds, something between a cry and a musical note,—such as none had ever heard her utter before. These were old remembrances surging up from her childish days,—coming through her mother from the cannibal chief, her grandfather,—death-wails, such as they sing in the mountains of Western Africa, when they see the fires on distant hill-sides and know that their own wives and children are undergoing the fate of captives.

The time came when Elsie was to be laid by her mother in the small square marked by the white stone.

It was not unwillingly that the Reverend Chauncy Fairweather had relinquished the duty of conducting the service to the Reverend Doctor Honeywood, in accordance with Elsie's request. He could not, by any reasoning, reconcile his present way of thinking with a hope for the future of his unfortunate parishioner. Any good old Roman Catholic priest, born and bred to his faith and his business, would have found a loop-hole into some kind of heaven for her, by virtue of his doctrine of "invincible ignorance," or other special proviso; but a recent convert cannot enter into the working conditions of his new creed. Beliefs must be lived in for a good while, before they accommodate themselves to the soul's wants, and wear loose enough to be comfortable.

The Reverend Doctor had no such scruples. Like thousands of those who are classed nominally with the despairing believers, he had never prayed over a departed brother or sister without feeling and expressing a guarded hope that there was mercy in store for the poor sinner, whom parents, wives, children, brothers and sisters could not bear to give up to utter ruin without a word,—and would not, as he knew full well, in virtue of that human love and sympathy which nothing can ever extinguish. And in this poor Elsie's history he could read nothing which the tears of the recording angel might not wash away. As the good physician of the place knew the diseases that assailed the bodies of men and women, so he had learned the mysteries of the sickness of the soul.

So many wished to look upon Elsie's face once more, that her father would not deny them; nay, he was pleased that those who remembered her living should see her in the still beauty of death. Helen and those with her arrayed her for this farewell-view. All was ready for the sad or curious eyes which were to look upon her. There was no painful change to be concealed by any artifice. Even her round neck was left uncovered, that she might be more like one who slept. Only the golden cord was left in its place: some searching eye might detect a trace of that birth-mark which it was whispered she had always worn a necklace to conceal.



Page 24

At the last moment, when all the preparations were completed, Old Sophy stooped over her, and, with trembling hand, loosed the golden cord. She looked intently, for some little space: there was no shade nor blemish where the ring of gold had encircled her throat. She took it gently away and laid it in the casket which held her ornaments.

“The Lord be praised!” the old woman cried, aloud. “He has taken away the mark that was on her; she’s fit to meet his holy angels now!”

So Elsie lay for hours in the great room, in a kind of state, with flowers all about her,—her black hair braided, as in life,—her brows smooth, as if they had never known the scowl of passion,—and on her lips the faint smile with which she had uttered her last “Good-night.” The young girls from the school looked at her, one after another, and passed on, sobbing, carrying in their hearts the picture that would be with them all their days. The great people of the place were all there with their silent sympathy. The lesser kind of gentry, and many of the plainer folk of the village, half-pleased to find themselves passing beneath the stately portico of the ancient mansion-house, crowded in, until the ample rooms were overflowing. All the friends whose acquaintance we have made were there, and many from remoter villages and towns.

There was a deep silence at last. The hour had come for the parting words to be spoken over the dead. The good old minister’s voice rose out of the stillness, subdued and tremulous at first, but growing firmer and clearer as he went on, until it reached the ears of the visitors who were in the far, desolate chambers, looking at the pictured hangings and the old dusty portraits. He did not tell her story in his prayer. He only spoke of our dear departed sister as one of many whom Providence in its wisdom has seen fit to bring under bondage from their cradles. It was not for us to judge them by any standard of our own. He who made the heart alone knew the infirmities it inherited or acquired. For all that our dear sister had presented that was interesting and attractive in her character we were to be grateful; for whatever was dark or inexplicable we must trust that the deep shadow which rested on the twilight dawn of her being might render a reason before the bar of Omniscience; for the grace which had lightened her last days we should pour out our hearts in thankful acknowledgment. From the life and the death of this our dear sister we should learn a lesson of patience with our fellow-creatures in their inborn peculiarities, of charity in judging what seem to us wilful faults of character, of hope and trust, that, by sickness or affliction, or such inevitable discipline as life must always bring with it, if by no gentler means, the soul which had been left by Nature to wander into the path of error and of suffering might be reclaimed and restored to its true aim, and so led on by divine grace to its eternal welfare. He closed his prayer by commending each member of the afflicted family to the divine blessing.



Page 25

Then all at once rose the clear sound of the girls' voices, in the sweet, sad melody of a funeral hymn,—one of those which Elsie had marked, as if prophetically, among her own favorites.

And so they laid her in the earth, and showered down flowers upon her, and filled her grave, and covered it with green sods. By the side of it was another oblong ridge, with a white stone standing at its head. Mr. Bernard looked upon it, as he came close to the place where Elsie was laid, and read the inscription,—

CATALINA

WIFE TO DUDLEY VENNER

DIED

OCTOBER 13TH 1840

AGED XX YEARS.

A gentle rain fell on the turf after it was laid. This was the beginning of a long and dreary autumnal storm, a deferred "equinoctial," as many considered it. The mountain-streams were all swollen and turbulent, and the steep declivities were furrowed in every direction by new channels. It made the house seem doubly desolate to hear the wind howling and the rain beating upon the roofs. The poor relation who was staying at the house would insist on Helen's remaining a few days: Old Sophy was in such a condition, that it kept her in continual anxiety and there were many cares which Helen could take off from her.

The old black woman's life was buried in her darling's grave. She did nothing but moan and lament for her. At night she was restless, and would get up and wander to Elsie's apartment and look for her and call her by name. At other times she would lie awake and listen to the wind and the rain,—sometimes with such a wild look upon her face, and with such sudden starts and exclamations, that it seemed, as if she heard spirit-voices and were answering the whispers of unseen visitants. With all this were mingled hints of her old superstition,—forebodings of something fearful about to happen,—perhaps the great final catastrophe of all things, according to the prediction current in the kitchens of Rockland.

"Hark!" Old Sophy would say,—“don' you hear th' crackin' 'n' th' snappin' up in 'Th' Mountain, 'n' th' rollin' o' th' big stones? The' 's somethin' stirrin' among th' rocks; I hear th' soun' of it in th' night, when th' wind has stopped blowin'. Oh, stay by me a little while, Miss Darlin'! stay by me! for it's th' Las' Day, may be, that's close on us, 'n' I feel as if I couldn' meet th' Lord all alone!”



It was curious,—but Helen did certainly recognize sounds, during the lull of the storm, which were not of falling rain or running streams, —short snapping sounds, as of tense cords breaking,—long uneven sounds, as of masses rolling down steep declivities. But the morning came as usual; and as the others said nothing of these singular noises, Helen did not think it necessary to speak of them. All day long she and the humble relative of Elsie's mother, who had appeared, as poor relations are wont to in the great crises of life, were busy in arranging the disordered house, and looking over the various objects which Elsie's singular tastes had brought together, to dispose of them as her father might direct. They all met together at the usual hour for tea. One of the servants came in, looking very blank, and said to the poor relation,—



Page 26

“The well is gone dry; we have nothing but rain-water.”

Dudley Venner’s countenance changed; he sprang to his feet and went to assure himself of the fact, and, if he could, of the reason of it. For a well to dry up during such a rain-storm was extraordinary,—it was ominous.

He came back, looking very anxious.

“Did any of you notice any remarkable sounds last night,” he said,— “or this morning? Hark! do you hear anything now?”

They listened in perfect silence for a few moments. Then there came a short cracking sound, and two or three snaps, as of parting cords.

Dudley Venner called all his household together.

“We are in danger here, as I think, to-night,” he said,—“not very great danger, perhaps, but it is a risk I do not wish you to run. These heavy rains have loosed some of the rocks above, and they may come down and endanger the house. Harness the horses, Elbridge, and take all the family away. Miss Darley will go to the Institute; the others will pass the night at the Mountain House. I shall stay here, myself: it is not at all likely that anything will come of these warnings; but if there should, I choose to be here and take my chance.”

It needs little, generally, to frighten servants, and they were all ready enough to go. The poor relation was one of the timid sort, and was terribly uneasy to be got out of the house. This left no alternative, of course, for Helen, but to go also. They all urged upon Dudley Venner to go with them: if there was danger, why should he remain to risk it, when he sent away the others?

Old Sophy said nothing until the time came for her to go with the second of Elbridge’s carriage-loads.

“Come, Sophy,” said Dudley Venner, “get your things and go. They will take good care of you at the Mountain House; and when we have made sure that there is no real danger, you shall come back at once.”

“No, Massa!” Sophy answered. “I’ve seen Elsie into th’ ground, ‘n’ I a’n’t goin’ away to come back ‘n’ fin’ Massa Venner buried under th’ rocks. My darlin’ ’s gone; ‘n’ now, if Massa goes, ‘n’ th’ ol’ place goes, it’s time for Ol’ Sophy to go, too. No, Massa Venner, we’ll both stay in th’ ol’ mansion ‘n’ wait for th’ Lord!”

Nothing could change the old woman’s determination; and her master, who only feared, but did not really expect the long-deferred catastrophe, was obliged to consent to her staying. The sudden drying of the well at such a time was the most alarming sign; for



he remembered that the same thing had been observed just before great mountain-slides. This long rain, too, was just the kind of cause which was likely to loosen the strata of rock piled up in the ledges; if the dreaded event should ever come to pass, it would be at such a time.

He paced his chamber uneasily until long past midnight. If the morning came without accident, he meant to have a careful examination made of all the rents and fissures above, of their direction and extent, and especially whether, in case of a mountain-slide, the huge masses would be like to reach so far to the east and so low down the declivity as the mansion.

Page 27

At two o'clock in the morning he was dozing in his chair. Old Sophy had lain down on her bed, and was muttering in troubled dreams.

All at once a loud crash seemed to rend the very heavens above them: a crack as of the thunder that follows close upon the bolt,—a rending and crushing as of a forest snapped through all its stems, torn, twisted, splintered, dragged with all its ragged boughs into one chaotic ruin. The ground trembled under them as in an earthquake; the old mansion shuddered so that all its windows chattered in their casements; the great chimney shook off its heavy cap-stones, which came down on the roof with resounding concussions; and the echoes of The Mountain roared and bellowed in long reduplication, as if its whole foundations were rent, and this were the terrible voice of its dissolution.

Dudley Venner rose from his chair, folded his arms, and awaited his fate. There was no knowing where to look for safety; and he remembered too well the story of the family that was lost by rushing out of the house, and so hurrying into the very jaws of death.

He had stood thus but for a moment, when he heard the voice of Old Sophy in a wild cry of terror:—

“It's the Las' Day! It's the Las' Day! The Lord is comin' to take us all!”

“Sophy!” he called; but she did not hear him or heed him, and rushed out of the house.

The worst danger was over. If they were to be destroyed, it would necessarily be in a few seconds from the first thrill of the terrible convulsion. He waited in awful suspense, but calm. Not more than one or two minutes could have passed before the frightful tumult and all its sounding echoes had ceased. He called Old Sophy; but she did not answer. He went to the western window and looked forth into the darkness. He could not distinguish the outlines of the landscape, but the white stone was clearly visible, and by its side the new-made mound. Nay, what was that which obscured its outline, in shape like a human figure? He flung open the window and sprang through. It was all that there was left of poor Old Sophy, stretched out, lifeless, upon her darling's grave.

He had scarcely composed her limbs and drawn the sheet over her, when the neighbors began to arrive from all directions. Each was expecting to hear of houses overwhelmed and families destroyed; but each came with the story that his own household was safe. It was not until the morning dawned that the true nature and extent of the sudden movement was ascertained. A great seam had opened above the long cliff, and the terrible Rattlesnake Ledge, with all its envenomed reptiles, its dark fissures and black caverns, was buried forever beneath a mighty incumbent mass of ruin.

CHAPTER XXXI.

MR. SILAS PECKHAM RENDERS HIS ACCOUNT.



Page 28

The morning rose clear and bright. The long storm was over, and the calm autumnal sunshine was now to return, with all its infinite repose and sweetness. With the earliest dawn exploring parties were out in every direction along the southern slope of The Mountain, tracing the ravages of the great slide and the track it had followed. It proved to be not so much a slide as the breaking off and falling of a vast line of cliff, including the dreaded Ledge. It had folded over like the leaves of a half-opened book when they close, crushing the trees below, piling its ruins in a glaciis at the foot of what had been the overhanging wall of the cliff, and filling up that deep cavity above the mansion-house which bore the ill-omened name of Dead Man's Hollow. This it was which had saved the Dudley mansion. The falling masses, or huge fragments breaking off from them, would have swept the house and all around it to destruction but for this deep shelving dell, into which the stream of ruin was happily directed. It was, indeed, one of Nature's conservative revolutions; for the fallen masses made a kind of shelf, which interposed a level break between the inclined planes above and below it, so that the nightmare-fancies of the dwellers in the Dudley mansion, and in many other residences under the shadow of The Mountain, need not keep them lying awake hereafter to listen for the snapping of roots and the splitting of the rocks above them.

Twenty-four hours after the falling of the cliff, it seemed as if it had happened ages ago. The new fact had fitted itself in with all the old predictions, forebodings, fears, and acquired the solidarity belonging to all events which have slipped out of the fingers of Time and dissolved in the antecedent eternity.

Old Sophy was lying dead in the Dudley mansion. If there were tears shed for her, they could not be bitter ones; for she had lived out her full measure of days, and gone—who could help fondly believing it?—to rejoin her beloved mistress. They made a place for her at the foot of the two mounds. It was thus she would have chosen to sleep, and not to have wronged her humble devotion in life by asking to lie at the side of those whom she had served so long and faithfully. There were very few present at the simple ceremony. Helen Darley was one of these few. The old black woman had been her companion in all the kind offices of which she had been the ministering angel to Elsie.

After it was all over, Helen was leaving with the rest, when Dudley Venner begged her to stay a little, and he would send her back: it was a long walk; besides, he wished to say some things to her, which he had not had the opportunity of speaking. Of course Helen could not refuse him; there must be many thoughts coming into his mind which he would wish to share with her who had known his daughter so long and been with her in her last days.

She returned into the great parlor with the wrought cornices and the medallion-portraits on the ceiling.



Page 29

"I am now alone in the world," Dudley Venner said.

Helen must have known that before he spoke. But the tone in which he said it had so much meaning, that she could not find a word to answer him with. They sat in silence, which the old tall clock counted out in long seconds; but it was a silence which meant more than any words they had ever spoken.

"Alone in the world! Helen, the freshness of my life is gone, and there is little left of the few graces which in my younger days might have fitted me to win the love of women. Listen to me,—kindly, if you can; forgive me, at least. Half my life has been passed in constant fear and anguish, without any near friend to share my trials. My task is done now; my fears have ceased to prey upon me; the sharpness of early sorrows has yielded something of its edge to time. You have bound me to you by gratitude in the tender care you have taken of my poor child. More than this. I must tell you all now, out of the depth of this trouble through which I am passing. I have loved you from the moment we first met; and if my life has anything left worth accepting, it is yours. Will you take the offered gift?"

Helen looked in his face, surprised, bewildered.

"This is not for me,—not for me," she said. "I am but a poor faded flower, not worth the gathering of such a one as you. No, no,—I have been bred to humble toil all my days, and I could not be to you what you ought to ask. I am accustomed to a kind of loneliness and self-dependence. I have seen nothing, almost, of the world, such as you were born to move in. Leave me to my obscure place and duties; I shall at least have peace;—and you—you will surely find in due time some one better fitted by Nature and training to make you happy."

"No, Miss Darley!" Dudley Venner said, almost sternly. "You must not speak to a man who has lived through my experiences of looking about for a new choice after his heart has once chosen. Say that you can never love me; say that I have lived too long to share your young life; say that sorrow has left nothing in me for Love to find his pleasure in; but do not mock me with the hope of a new affection for some unknown object. The first look of yours brought me to your side. The first tone of your voice sunk into my heart. From this moment my life must wither out or bloom anew. My home is desolate. Come under my roof and make it bright once more,—share my life with me,—or I shall give the halls of the old mansion to the bats and the owls, and wander forth alone without a hope or a friend!"

To find herself with a man's future at the disposal of a single word of hers!—a man like this, too, with a fascination for her against which she had tried to shut her heart, feeling that he lived in another sphere than hers, working as she was for her bread, a poor operative in the factory of a hard master and jealous overseer, the salaried drudge of Mr. Silas Peckham! Why, she had thought he was



Page 30

grateful to her as a friend of his daughter; she had even pleased herself with the feeling that he liked her, in her humble place, as a woman of some cultivation and many sympathetic! points of relation with himself; but that he *loved* her,—that this deep, fine nature, in a man so far removed from her in outward circumstance, should have found its counterpart in one whom life had treated so coldly as herself,—that Dudley Venner should stake his happiness on a breath of hers,—poor Helen Darley's,—it was all a surprise, a confusion, a kind of fear not wholly fearful. Ah, me! women know what it is,—that mist over the eyes, that trembling in the limbs, that faltering of the voice, that sweet, shame-faced, unspoken confession of weakness which does not wish to be strong, that sudden overflow in the soul where thoughts loose their hold on each other and swim single and helpless in the flood of emotion,—women know what it is!

No doubt she was a little frightened and a good deal bewildered, and that her sympathies were warmly excited for a friend to whom she had been brought so near, and whose loneliness she saw and pitied. She lost that calm self-possession she had hoped to maintain.

“If I thought that I could make you happy,—if I should speak from my heart, and not my reason,—I am but a weak woman,—yet if I can be to you—What can I say?”

What more could this poor, dear Helen say?

* * * * *

“Elbridge, harness the horses and take Miss Darley back to the school.”

What conversation had taken place since Helen's rhetorical failure is not recorded in the minutes from which this narrative is constructed. But when the man who had been summoned had gone to get the carriage ready, Helen resumed something she had been speaking of.

“Not for the world! Everything must go on just as it has gone on, for the present. There are proprieties to be consulted. I cannot be hard with you, that out of your very affliction has sprung this—this—well—you must name it for me,—but the world will never listen to explanations. I am to be Helen Darley, lady assistant in Mr. Silas Peckham's school, as long as I see fit to hold my office. And I mean to attend to my scholars just as before; so that I shall have very little time for visiting or seeing company. I believe, though, you are one of the Trustees and a Member of the Examining Committee; so that, if you should happen to visit the school, I shall try to be civil to you.”

Every lady sees, of course, that Helen was quite right; but perhaps here and there one will think that Dudley Venner was all wrong,—that he was too hasty,—that he should



have been too full of his recent grief for such a confession as he has just made, and the passion from which it sprung. Perhaps they do not understand the sudden recoil of a strong nature long compressed. Perhaps they have not studied the mystery of *allotropism* in the emotions of the human heart. Go to the nearest chemist and ask him to show you some of the dark-red phosphorus which will not burn, without fierce heating, but at 500 deg., Fahrenheit, changes back again to the inflammable substance we know so well. Grief seems more like ashes than like fire; but as grief has been love once, so it may become love again. This is emotional allotropism.



Page 31

Helen rode back to the Institute and inquired for Mr. Peckham. She had not seen him during the brief interval between her departure from the mansion-house and her return to Old Sophy's funeral. There were various questions about the school she wished to ask.

"Oh, how's your haaelth, Miss Darley?" Silas began. "We've missed you consid'able. Glad to see you back at the post of dooty. Hope the Squire treated you hahnsomely,—liberal pecooniary compensation,—hey? A'n't much of a loser, I guess, by acceptin' his propositions?"

Helen blushed at this last question, as if Silas had meant something by it beyond asking what money she had received; but his own double-meaning expression and her blush were too nice points for him to have taken cognizance of. He was engaged in a mental calculation as to the amount of the deduction he should make under the head of "damage to the institootion,"—this depending somewhat on that of the "pecooniary compensation" she might have received for her services as the friend of Elsie Venner.

So Helen slid back at once into her routine, the same faithful, patient creature she had always been. But what was this new light which seemed to have kindled in her eyes? What was this look of peace, which nothing could disturb, which smiled serenely through all the little meannesses with which the daily life of the educational factory surrounded her,—which not only made her seem resigned, but overflowed all her features with a thoughtful, subdued happiness? Mr. Bernard did not know,—perhaps he did not guess. The inmates of the Dudley mansion were not scandalized by any mysterious visits of a veiled or unveiled lady. The vibrating tongues of the "female youth" of the Institute were not set in motion by the standing of an equipage at the gate, waiting for their lady teacher. The servants at the mansion did not convey numerous letters with superscriptions in a bold, manly hand, sealed with the arms of a well-known house, and directed to Miss Helen Darley; nor, on the other hand, did Hiram, the man from the lean streak in New Hampshire, carry sweet-smelling, rose-hued, many-layered, criss-crossed, fine-stitch-lettered packages of note-paper directed to Dudley Venner, Esq., and all too scanty to hold that incredible expansion of the famous three words which a woman was born to say,—that perpetual miracle which astonishes all the go-betweens who wear their shoes out in carrying a woman's infinite variations on the theme, "I love you."

But the reader must remember that there are walks in country-towns where people are liable to meet by accident, and that the hollow of an old tree has served the purpose of a post-office sometimes; so that he has her choice (to divide the pronouns impartially) of various hypotheses to account for the new glory of happiness which seemed to have irradiated our poor Helen's features, as if her dreary life were awakening in the dawn of a blessed future.



Page 32

With all the alleviations which have been hinted at, Mr. Dudley Venner thought that the days and the weeks had never moved so slowly as through the last period of the autumn that was passing. Elsie had been a perpetual source of anxiety to him, but still she had been a companion. He could not mourn for her; for he felt that she was safer with her mother, in that world where there are no more sorrows and dangers, than she could have been with him. But as he sat at his window and looked at the three mounds, the loneliness of the great house made it seem more like the sepulchre than these narrow dwellings where his beloved and her daughter lay close to each other, side by side,—Catalina, the bride of his youth, and Elsie, the child whom he had nurtured, with poor Old Sophy, who had followed them like a black shadow, at their feet, under the same soft turf, sprinkled with the brown autumnal leaves. It was not good for him to be thus alone. How should he ever live through the long months of November and December?

The months of November and December did, in some way or other, get rid of themselves at last, bringing with them the usual events of village-life and a few unusual ones. Some of the geologists had been up to look at the great slide, of which they gave those prolix accounts which everybody remembers who read the scientific journals of the time. The engineers reported that there was little probability of any further convulsion along the line of rocks which overhung the more thickly settled part of the town. The naturalists drew up a paper on the "Probable Extinction of the *Crotalus Durissus* in the Township of Rockland." The engagement of the Widow Rowens to a Little Millionville merchant was announced,—"Sudding 'n' onexpected," Widow Leech said,—"waaelthy, or she wouldn't ha' looked at him,—fifty year old, if he is a day, 'n' ha'n't got a white hair in his head." The Reverend Chauncy Fairweather had publicly announced that he was going to join the Roman Catholic communion,—not so much to the surprise or consternation of the religious world as he had supposed. Several old ladies forthwith proclaimed their intention of following him; but, as one or two of them were deaf, and another had been threatened with an attack of that mild, but obstinate complaint, *dementia senilis*, many thought it was not so much the force of his arguments as a kind of tendency to jump as the bellwether jumps, well known in flocks not included in the Christian fold. His bereaved congregation immediately began pulling candidates on and off, like new boots, on trial. Some pinched in tender places; some were too loose; some were too square-toed; some were too coarse, and didn't please; some were too thin, and wouldn't last;—in short, they couldn't possibly find a fit. At last people began to drop in to hear old Doctor Honeywood. They were quite surprised to find what a human old gentleman he was, and went back and told the others, that, instead of being a



Page 33

case of confluent sectarianism, as they supposed, the good old minister had been so well vaccinated with charitable virus that he was now a true, open-souled Christian of the mildest type. The end of all which was, that the liberal people went over to the old minister almost in a body, just at the time that Deacon Shearer and the “Vinegar-Bible” party split off, and that not long afterwards they sold their own meeting-house to the malecontents, so that Deacon Soper used often to remind Colonel Sprowle of his wish that “our little man and him [the Reverend Doctor] would swop pulpits,” and tell him it had “pooty nigh come trew.”—But this is anticipating the course of events, which were much longer in coming about; for we have but just got through that terribly long month, as Mr. Dudley Venner found it, of December.

On the first of January, Mr. Silas Peckham was in the habit of settling his quarterly accounts, and making such new arrangements as his convenience or interest dictated. New-Year was a holiday at the Institute. No doubt this accounted for Helen’s being dressed so charmingly,—always, to be sure, in her own simple way, but yet with such a true lady’s air that she looked fit to be the mistress of any mansion in the land.

She was in the parlor alone, a little before noon, when Mr. Peckham came in.

“I’m ready to settle my account with you now, Miss Darley,” said Silas.

“As you please, Mr. Peckham,” Helen answered, very graciously.

“Before payin’ you your selary,” the Principal continued, “I wish to come to an understandin’ as to the futur’. I consider that I’ve been payin’ high, very high, for the work you do. Women’s wages can’t be expected to do more than feed and clothe ’em, as a general thing, with a little savin’, in case of sickness, and to bury ’em, if they break daown, as all of ’em are liable to do at any time. If I a’n’t misinformed, you not only support yourself out of my establishment, but likewise relatives of yours, who I don’t know that I’m called upon to feed and clothe. There is a young woman, not burdened with destitoot relatives, has signified that she would be glad to take your dooties for less pecooniary compensation, by a consid’able amaount, than you now receive. I shall be willin’, however, to retain your services at sech redooced rate as we shall fix upon,—provided sech redooced rate be as low or lower than the same services can be obtained elsewhere.”

“As you please, Mr. Peckham,” Helen answered, with a smile so sweet that the Principal (who of course had trumped up this opposition-teacher for the occasion) said to himself she would stand being cut down a quarter, perhaps a half, of her salary.



“Here is your accaount, Miss Darley, and the balance doo you,” said Silas Peckham, handing her a paper and a small roll of infectious-flavored bills wrapping six poisonous coppers of the old coinage.

She took the paper and began looking at it. She could not quite make up her mind to touch the feverish bills with the cankering copper in them, and left them airing themselves on the table.

Page 34

The document she held ran as follows:

*Silas Peckham, Esq., Principal of the Apollinean Institute,
In Account with Helen Darley, Assist. Teacher.*

Dr.

To Salary for quarter ending Jan. 1st,
@ \$75 per quarter \$75.00

\$75.00

Cr. By Deduction for absence, 1 week 8 days \$10.00 " Board, lodging, etc.,
for 10 days, @ 75 cts. per day 7.50 " Damage to Institution by absence of
teacher from duties, say . . . 25.00 " Stationery furnished 43 " Postage-stamp
. . . 01 " Balance due Helen Darley . . \$32.06 _____ \$75.00

ROCKLAND, Jan. 1st, 1859.

Now Helen had her own private reasons for wishing to receive the small sum which was due her at this time without any unfair deduction,—reasons which we need not inquire into too particularly, as we may be very sure that they were right and womanly. So, when she looked over this account of Mr. Silas Peckham's, and saw that he had contrived to pare down her salary to something less than half its stipulated amount, the look which her countenance wore was as near to that of righteous indignation as her gentle features and soft blue eyes would admit of its being.

"Why, Mr. Peckham," she said, "do you mean this? If I am of so much value to you that you must take off twenty-five dollars for ten days' absence, how is it that my salary is to be cut down to less than seventy-five dollars a quarter, if I remain here?"

"I gave you fair notice," said Silas. "I have a minute of it I took down immed'ately after the intervoo."

He lugged out his large pocket-book with the strap going all round it, and took from it a slip of paper which confirmed his statement.

"Besides," he added, slyly, "I presoom you have received a liberal pecooniary compensation from Squire Venner for nussin' his daughter."

Helen was looking over the bill while he was speaking.

"Board and lodging for ten days, Mr. Peckham,—*whose* board and lodging, pray?"



The door opened before Silas Peckham could answer, and Mr. Bernard walked into the parlor. Helen was holding the bill in her hand, looking as any woman ought to look who has been at once wronged and insulted.

“The last turn of the thumbscrew!” said Mr. Bernard to himself. “What is it, Helen? You look troubled.”

She handed him the account.

He looked at the footing of it. Then he looked at the items. Then he looked at Silas Peckham.

At this moment Silas was sublime. He was so transcendently unconscious of the emotions going on in Mr. Bernard’s mind at the moment, that he had only a single thought.

“The accaount’s correc’ly cast, I presoom;—if the’ ’s any mistake of figgers or addin’ ’em up, it’ll be made all right. Everything’s accordin’ to agreement. The minute written immed’ately after the intervoo is here in my possession.”

Page 35

Mr. Bernard looked at Helen. Just what would have happened to Silas Peckham, as he stood then and there, but for the interposition of a merciful Providence, nobody knows or ever will know; for at that moment steps were heard upon the stairs, and Hiram threw open the parlor-door for Mr. Dudley Venner to enter.

He saluted them all gracefully with the good-wishes of the season, and each of them returned his compliment,—Helen blushing fearfully, of course, but not particularly noticed in her embarrassment by more than one.

Silas Peckham reckoned with perfect confidence on his Trustees, who had always said what he told them to, and done what he wanted. It was a good chance now to show off his power, and, by letting his instructors know the unstable tenure of their offices, make it easier to settle his accounts and arrange his salaries. There was nothing very strange in Mr. Venner's calling; he was one of the Trustees, and this was New Year's Day. But he had called just at the lucky moment for Mr. Peckham's object.

"I have thought some of makin' changes in the department of instruction," he began. "Several accomplished teachers have applied to me, who would be glad of situations. I understand that there never have been so many fast-rate teachers, male and female, out of employment as doorin' the present season. If I can make satisfactory arrangements with my present corps of teachers, I shall be glad to do so; otherwise I shall, with the permission of the Trustees, make such other arrangements as circumstances compel."

"You may make arrangements for a new assistant in my department, Mr. Peckham," said Mr. Bernard, "at once,—this day,—this hour. I am not safe to be trusted with your person five minutes out of this lady's presence,—of whom I beg pardon for this strong language. Mr. Venner, I must beg you, as one of the Trustees of this Institution, to look at the manner in which its Principal has attempted to swindle this faithful teacher, whose toils and sacrifices and self-devotion to the school have made it all that it is, in spite of this miserable trader's incompetence. Will you look at the paper I hold?"

Dudley Venner took the account and read it through, without changing a feature. Then he turned to Silas Peckham.

"You may make arrangements for a new assistant in the branches this lady has taught. Miss Helen Darley is to be my wife. I had hoped to announce this news in a less abrupt and ungraceful manner. But I came to tell you with my own lips what you would have learned before evening from my friends in the village."

Mr. Bernard went to Helen, who stood silent, with downcast eyes, and took her hand warmly, hoping she might find all the happiness she deserved. Then he turned to Dudley Venner, and said,—



“She is a queen, but has never found it out. The world has nothing nobler than this dear woman, whom you have discovered in the disguise of a teacher. God bless her and you!”



Page 36

Dudley Venner returned his friendly grasp, without answering a word in articulate speech.

Silas remained dumb and aghast for a brief space. Coming to himself a little, he thought there might have been some mistake about the items,—would like to have Miss Darley's bill returned,—would make it all right,—had no idee that Squire Venner had a special int'rest in Miss Darley,—was sorry he had given offence,—if he might take that bill and look it over—

"No, Mr. Peckham," said Mr. Dudley Venner; "there will be a full meeting of the Board next week, and the bill, and such evidence with reference to the management of the Institution and the treatment of its instructors as Mr. Langdon sees fit to bring forward, will be laid before them."

Miss Helen Darley became that very day the guest of Miss Arabella Thornton, the Judge's daughter. Mr. Bernard made his appearance a week or two later at the Lectures, where the Professor first introduced him to the reader.

He stayed after the class had left the room.

"Ah, Mr. Langdon! how do you do? Very glad to see you back again. How have you been since our correspondence on Fascination and other curious scientific questions?"

It was the Professor who spoke,—whom the reader will recognize as myself, the teller of this story.

"I have been well," Mr. Bernard answered, with a serious look which invited a further question.

"I hope you have had none of those painful or dangerous experiences you seemed to be thinking of when you wrote; at any rate, you have escaped having your obituary written."

"I have seen some things worth remembering. Shall I call on you this evening and tell you about them?"

"I shall be most happy to see you."

* * * * *

This was the way in which I, the Professor, became acquainted with some of the leading events of this story. They interested me sufficiently to lead me to avail myself of all those other extraordinary methods of obtaining information well known to writers of narrative.



Mr. Langdon seemed to me to have gained in seriousness and strength of character by his late experiences. He threw his whole energies into his studies with an effect which distanced all his previous efforts. Remembering my former hint, he employed his spare hours in writing for the annual prizes, both of which he took by a unanimous vote of the judges. Those who heard him read his Thesis at the Medical Commencement will not soon forget the impression made by his fine personal appearance and manners, nor the universal interest excited in the audience, as he read, with his beautiful enunciation, that striking paper entitled "Unresolved Nebulas in Vital Science." It was a general remark of the Faculty,—and old Doctor Kittredge, who had come down on purpose to hear Mr. Langdon, heartily agreed to it,—that there had never been a diploma filled up, since the institution which conferred upon him the degree of *Doctor Medicinæ* was founded, which carried with it more of promise to the profession than that which bore the name of



Page 37

Bernardus Caryl Langdon

CHAPTER XXXII

CONCLUSION.

Mr. Bernard Langdon had no sooner taken his degree, than, in accordance with the advice of one of his teachers whom he frequently consulted, he took an office in the heart of the city where he had studied. He had thought of beginning in a suburb or some remoter district of the city proper.

“No,” said his teacher,—to wit, myself,—“don’t do any such thing. You are made for the best kind of practice; don’t hamper yourself with an outside constituency, such as belongs to a practitioner of the second class. When a fellow like you chooses his beat, he must look ahead a little. Take care of all the poor that apply to you, but leave the half-pay classes to a different style of doctor,—the people who spend one half their time in taking care of their patients, and the other half in squeezing out their money. Go for the swell-fronts and south-exposure houses; the folks inside are just as good as other people, and the pleasantest, on the whole, to take care of. They must have somebody, and they like a gentleman best. Don’t throw yourself away. You have a good presence and pleasing manners. You wear white linen by inherited instinct. You can pronounce the word *view*. You have all the elements of success; go and take it. Be polite and generous, but don’t undervalue yourself. You will be useful, at any rate; you may just as well be happy, while you are about it. The highest social class furnishes incomparably the best patients, taking them by and large. Besides, when they won’t get well and bore you to death, you can send ’em off to travel. Mind me now, and take the tops of your sparrowgrass. Somebody must have ’em,—why shouldn’t you? If you don’t take your chance, you’ll get the butt-ends as a matter of course.”

Mr. Bernard talked like a young man full of noble sentiments. He wanted to be useful to his fellow-beings. Their social differences were nothing to him. He would never court the rich,—he would go where he was called. He would rather save the life of a poor mother of a family than that of half a dozen old gouty millionnaires whose heirs had been yawning and stretching these ten years to get rid of them.

“Generous emotions!” I exclaimed. “Cherish ’em; cling to ’em till you are fifty,—till you are seventy,—till you are ninety! But do as I tell you,—strike for the best circle of practice, and you’ll be sure to get it!”

Mr. Langdon did as I told him,—took a genteel office, furnished it neatly, dressed with a certain elegance, soon made a pleasant circle of acquaintances, and began to work his way into the right kind of business. I missed him, however, for some days, not long after he had opened his office. On his return, he told me he had been up at Rockland, by

special invitation, to attend the wedding of Mr. Dudley Venner and Miss Helen Darley. He gave me a full account of the



Page 38

ceremony, which I regret that I cannot relate in full. "Helen looked like an angel,"—that, I am sure, was one of his expressions. As for her dress, I should like to give the details, but am afraid of committing blunders, as men always do, when they undertake to describe such matters. White dress, anyhow,—that I am sure of,—with orange-flowers, and the most wonderful lace veil that was ever seen or heard of. The Reverend Doctor Honeywood performed the ceremony, of course. The good people seemed to have forgotten they ever had had any other minister,—except Deacon Shearer and his set of malecontents, who were doing a dull business in the meeting-house lately occupied by the Reverend Mr. Fairweather.

"Who was at the wedding?"

"Everybody, pretty much. They wanted to keep it quiet, but it was of no use. Married at church. Front pews, old Doctor Kittredge and all the mansion-house people and distinguished strangers,—Colonel Sprowle and family, including Matilda's young gentleman, a graduate of one of the fresh-water colleges,—Mrs. Pickins (late Widow Rowens) and husband,—Deacon Soper and numerous parishioners. A little nearer the door, Abel, the Doctor's man, and Elbridge, who drove them to church in, the family-coach. Father Fairweather, as they all call him now, came in late, with Father McShane."

"And Silas Peckham?"

"Oh, Silas had left The School and Rockland. Cut up altogether too badly in the examination instituted by the Trustees. Had moved over to Tamarack, and thought of renting a large house and 'farming' the town-poor."

* * * * *

Some time after this, as I was walking with a young friend along by the swell-fronts and south-exposures, whom should I see but Mr. Bernard Langdon, looking remarkably happy, and keeping step by the side of a very handsome and singularly well-dressed young lady? He bowed and lifted his hat as we passed.

"Who is that pretty girl my young doctor has got there?" I said to my companion.

"Who is that?" he answered. "You don't know? Why, that is neither more nor less than Miss Letitia Forester, daughter of—of—why, the great banking-firm, you know, Bilyuns Brothers & Forester. Got acquainted with her in the country, they say. There's a story that they're engaged, or like to be, if the firm consents."

"Oh!" I said.



I did not like the look of it in the least. Too young,—too young. Has not taken any position yet. No right to ask for the hand of Bilyuns Brothers & Co.'s daughter. Besides, it will spoil him for practice, if he marries a rich girl before he has formed habits of work.

I looked in at his office the next day. A box of white kids was lying open on the table. A three-cornered note, directed in a very delicate lady's-hand, was distinguishable among a heap of papers. I was just going to call him to account for his proceedings, when he pushed the three-cornered note aside and took up a letter with a great corporation-seal upon it. He had received the offer of a professor's chair in an ancient and distinguished institution.



Page 39

“Pretty well for three-and-twenty, my boy,” I said. “I suppose you’ll think you must be married one of these days, if you accept this office.”

Mr. Langdon blushed.—There had been stories about him, he knew. His name had been mentioned in connection with that of a very charming young lady. The current reports were not true. He had met this young lady, and been much pleased with her, in the country, at the house of her grandfather, the Reverend Doctor Honeywood,—you remember Miss Letitia Forester, whom I have mentioned repeatedly? On coming to town, he found his country-acquaintance in a social position which seemed to discourage his continued intimacy. He had discovered, however, that he was a not unwelcome visitor, and had kept up friendly relations with her. But there was no truth in the current reports,—none at all.

Some months had passed, after this visit, when I happened one evening to stroll into a box in one of the principal theatres of the city. A small party sat on the seats before me: a middle-aged gentleman and his lady, in front, and directly behind them my young doctor and the same very handsome young lady I had seen him walking with on the side-walk before the swell-fronts and south-exposures. As Professor Langdon seemed to be very much taken up with his companion, and both of them looked as if they were enjoying themselves, I determined not to make my presence known to my young friend, and to withdraw quietly after feasting my eyes with the sight of them for a few minutes.

“It looks as if something might come of it,” I said to myself.

At that moment the young lady lifted her arm accidentally, in such a way that the light fell upon the clasp of a chain which encircled her wrist. My eyes filled with tears as I read upon the clasp, in sharp-cut Italic letters, *E. V.* They were tears at once of sad remembrance and of joyous anticipation; for the ornament on which I looked was the double pledge of a dead sorrow and a living affection. It was the golden bracelet,—the parting-gift of Elsie Venner.

* * * * *

BUBBLES.

I.

I stood on the brink in childhood,
And watched the bubbles go
From the rock-fretted sunny ripple
To the smoother lymph below;



And over the white creek-bottom,
Under them every one,
Went golden stars in the water,
All luminous with the sun.

But the bubbles brake on the surface,
And under, the stars of gold
Brake, and the hurrying water
Flowed onward, swift and cold.

II.

I stood on the brink in manhood,
And it came to my weary heart,—
In my breast so dull and heavy,
After the years of smart,—

That every hollowest bubble
Which over my life had passed
Still into its deeper current
Some sky-sweet gleam had cast;



Page 40

That, however I mocked it gayly,
And guessed at its hollowness,
Still shone, with each bursting bubble,
One star in my soul the less.

CITIES AND PARKS:

WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE NEW YORK CENTRAL PARK.

The first murderer was the first city-builder; and a good deal of murdering has been carried on in the interest of city-building ever since Cain's day. Narrow and crooked streets, want of proper sewerage and ventilation, the absence of forethought in providing open spaces for the recreation of the people, the allowance of intramural burials, and of fetid nuisances, such as slaughter-houses and manufactories of offensive stuffs, have converted cities into pestilential inclosures, and kept Jefferson's saying—"Great cities are great sores"—true in its most literal and mortifying sense.

There is some excuse for the crowded and irregular character of Old-World cities. They grew, and were not builded. Accumulations of people, who lighted like bees upon a chance branch, they found themselves hived in obdurate brick and mortar before they knew it; and then, to meet the necessities of their cribbed, cabined, and confined condition, they must tear down sacred landmarks, sacrifice invaluable possessions, and trample on prescriptive rights, to provide breathing-room for their gasping population. Besides, air, water, light, and cleanliness are modern innovations. The nose seems to have acquired its sensitiveness within a hundred years,—the lungs their objection to foul air, and the palate its disgust at ditch-water like the Thames, within a more recent period. Honestly dirty, and robustly indifferent to what mortally offends our squeamish senses, our happy ancestors fattened on carbonic acid gas, and took the exhalations of graveyards and gutters with a placidity of stomach that excites our physiological admiration. If they died, it was not for want of air. The pestilence carried, them off,—and that was a providential enemy, whose home-bred origin nobody suspected.

It must seem to foreigners of all things the strangest, that, in a country where land is sold at one dollar and twenty-five cents the acre by the square mile, there should in any considerable part of it be a want of room,—any necessity for crowding the population into pent-up cities,—any narrowness of streets, or want of commons and parks. And yet it is an undeniable truth that our American cities are all suffering the want of ample thoroughfares, destitute of adequate parks and commons, and too much crowded for health, convenience, or beauty. Boston has for its main street a serpentine lane, wide enough to drive the cows home from their pastures, but totally and almost fatally inadequate to be the great artery of a city of two hundred thousand people. Philadelphia is little better off with her narrow Chestnut Street, which purchases what accommodation it affords by admitting the parallel streets to nearly equal use, and thus

Page 41

sacrificing the very idea of a metropolitan thoroughfare, in which the splendor and motion and life of a metropolis ought to be concentrated. New York succeeds in making Broadway what the Toledo, the Strand, the Linden Strasse, the Italian Boulevards are; but the street is notoriously blocked and confused, and occasions more loss of time and temper and life and limb than would amply repay, once in five years, the widening of it to double its present breadth.

It is a great misfortune, that our commercial metropolis, the predestined home of five millions of people, should not have a single street worthy of the population, the wealth, the architectural ambition ready to fill and adorn it. Wholesale trade, bankers, brokers, and lawyers seek narrow streets. There must be swift communication between the opposite sides, and easy recognition of faces across the way. But retail trade requires no such conditions. The passers up and down on opposite sides of Broadway are as if in different streets, and neither expect to recognize each other nor to pass from one to the other without set effort. It took a good while to make Broad and Canal Streets attractive business-streets, and to get the importers and jobbers out of Pearl Street; but the work is now done. The Bowery affords the only remaining chance of building a magnificent metropolitan thoroughfare in New York; and we anticipate the day—when Broadway will surrender its pretensions to that now modest Cheapside. Already, about the confluence of the Third and Fourth Avenues at Eighth Street are congregated some of the chief institutions of the city,—the Bible House, the Cooper Institute, the Astor Library, the Mercantile Library. Farther down, the continuation of Canal Street affords the most commanding sites for future public edifices; while the neighborhoods of Franklin and Chatham Squares ought to be seized upon to embellish the city at imperial points with its finest architectural piles. The capacities of New York, below Union Square, for metropolitan splendor are entirely undeveloped; the best points are still occupied by comparatively worthless buildings, and the future will produce a now unlooked-for change in the whole character of that great district.

The huddling together of our American cities is due to the recentness of the time when space was our greatest enemy and sparseness our chief discouragement. Our founders hated room as much as a backwoods farmer hates trees. The protecting walls, which narrowed the ways and cramped the houses of the Old-World cities, did not put a severer compress upon them, than the disgust of solitude and the craving for “the sweet security of streets” threw about our city-builders. In the Western towns now, they carefully give a city air to their villages by crowding the few stores and houses of which they are composed into the likeliest appearance of an absolute scarcity of space.



Page 42

They labor unconsciously to look crowded, and would sooner go into a cellar to eat their oysters than have them in the finest saloon above ground. And so, if a peninsula like Boston, or a miniature Mesopotamia like New York, or a basin like Cincinnati, could be found to tuck away a town in, in which there was a decent chance of covering over the nakedness of the land within a thousand years, they rejoiced to seize on it and warm their shivering imaginations in the idea of the possible snugness which their distant posterity might enjoy.

Boston owes its only park worth naming—the celebrated Common—to the necessity of leaving a convenient cow-pasture for the babes and sucklings of that now mature community. Forty acres were certainly never more fortunately situated for their predestined service, nor more providentially rescued for the higher uses of man. May the memory of the weaning babes who pleaded for the spot where their “milky mothers” fed be ever sacred in our Athens, and may the cows of Boston be embalmed with the bulls of Egypt! A white heifer should be perpetually grazing, at her tether, in the shadow of the Great Elm. Would it be wholly unbecoming one born in full view of that lovely inclosure to suggest that the straightness of the lines in which the trees are planted on Boston Common, and the rapidly increasing thickness of their foliage, destroy in the summer season the effect of breadth and liberty, hide both the immediate and the distant landscape, stifle the breeze, and diminish the attractiveness of the spot? Fewer trees, scattered in clumps and paying little regard to paths, would vastly improve the effect. The colonnades of the malls furnish all the shade desirable in so small an inclosure.

For the most part, the proper laying-out of cities is both a matter of greater ease and greater importance in America than anywhere else. We are much in the condition of those old Scriptural worthies, of whom it could be so coolly said, “So he went and built a city,” as if it were a matter of not much greater account than “So he went and built a log-house.” Very likely some of those Biblical cities, extemporized so tersely, were not much more finished than those we now and then encounter in our Western and Southern tours, where a poor shed at four cross-roads is dignified with the title. We believe it was Samuel Dexter, the pattern of Webster, who, on hanging out his shingle in a New England village, where a tavern, a schoolhouse, a church, and a blacksmith’s shop constituted the whole settlement, gave as a reason, that, having to break into the world somewhere, he had chosen the weakest place. He would have tried a new Western city, had they then been in fashion, as a still softer spot in the social crust. But this rage for cities in America is prophetic. The name is a spell; and most of the sites, surveyed and distributed into town-lots with squares and parks staked out, are only a century before their time, and will redound to the



Page 43

future credit, however fatal to the immediate cash of their projectors. Who can doubt that Cairo of Illinois—the standing joke of tourists, (and the standing-water of the Ohio and Mississippi,) though no joke to its founders—will one day rival its Egyptian prototype? America runs to cities, and particularly in its Northern latitudes. As cities have been the nurses of democratic institutions and ideas, democratic nations, for very obvious reasons, tend to produce them. They are the natural fruits of a democracy. And with no people are great cities so important, or likely to be so increasingly populous, as with a great agricultural and commercial nation like our own, covered with a free and equal population. The vast wealth of such a people, evenly distributed, and prevented from over-accumulation in special families by the absence of primogeniture and entail,—their general education and refined tastes,—the intense community of ideas, through the all-pervading influence of a daily press reaching with simultaneous diffusion over thousands of square miles,—the facilities of locomotion,—all inevitably cooperate with commercial necessities to create great cities,—not merely as the homes of the mercantile and wealthy class, but as centres where the leisure, the tastes, the pride, and the wants of the people at large repair more and more for satisfaction. Free populations, educated in public schools and with an open career for all, soon instinctively settle the high economies of life.

Many observers have ascribed the rapid change which for twenty years past has been going on in the relative character of towns and villages on the one hand, and cities on the other, to the mere operation of the railroad-system. But that system itself grew out of higher instincts. Equal communities demand equal privileges and advantages. They tend to produce a common level. The country does not acquiesce in the superiority of the city in manners, comforts, or luxuries. It demands a market at its door,—first-rate men for its advisers in all medical, legal, moral, and political matters. It demands for itself the amusements, the refinements, the privileges of the city. This is to be brought about only by the application, at any cost, of the most immediate methods of communication with the city; and behold our railroad system,—the Briarean shaking of hands which the country gives the city! The growth of this system is a curious commentary on the purely mercenary policy which is ordinarily supposed to govern the investments of capital. The railroads of the United States are as much the products of social rivalries and the fruits of an ineradicable democratic instinct for popularizing all advantages, as of any commercial emulation. The people have willingly bandaged their own eyes, and allowed themselves to believe a profitable investment was made, because their inclinations were so determined to have the roads, profitable or not. Their wives and daughters *would* shop in the city; the choicest sights and sounds were there; there concentrated themselves the intellectual and moral lights; there were the representative splendors of the state or nation;—and a swift access to them was essential to true equality and self-respect.

Page 44

One does not need to be a graybeard to recall the time when every county-town in New England had, because it needs must have, its first rate lawyer, its distinguished surgeon, its comprehensive business-man,—and when a fixed and unchanging population gave to our villages a more solid and a more elegant air than they now possess. The Connecticut river-villages, with a considerable increase in population, and a vast improvement in the general character of the dwellings, have nevertheless lost their most characterizing features,—the large and dignified residences of their founders, and the presence of the once able and widely known men that were identified with their local importance and pride. The railroads have concentrated the ability of all the professions in the cities, and carried thither the wealth of all the old families. To them, and not to the county-town, repair the people for advice in all critical matters, for supplies in all important purchases, for all their rarest pleasures, and all their most prized and memorable opportunities.

Cities, and the immediate neighborhood of cities, are rapidly becoming the chosen residences of the enterprising, successful, and intelligent. As might be supposed, the movement works both ways: the locomotive facilities carry citizens into the country, as well as countrymen into the city. But those who have once tasted the city are never wholly weaned from it, and every citizen who moves into a village-community sends two countrymen back to take his place. He infects the country with civic tastes, and acts as a great conductor between the town and the country. It is apparent, too, that the experience of ten years, during which some strong reaction upon the centripetal tendencies of the previous ten years drove many of the wealthy and the self-supposed lovers of quietude and space into the country, has dispersed several very natural prejudices, and returned the larger part of the truants to their original ways. One of these prejudices was, that our ordinary Northern climate was as favorable to the outdoor habits of the leisurely class as the English climate; whereas, besides not having a leisurely class, and never being destined to have any, under our wise wealth-distributing customs, and not having any out-door habits, which grow up only on estates and on hereditary fortunes, experience has convinced most who have tried it that we have only six months when out-of-doors allows any comfort, health, or pleasure away from the city. The roads are sloughs; side-walks are wanting; shelter is gone with the leaves; non-intercourse is proclaimed; companionship cannot be found; leisure is a drug; books grow stupid; the country is a stupendous bore. Another prejudice was the anticipated economy of the country. This has turned out to be, as might have been expected, an economy to those who fall in with its ways, which citizens are wholly inapt and unprepared to do. It is very economical not to want city comforts and



Page 45

conveniences. But it proves more expensive to those who go into the country to want them there than it did to have them where they abound. They are not to be had in the country at any price,—water, gas, fuel, food, attendance, amusement, locomotion in all weathers; but such a moderate measure of them as a city-bred family cannot live without involves so great an expense, that the expected economy of life in the country to those not actually brought up there turns out a delusion. The expensiveness of life in the city comes of the generous and grand scale on which it there proceeds, not from the superior cost of the necessaries or comforts of life. They are undoubtedly cheaper in the city, all things considered, than anywhere in the country. Where everything is to be had, in the smallest or the largest quantities,—where every form of service can be commanded at a moment's notice,—where the wit, skill, competition of a country are concentrated upon the furnishing of all commodities at the most taking rates,—there prices will, of course, be most reasonable; and the expensiveness of such communities, we repeat, is entirely due to the abundant wealth which makes such enormous demands and secures such various comforts and luxuries;—in short, it is the high standard of living, not the cost of the necessaries of life. This high standard is, of course, an evil to those whose social ambition drives them to a rivalry for which they are not prepared. But no special pity is due to hardships self-imposed by pride and folly. The probability is, that, proportioned to their income from labor, the cost of living in the city, for the bulk of its population, is lighter, their degree of comfort considered, than in the country. And for the wealthy class of society, no doubt, on the whole, economy is served by living in the city. Our most expensive class is that which lives in the country after the manner of the city.

A literary man, of talents and thorough respectability, lately informed us, that, after trying all places, cities, villages, farmhouses, boarding-houses, hotels, taverns, he had discovered that keeping house in New York was the cheapest way to live,—vastly the cheapest, if the amount of convenience and comfort was considered,—and absolutely cheapest in fact. To be sure, being a bachelor, his housekeeping was done in a single room, the back-room of a third-story, in a respectable and convenient house and neighborhood. His rent was ninety-six dollars a year. His expenses of every other kind, (clothing excepted,) one dollar a week. He could not get his chop or steak cooked well enough, nor his coffee made right, until he took them in hand himself,—nor his bed made, nor his room cleaned. His conveniences were incredibly great. He cooked by alcohol, and expected to warm himself the winter through on two gallons of alcohol at seventy-five cents a gallon. This admirable housekeeping is equalled in economy only by that of a millionaire, a New-Yorker, and a bachelor also, whose accounts, all accurately kept by his own hand, showed, after death, that (1st) his own living, (2d) his support of religion, (3d) his charities, (4th) his gifts to a favorite niece, had not averaged, for twenty years, over five hundred dollars. Truly, the city is a cheap place to live in, for those who know how! And what place is cheap for those who do not?

Page 46

Contrary to the old notion, the more accurate statistics of recent times have proved the city, as compared with the country, the more healthy, the more moral, and the more religious place. What used to be considered the great superiority of the country—hardship, absence of social excitements and public amusements, simple food, freedom from moral exposure—a better knowledge of the human constitution, considered either physically or morally, has shown to be decidedly opposed to health and virtue. More constitutions are broken down in the hardening process than survive and profit by it. Cold houses, coarse food unskilfully cooked, long winters, harsh springs, however favorable to the heroism of the stomach, the lungs, and the spirits, are not found conducive to longevity. In like manner, monotony, seclusion, lack of variety and of social stimulus lower the tone of humanity, drive to sensual pleasures and secret vices, and nourish a miserable pack of mean and degrading immoralities, of which scandal, gossip, backbiting, tale-bearing are the better examples.

In the Old World, the wealth of states is freely expended in the embellishment of their capitals. It is well understood, not only that loyalty is never more economically secured than by a lavish appeal to the pride of the citizen in the magnificence of the public buildings and grounds which he identifies with his nationality, but that popular restlessness is exhaled and dangerous passions drained off in the roominess which parks and gardens afford the common people. In the New World, it has not yet proved necessary to provide against popular discontents or to bribe popular patriotism with spectacles and state-parade; and if it were so, there is no government with an interest of its own separate from that of the people to adopt this policy. It has therefore been concluded that democratic institutions must necessarily lack splendor and great public provision for the gratification of the aesthetic tastes or the indulgence of the leisure of the common people. The people being, then, our sovereigns, it has not been felt that they would or could have the largeness of view, the foresight, the sympathy with leisure, elegance, and ease, to provide liberally and expensively for their own recreation and refreshment. A bald utility has been the anticipated genius of our public policy. Our national Mercury was to be simply the god of the post-office, or the sprite of the barometer,—our Pan, to keep the crows from the corn-fields,—our Muses, to preside over district-schools. It begins now to appear that the people are not likely to think anything too good for themselves, or to higgler about the expense of whatever ministers largely to their tastes and fancies,—that political freedom, popular education, the circulation of newspapers, books, engravings, pictures, have already created a public which understands that man does not live by bread alone,—which demands leisure, beauty, space, architecture, landscape, music, elegance, with



Page 47

an imperative voice, and is ready to back its demands with the necessary self-taxation. This experience our absolute faith in free institutions enabled us to anticipate as the inevitable result of our political system; but let us confess that the rapidity with which it has developed itself has taken us by surprise. We knew, that, when the people truly realized their sovereignty, they would claim not only the utilitarian, but the artistic and munificent attributes of their throne,—and that all the splendors and decorations, all the provisions for leisure, taste, and recreation, which kings and courts have made, would be found to be mere preludes and rehearsals to the grander arrangements and achievements of the vastly richer and more legitimate sovereign, the People, when he understood his own right and duty. As dynasties and thrones have been predictions of the royalty of the people, so old courts and old capitals, with all their pomp and circumstance, their parks and gardens, galleries and statues, are but dim prefigurings of the glories of architecture, the grandeur of the grounds, the splendor and richness of the museums and conservatories with which the people will finally crown their own self-respect and decorate their own majesty. But we did not expect to see this sure prophecy turning itself into history in our day. We thought the people were too busy with the spade and the quill to care for any other sceptres at present. But it is now plain that they have been dreaming princely dreams and thinking royal thoughts all the while, and are now ready to put them into costly expression.

Passing by all other evidences of this, we come at once to the most majestic and indisputable witness of this fact, the actual existence of the Central Park in New York,—the most striking evidence of the sovereignty of the people yet afforded in the history of free institutions,—the best answer yet given to the doubts and fears which have frowned on the theory of self-government,—the first grand proof that the people do not mean to give up the advantages and victories of aristocratic governments, in maintaining a popular one, but to engraft the energy, foresight, and liberality of concentrated powers upon democratic ideas, and keep all that has adorned and improved the past, while abandoning what has impaired and disgraced it. That the American people appreciate and are ready to support what is most elegant, refined, and beautiful in the greatest capitals of Europe,—that they value and intend to provide the largest and most costly opportunities for the enjoyment of their own leisure, artistic tastes, and rural instincts, is emphatically declared in the history, progress, and manifest destiny of the Central Park; while their competency to use wisely, to enjoy peacefully, to protect sacredly, and to improve industriously the expensive, exposed, and elegant pleasure-ground they have devised, is proved with redundant testimony by the year and more

Page 48

of experience we have had in the use of the Park, under circumstances far less favorable than any that can ever again arise. As a test of the ability of the people to know their own higher wants, of the power of their artistic instincts, their docility to the counsels of their most judicious representatives, their superiority to petty economies, their strength to resist the natural opposition of heavy tax-payers to expensive public works, their gentleness and amenableness to just authority in the pursuit of their pleasures, of their susceptibility to the softening influences of elegance and beauty, of their honest pride and rejoicing in their own splendor, of their superior fondness for what is innocent and elevating over what is base and degrading, when brought within equal reach, the Central Park has already afforded most encouraging, nay, most decisive proof.

The Central Park is an anomaly to those who have not deeply studied the tendencies of popular governments. It is a royal work, undertaken and achieved by the Democracy,—surprising equally themselves and their skeptical friends at home and abroad,—and developing, both in its creation and growth, in its use and application, new and almost incredible tastes, aptitudes, capacities, and powers in the people themselves. That the people should be capable of the magnanimity of laying down their authority, when necessary to concentrate it in the hands of energetic and responsible trustees requiring large powers,—that they should be willing to tax themselves heavily for the benefit of future generations,—that they should be wise enough to distrust their own judgment and defer modestly to the counsels of experts,—that they should be in favor of the most solid and substantial work,—that they should be willing to have the better half of their money under ground and out of sight, invested in drains and foundations of roads,—that they should acquiesce cheerfully in all the restrictions necessary to the achievement of the work, while admitted freely to the use and enjoyment of its inchoate processes,—that their conduct and manners should prove so unexceptionable,—their disposition to trespass upon strict rules so small,—their use and improvement of the work so free, so easy, and so immediately justificatory of all the cost of so generous and grand an enterprise: these things throw light and cheer upon the prospects of popular institutions, at a period when they are seriously clouded from other quarters.

We do not propose to enter into any description of the Central Park. Those who have not already visited it will find a description, accompanying a study for the plan submitted for competition in 1858, by Messrs. Olmsted and Vaux, and published among the Documents of the New York Senate, which will satisfy their utmost expectations. We wish merely to throw out some replies to the leading objections we have met in the papers and other quarters to the plan itself. We need hardly say that the Central Park



Page 49

requires no advocate and no defence. Its great proprietor, the Public, is perfectly satisfied with his purchase and his agents. He thinks himself providentially guided in the choice of his Superintendent, and does not vainly pique himself upon his sagacity in selecting Mr. Frederick Law Olmsted for the post. This gentleman, in his place, offsets at least a thousand square plugs in round holes. He is precisely the man for the place, —and that is precisely the place for the man. Among final causes, it would be difficult not to assign the Central Park as the reason of his existence. To fill the duties of his office as he has filled them,—to prove himself equally competent as original designer, patient executor, potent disciplinarian, and model police-officer,—to enforce a method, precision, and strictness, equally marked in the workmanship, in the accounts, and in the police of the Park,—to be equally studious of the highest possible use and enjoyment of the work by the public of to-day, and of the prospects and privileges of the coming generations,—to sympathize with the outside people, while in the closest fellowship with the inside,—to make himself equally the favorite and friend of the people and of the workmen: this proves an original adaptation, most carefully improved, which we seriously believe not capable of being paralleled in any other public work, of similar magnitude, ever undertaken. The union of prosaic sense with poetical feeling, of democratic sympathies with refined and scholarly tastes, of punctilious respect for facts with tender hospitality for ideas, has enabled him to appreciate and embody, both in the conception and execution of the Park, the beau-ideal of a people's pleasure-ground. If he had not borne, as an agriculturist, and as the keenest, most candid, and instructive of all our writers on the moral and political economy of our American Slavery, a name to be long remembered, he might safely trust his reputation to the keeping of New York city and all her successive citizens, as the author and achiever of the Central Park,—which, when completed, will prove, we are confident, the most splendid, satisfactory, and popular park in the world.

Two grand assumptions have controlled the design from the inception.

First, That the Park would be the only park deserving the name, for a town of twice or thrice the present population of New York; that this town would be built compactly around it (and in this respect of centrality it would differ from any extant metropolitan park of magnitude); and that it would be a town of greater wealth and more luxurious demands than any now existing.

Second, That, while in harmony with the luxury of the rich, the Park should and would be used more than any existing park by people of moderate wealth and by poor people, and that its use by these people must be made safe, convenient, agreeable; that they must be expected to have a pride and pleasure in using it rightly, in cherishing and protecting it against all causes of injury and dilapidation, and that this is to be provided for and encouraged.



Page 50

A want of appreciation of the first assumption is the cause of all sincere criticism against the Transverse Roads. Some engineers originally pronounced them impracticable of construction; but all their grounds of apprehension have been removed by the construction of two of them, especially by the completion of the tunnel under Vista Rock, and below the foundation of the Reservoir embankment and wall. They were planned for the future; they are being built solidly, massively, permanently, for the future. Less thoroughly and expensively constructed, they would need to be rebuilt in the future at enormously increased cost, and with great interruption to the use of the Park; and the grounds in their vicinity, losing the advantage of age, would need to be remodelled and remade. An engineer, visiting the Park for the first time, and hearing the criticism to which we refer applied to the walls and bridges of the Transverse Roads, observed,—“People in this country are so unaccustomed to see genuine substantial work, they do not know what it means when they meet with it.” We think he did not do the people justice.

The Transverse Roads passing through the Park will not be seen from it; and although they will not be, when deep in the shadow of the overhanging bridges and groves, without a very grand beauty, this will be the beauty of utility and of permanence, not of imaginative grace. The various bridges and archways of the Park proper, while equally thorough in their mode of construction, and consequently expensive, are in all cases embellished each with special decorations in form and color. These decorations have the same quality of substantiality and thorough good workmanship. Note the clean under-cutting of the leaves, (of which there are more than fifty different forms in the decorations of the Terrace arch,) and their consequent sharp and expressive shadows. Admitting the need of these structures, and the economy of a method of construction which would render them permanent, the additional cost of their permanent decoration in this way could not have been rationally grudged.

Regard for the distant future has likewise controlled the planting; and the Commissioners, in so far as they have resisted the clamor of the day, that the Park must be immediately shaded, have done wisely. Every horticulturist knows that this immediate shade would be purchased at an expense of dwarfed, diseased, and deformed trees, with stunted shade, in the future. No man has planted large and small trees together without regretting the former within twenty years. The same consideration answers an objection which has been made, that the trees are too much arranged in masses of color. Imagine a growth of twenty years, with the proper thinnings, and most of these masses will resolve each into one tree, singled out, as the best individual of its mass, to remain. There is a large scale in the planting, as in everything else.

Page 51

Regard to the convenience, comfort, and safety of those who cannot afford to visit the Park in carriages has led to an unusual extent and variety of character in the walks, and also to a peculiar arrangement by which they are carried in many instances beneath and across the line of the carriage-roads. Thus access can be had by pedestrians to all parts of the Park at times when the roads are thronged with vehicles, without any delays or dangers in crossing the roads, and without the humiliation to sensitive democrats of being spattered or dusted, or looked down upon from luxurious equipages.

The great irregularity of the surface offers facilities for this purpose,—the walks being carried through the heads of valleys which are crossed by the carriage-ways upon arches of masonry. Now with regard to these archways, if no purposes of convenience were to be served by them, the Park would not, we may admit, be beautified by them. But we assume that the population of New York is to be doubled; that, when it is so, if not sooner, the walks and drives of the Park will often be densely thronged; and, for the comfort of the people, when that shall be the case, we consider that these archways will be absolutely necessary.[A] Assuming further, then, that they are to be built, and, if ever, built now,—since it would involve an entirely new-modelling of the Park to introduce them in the future,—it was necessary to pay some attention to make them agreeable and unmonotonous objects, or the general impression of ease, freedom, and variety would be interfered with very materially. It is not to make the Park architectural, as is commonly supposed, that various and somewhat expensive *design* is introduced; on the contrary, it is the intention to plant closely in the vicinity of all the arches, so that they may be unnoticed in the general effect, and be seen only just at the time they are being used, when, of course, they must come under notice. The charge is made, that the features of the natural landscape have been disregarded in the plan. To which we answer, that on the ground of the Lower Park there was originally no landscape, in the artistic sense. There were hills, and hillocks, and rocks, and swampy valleys. It would have been easy to flood the swamps into ponds, to clothe the hillocks with grass and the hills with foliage, and leave the rocks each unscathed in its picturesqueness. And this would have been a great improvement; yet there would be no landscape: there would be an unassociated succession of objects,—many nice “bits” of scenery, appropriate to a villa-garden or to an artist’s sketch-book, but no scenery such as an artist arranges for his broad canvas, no composition, no *park-like* prospect. It would have afforded a good place for loitering; but if this were all that was desirable, forty acres would have done as well as a thousand, as is shown in the Ramble. Space, breadth, objects in the distance, clear in outline, but obscure, mysterious, exciting curiosity, in their detail, were wanting.



Page 52

[Footnote A: The length of roads, walks, etc., completed, will be found in the last Annual Report, pp. 47-52.

The length of the famous drive in Hyde Park (the King Road) is 2 1/2 miles. There is another road, straight between two gates, 1 1/4 miles in length. "Rotten Bow" (the Ride) is a trifle over a mile in length.

The length of Drive in Central Park will be 9 1/3 miles; the length of Bridle Roads, 5 1/3 miles; the length of Walks, 20 miles.

Ten miles of walk, gravelled and substantially underlaid, are now finished.

Eighteen archways are planned, beside those of the Transverse Roads, equal 1 to 46 acres. When the planting is well-grown, no two of the archways will be visible from the same point.]

To their supply there were hard limitations. On each side, within half a mile of each other, there were to be lines of stone and brick houses, cutting off any great lateral distance. Suppose one to have entered the Park at the south end, and to have moved far enough within it to dispossess his mind of the sentiments of the streets: he will have threaded his way between hillocks and rocks, one after another, differing in magnitude, but never opening a landscape having breadth or distance. He ascends a hill and looks northward: the most distant object is the hard, straight, horizontal line of the stone wall of the Reservoir, flanked on one side by the peak of Vista Rock. It is a little over a mile distant,—but, standing clear out against the horizon, appears much less than that. Hide it with foliage, as well as the houses right and left, and the limitation of distance is a mile in front and a quarter of a mile upon each side. Low hills or ridges of rock in a great degree cut off the intermediate ground from view: cross these, and the same unassociated succession of objects might be visited, but no one of them would have engaged the visitor's attention and attracted him onward from a distance. The plan has evidently been to make a selection of the natural features to form the leading ideas of the new scenery, to magnify the most important quality of each of these, and to remove or tone down all the irregularities of the ground between them, and by all means to make the limit of vision undefined and obscure. Thus, in the central portion of the Lower Park the low grounds have been generally filled, and the high grounds reduced; but the two largest areas of low ground have been excavated, the excavation being carried laterally into the hills as far as was possible, without extravagant removal of rock, and the earth obtained transferred to higher ground connecting hillocks with hills. Excavations have also been made about the base of all the more remarkable ledges and peaks of rock, while additional material has been conveyed to their sides and summits to increase their size and dignity.

Page 53

This general rule of the plan was calculated to give, in the first place, breadth, and, in the second, emphasis, to any general prospect of the Park. A want of unity, or rather, if we may use the word, of assemblage, belonged to the ground; and it must have been one of the first problems to establish some one conspicuous, salient idea which should take the lead in the composition, and about which all minor features should seem naturally to group as accessories. The straight, evidently artificial, and hence distinctive and notable, Mall, with its terminating Terrace, was the resolution of this problem. It will be, when the trees are fully grown, a feature of the requisite importance, —and will serve the further purpose of opening the view toward, and, as it were, framing and keeping attention directed upon, Vista Rock, which from the southern end of the Mall is the most distant object that can be brought into view.

For the same purpose, evidently, it was thought desirable to insist, as far as possible, upon a pause at the point where, to the visitor proceeding northward, the whole hill-side and glen before Vista Rock first came under view, and where an effect of distance in that direction was yet attainable. This is provided for by the Terrace, with its several stairs and stages, and temptations to linger and rest. The introduction of the Lake to the northward of the Terrace also obliges a diversion from the direct line of proceeding; the visitor's attention is henceforth directed laterally, or held by local objects, until at length by a circuitous route he reaches and ascends (if he chooses) the summit of Vista Rock, when a new landscape of entirely different character, and one not within our control, is opened to him. Thus the apparent distance of Vista Rock from the lower part of the Park (which is increased by means which we have not thought it necessary to describe) is not falsified by any experience of the visitor in his subsequent journey to it.

There was a fine and completely natural landscape in the Upper Park. The plan only simplifies it,—removing and modifying those objects which were incongruous with its best predominating character, and here and there adding emphasis or shadow.

The Park (with the extension) is two and three quarter miles in length and nearly half a mile wide. It contains 843 acres, including the Reservoir (136 acres).

Original cost of land to 106th Street, \$5,444,369.90
Of this, assessed on adjoining property, 1,657,590.00

To be paid by corporation direct, 3,786,779.90
Assessed value of extension land, (106th to 110th,) 1,400,000.00

Total cost of land, \$6,800,000.00[B]

[Footnote B: The amount thus far expended in construction and maintenance is nearly \$3,000,000. The plan upon which the work is proceeding will require a further expenditure of \$1,600,000. The expenditure is not squandered. Much the larger part of it is paid for day-labor. Account with laborers is kept by the hour, the rate of wages

being scarcely above the lowest contractor's rates, and 30 per cent. below the rate of other public works of the city; always paid directly into the laborer's hands,—in specie, however.



Page 54

The thorough government of the work, and the general efficiency of its direction, are indicated by the remarkable good order and absence of “accidents” which have characterized it. See p. 64 of Annual Report, 1860. For some particulars of cost, see pp. 61, 62, of same Report.]

In all European parks, there is more or less land the only use of which is to give a greater length to the roads which pass around it,—it being out of sight, and, in American phrase, unimproved. There is not an acre of land in Central Park, which, if not wanted for Park purposes, would not sell for at least as much as the land surrounding the Park and beyond its limits,—that is to say, for at least \$60,000, the legal annual interest of which is \$4,200. This would be the ratio of the annual waste of property in the case of any land not put to use; but, in elaborating the plan, care has been taken that no part of the Park should be without its special advantages, attractions, or valuable uses, and that these should as far as possible be made immediately available to the public.

The comprehensiveness of purpose and the variety of detail of the plan far exceed those of any other park in the world, and have involved, and continue to involve, a greater amount of study and invention than has ever before been given to a park. A consideration of this should enforce an unusually careful method of maintenance, both in the gardening and police departments. Sweeping with a broom of brush-wood once a week is well enough for a hovel; but the floors of a palace must needs be daily waxed and polished, to justify their original cost. We are unused to thorough gardening in this country. There are not in all the United States a dozen lawns or grass-plots so well kept as the majority of tradesmen’s door-yards in England or Holland. Few of our citizens have ever seen a really well-kept ground. During the last summer, much of the Park was in a state of which the Superintendent professed himself to be ashamed; but it caused not the slightest comment with the public, so far as we heard. As nearly all men in office, who have not a personal taste to satisfy, are well content, if they succeed in satisfying the public, we fear the Superintendent will be forced to “economize” on the keeping of the Park, as he was the past year, to a degree which will be as far from true economy as the cleaning of mosaic floors with birch brooms. The Park is laid out in a manner which assumes and requires cleanly and orderly habits in those who use it; much of its good quality will be lost, if it be not very neatly kept; and such negligence in the keeping will tend to negligence in the using.

In the plan, there is taken for granted a generally good inclination, a cleanly, temperate, orderly disposition, on the part of the public which is to frequent the Park, and finally to be the governors of its keeping, and a good, well-disposed, and well-disciplined police force, who would, in spite of “the inabilities of a republic,” adequately control the cases exceptional to the assumed general good habits of that public,—at the same time neglecting no precaution to facilitate the convenient enforcement of the laws, and reduce the temptation to disorderly practices to a minimum.



Page 55

How thoroughly justified has been this confidence in the people, taking into account the novelty of a good public ground, of cleanliness in our public places, and indeed the novelty of the whole undertaking, we have already intimated. How much the privileges of the Park in its present incomplete condition are appreciated, and how generally the requirements of order are satisfied, the following summary, compiled from the Park-keeper's reports of the first summer's use after the roads of the Lower Park were opened, will inadequately show.

Number of visitors in six months. Foot. Saddle. Carriages.

May, 184,450 8,017 26,500

June, 294,300 9,050 31,300

July, 71,035 2,710 4,945

August, 63,800 875 14,905

September, 47,433 2,645 20,708

October, 160,187 3,014 26,813

Usual number of visitors on a
fine summer's day, 2,000 90 1,200

Usual number of visitors on a
fine Sunday, 35,000 60 1,500

(Men 20,000, Women 13,000, Children 2,000.)

Sunday, May 29, entrances counted, 75,000 120 3,200

Usual number of visitors,
fine Concert day, 7,500 180 2,500
Saturday, Sept. 22, (Concert day,
entrances counted, 13,000 225 4,650

During this time, (six months,) but thirty persons were detected upon the Park tipsy. Of these, twenty-four were sufficiently drunk to justify their arrest,—the remainder going quietly off the grounds, when requested to do so. That is to say, it is not oftener than once a week that a man is observed to be the worse for liquor while on the Park; and this, while three to four thousand laboring men are at work within it, are paid upon it, and grog-shops for their accommodation are all along its boundaries. In other words, about one in thirty thousand of the visitors to the Park has been under the influence of drink when induced to visit it.

On Christmas and New-Year's Days, it was estimated by many experienced reporters that over 100,000 persons, each day, were on the Park, generally in a frolicsome mood. Of these, but one (a small boy) was observed by the keepers to be drunk; there was not an instance of quarrelling, and no disorderly conduct, except a generally good-natured resistance to the efforts of the police to maintain safety on the ice.

The Bloomingdale Road and Harlem Lane, two famous trotting-courses, where several hundred famously fast horses may be seen at the top of their speed any fine afternoon, both touch an entrance to the Park. The Park roads are, of course, vastly attractive to

the trotters, and for a few weeks there were daily instances of fast driving there: as soon, however, as the law and custom of the Park, restricting speed

Page 56

to a moderate rate, could be made generally understood, fast driving became very rare, —more so, probably, than in Hyde Park or the Bois de Boulogne. As far as possible, an arrest has been made in every case of intentionally fast driving observed by the keepers: those arrested number less than one to ten thousand of the vehicles entering the Park for pleasure-driving. In each case a fine (usually three dollars) has been imposed by the magistrate.

In six months there have been sixty-four arrests for all sorts of “disorderly conduct,” including walking on the grass after being requested to quit it, quarrelling, firing crackers, *etc.*,—one in eighteen thousand visitors. So thoroughly established is the good conduct of people on the Park, that many ladies walk daily in the Ramble without attendance.

A protest, as already intimated, is occasionally made against the completeness of detail to which the Commissioners are disposed to carry their work, on the ground that the habits of the masses of our city-population are ill-calculated for its appreciation, and that loss and damage to expensive work must often be the result. To which we would answer, that, if the authorities of the city hitherto have so far misapprehended or neglected their duty as to allow a large industrious population to continue so long without the opportunity for public recreations that it has grown up ignorant of the rights and duties appertaining to the general use of a well-kept pleasure-ground, any losses of the kind apprehended, which may in consequence occur, should be cheerfully borne as a necessary part of the responsibility of a good government. Experience thus far, however, does not justify these apprehensions.

To collect exact evidence showing that the Park is already exercising a good influence upon the character of the people is not in the nature of the case practicable. It has been observed that rude, noisy fellows, after entering the more advanced or finished parts of the Park, become hushed, moderate, and careful. Observing the generally tranquil and pleased expression, and the quiet, sauntering movement, the frequent exclamations of pleasure in the general view or in the sight of some special object of natural beauty, on the part of the crowds of idlers in the Ramble on a Sunday afternoon, and recollecting the totally opposite character of feeling, thought, purpose, and sentiment which is expressed by a crowd assembled anywhere else, especially in the public streets of the city, the conviction cannot well be avoided that the Park already exercises a beneficent influence of no inconsiderable value, and of a kind which could have been gained in no other way. We speak of Sunday afternoons and of a crowd; but the Park evidently does induce many a poor family, and many a poor seamstress and journeyman, to take a day or a half-day from the working-time of the week, to the end of retaining their youth and their youthful relations with purer Nature, and to their gain in



Page 57

strength, good-humor, safe citizenship, and—if the economists must be satisfied—money-value to the commonwealth. Already, too, there are several thousand men, women, and children who resort to the Park habitually: some daily, before business or after business, and women and children at regular hours during the day; some weekly; and some at irregular, but certain frequent chances of their business. Mr. Astor, when in town, rarely misses his daily ride; nor Mr. Bancroft; Mr. Mayor Harper never his drive. And there are certain working-men with their families equally sure to be met walking on Sunday morning or Sunday afternoon; others on Saturday. The number of these *habitués* constantly increases. When we meet those who depend on the Park as on the butcher and the omnibus, and the thousands who are again drawn by whatever impulse and suggestion of the hour, we often ask, What would they have done, where would they have been, to what sort of recreation would they have turned, *if to any*, had there been no park? Of one sort the answer is supplied by the keeper of a certain saloon, who came to the Park, as he said, to see his old Sunday customers. The enjoyment of the ice had made them forget their grog.

Six or seven years ago, an opposition brought down the prices and quadrupled the accommodations of the Staten Island ferry-boats. Clifton Park and numerous German gardens were opened; and the consequence was described, in common phrase, as the transformation of a portion of the island, on Sunday, to a Pandemonium. We thought we would, like Dante, have a cool look at it. We had read so much about it, and heard it talked about and preached about so much, that we were greatly surprised to find the throng upon the sidewalks quite as orderly and a great deal more evidently good-natured than any we ever saw before in the United States. We spent some time in what we had been led to suppose the hottest place, Clifton Park, in which there was a band of music and several thousand persons, chiefly Germans, though with a good sprinkling of Irish servant-girls with their lovers and brothers, with beer and ices; but we saw no rudeness, and no more impropriety, no more excitement, no more (week-day) sin, than we had seen at the church in the morning. Every face, however, was foreign. By-and-by came in three Americans, talking loudly, moving rudely, proclaiming contempt for “lager” and yelling for “liquor,” bantering and offering fight, joking coarsely, profane, noisy, demonstrative in any and every way, to the end of attracting attention to themselves, and proclaiming that they were “on a spree” and highly excited. They could not keep it up; they became awkward, ill at ease, and at length silent, standing looking about them in stupid wonder. Evidently they could not understand what it meant: people drinking, smoking in public, on Sunday, and yet not excited, not trying to make it a spree. It was not comprehensible. We ascertained that one of the ferry-boat bars had disposed



Page 58

of an enormous stock of lemonade, ginger-beer, and soda-water before three o'clock, —but, till this was all gone, not half a dozen glasses of intoxicating drinks. We saw no quarrelling, no drunkenness, and nothing like the fearful disorder which had been described,—with a few such exceptions as we have mentioned of native Americans who had no conception of enjoyment free from bodily excitement.

To teach and induce habits of orderly, tranquil, contemplative, or social amusement, moderate exercises and recreation, soothing to the nerves, has been the most needed “mission” for New York. We think we see daily evidence that the Park accomplishes not a little in this way. Unfortunately, the evidence is not of a character to be expressed in Federal currency, else the Commissioners would not be hesitating about taking the ground from One-Hundred-and-Sixth to One-Hundred-and-Tenth Street, because it is to cost half a million more than was anticipated. What the Park is worth to us to-day is, we trust, but a trifle to what it will be worth when the bulk of our hard-working people, of our over-anxious Marthas, and our gutter-skating children shall live nearer to it, and more generally understand what it offers them,—when its play-grounds are ready, its walks more shaded,—when cheap and wholesome meals, to the saving, occasionally, of the dreary housewife’s daily pottering, are to be had upon it,—when its system of cheap cabs shall have been successfully inaugurated,—and when a daily discourse of sweet sounds shall have been made an essential part of its functions in the body-politic.

We shall not probably live to see “the gentility of Sir Philip Sidney made universal,” but we do hope that we shall live to know many residents of towns of ten thousand population who will be ashamed to subscribe for the building of new churches while no public play-ground is being prepared for their people.

LIFE IN THE IRON-MILLS.

“Is this the end?
O Life, as futile, then, as frail!
What hope of answer or redress?”

A cloudy day: do you know what that is in a town of iron-works? The sky sank down before dawn, muddy, flat, immovable. The air is thick, clammy with the breath of crowded human beings. It stifles me. I open the window, and, looking out, can scarcely see through the rain the grocer’s shop opposite, where a crowd of drunken Irishmen are puffing Lynchburg tobacco in their pipes. I can detect the scent through all the foul smells ranging loose in the air.

The idiosyncrasy of this town is smoke. It rolls sullenly in slow folds from the great chimneys of the iron-foundries, and settles down in black, slimy pools on the muddy



streets. Smoke on the wharves, smoke on the dingy boats, on the yellow river,—clinging in a coating of greasy soot to the house-front, the two faded poplars, the faces of the passers-by. The long train of mules, dragging masses of pig-iron through the narrow street, have a foul vapor hanging to their reeking sides. Here, inside, is a little broken figure of an angel pointing upward from the mantel-shelf; but even its wings are covered with smoke, clotted and black. Smoke everywhere! A dirty canary chirps desolately in a cage beside me. Its dream of green fields and sunshine is a very old dream,—almost worn out, I think.



Page 59

From the back-window I can see a narrow brick-yard sloping down to the river-side, strewn with rain-butts and tubs. The river, dull and tawny-colored, (*la belle riviere!*) drags itself sluggishly along, tired of the heavy weight of boats and coal-barges. What wonder? When I was a child, I used to fancy a look of weary, dumb appeal upon the face of the negro-like river slavishly bearing its burden day after day. Something of the same idle notion comes to me to-day, when from the street-window I look on the slow stream of human life creeping past, night and morning, to the great mills. Masses of men, with dull, besotted faces bent to the ground, sharpened here and there by pain or cunning; skin and muscle and flesh begrimed with smoke and ashes; stooping all night over boiling caldrons of metal, laired by day in dens of drunkenness and infamy; breathing from infancy to death an air saturated with fog and grease and soot, vileness for soul and body. What do you make of a case like that, amateur psychologist? You call it an altogether serious thing to be alive: to these men it is a drunken jest, a joke,—horrible to angels perhaps, to them commonplace enough. My fancy about the river was an idle one: it is no type of such a life. What if it be stagnant and slimy here? It knows that beyond there waits for it odorous sunlight,—quaint old gardens, dusky with soft, green foliage of apple-trees, and flushing crimson with roses,—air, and fields, and mountains. The future of the Welsh puddler passing just now is not so pleasant. To be stowed away, after his grimy work is done, in a hole in the muddy graveyard, and after that,—*not* air, nor green fields, nor curious roses.

Can you see how foggy the day is? As I stand here, idly tapping the window-pane, and looking out through the rain at the dirty back-yard and the coal-boats below, fragments of an old story float up before me,—a story of this old house into which I happened to come to-day. You may think it a tiresome story enough, as foggy as the day, sharpened by no sudden flashes of pain or pleasure.—I know: only the outline of a dull life, that long since, with thousands of dull lives like its own, was vainly lived and lost: thousands of them,—massed, vile, slimy lives, like those of the torpid lizards in yonder stagnant water-butt.—Lost? There is a curious point for you to settle, my friend, who study psychology in a lazy, *dilettante* way. Stop a moment. I am going to be honest. This is what I want you to do. I want you to hide your disgust, take no heed to your clean clothes, and come right down with me,—here, into the thickest of the fog and mud and foul effluvia. I want you to hear this story. There is a secret down here, in this nightmare fog, that has lain dumb for centuries: I want to make it a real thing to you. You, Egoist, or Pantheist, or Arminian, busy in making straight paths for your feet on the hills, do not see it clearly,—this



Page 60

terrible question which men here have gone mad and died trying to answer. I dare not put this secret into words. I told you it was dumb. These men, going by with drunken faces and brains full of unawakened power, do not ask it of Society or of God. Their lives ask it; their deaths ask it. There is no reply. I will tell you plainly that I have a great hope; and I bring it to you to be tested. It is this: that this terrible dumb question is its own reply; that it is not the sentence of death we think it, but, from the very extremity of its darkness, the most solemn prophecy which the world has known of the Hope to come. I dare make my meaning no clearer, but will only tell my story. It will, perhaps, seem to you as foul and dark as this thick vapor about us, and as pregnant with death; but if your eyes are free as mine are to look deeper, no perfume-tinted dawn will be so fair with promise of the day that shall surely come.

My story is very simple,—only what I remember of the life of one of these men,—a furnace-tender in one of Kirby & John's rolling-mills,—Hugh Wolfe. You know the mills? They took the great order for the Lower Virginia railroads there last winter; run usually with about a thousand men. I cannot tell why I choose the half-forgotten story of this Wolfe more than that of myriads of these furnace-hands. Perhaps because there is a secret underlying sympathy between that story and this day with its impure fog and thwarted sunshine,—or perhaps simply for the reason that this house is the one where the Wolfes lived. There were the father and son,—both hands, as I said, in one of Kirby & John's mills for making railroad-iron,—and Deborah, their cousin, a picker in some of the cotton-mills. The house was rented then to half a dozen families. The Wolfes had two of the cellar-rooms. The old man, like many of the puddlers and feeders of the mills, was Welsh,—had spent half of his life in the Cornish tin-mines. You may pick the Welsh emigrants, Cornish miners, out of the throng passing the windows, any day. They are a trifle more filthy; their muscles are not so brawny; they stoop more. When they are drunk, they neither yell, nor shout, nor stagger, but skulk along like beaten hounds. A pure, unmixed blood, I fancy: shows itself in the slight angular bodies and sharply-cut facial lines. It is nearly thirty years since the Wolfes lived here. Their lives were like those of their class: incessant labor, sleeping in kennel-like rooms, eating rank pork and molasses, drinking—God and the distillers only know what; with an occasional night in jail, to atone for some drunken excess. Is that all of their lives?—of the portion given to them and these their duplicates swarming the streets to-day? —nothing beneath?—all? So many a political reformer will tell you,—and many a private reformer, too, who has gone among them with a heart tender with Christ's charity, and come out outraged, hardened.

One rainy night, about eleven o'clock, a crowd of half-clothed women stopped outside of the cellar-door. They were going home from the cotton-mill.



Page 61

“Good-night, Deb,” said one, a mulatto, steadying herself against the gas-post. She needed the post to steady her. So did more than one of them.

“Dah’s a ball to Miss Potts’ to-night. Ye’d best come.”

“Inteet, Deb, if hur ’ll come, hur ’ll hef fun,” said a shrill Welsh voice in the crowd.

Two or three dirty hands were thrust out to catch the gown of the woman, who was groping for the latch of the door.

“No.”

“No? Where’s Kit Small, then?”

“Begorra! on the spoils. Alleys behint, though we helped her, we dud. An wid ye! Let Deb alone! It’s ondacent frettin’ a quite body. Be the powers, an’ we’ll have a night of it! there’ll be lashin’s o’ drink,—the Vargent be blessed and praised for ’t!”

They went on, the mulatto inclining for a moment to show fight, and drag the woman Wolfe off with them; but, being pacified, she staggered away.

Deborah groped her way into the cellar, and, after considerable stumbling, kindled a match, and lighted a tallow dip, that sent a yellow glimmer over the room. It was low, damp,—the earthen floor covered with a green, slimy moss,—a fetid air smothering the breath. Old Wolfe lay asleep on a heap of straw, wrapped in a torn horse-blanket. He was a pale, meek little man, with a white face and red rabbit-eyes. The woman Deborah was like him; only her face was even more ghastly, her lips bluer, her eyes more watery. She wore a faded cotton gown and a slouching bonnet. When she walked, one could see that she was deformed, almost a hunchback. She trod softly, so as not to waken him, and went through into the room beyond. There she found by the half-extinguished fire an iron saucepan filled with cold boiled potatoes, which she put upon a broken chair with a pint-cup of ale. Placing the old candlestick beside this dainty repast, she untied her bonnet, which hung limp and wet over her face, and prepared to eat her supper. It was the first food that had touched her lips since morning. There was enough of it, however: there is not always. She was hungry,—one could see that easily enough,—and not drunk, as most of her companions would have been found at this hour. She did not drink, this woman,—her face told that, too,—nothing stronger than ale. Perhaps the weak, flaccid wretch had some stimulant in her pale life to keep her up,—some love or hope, it might be, or urgent need. When that stimulant was gone, she would take to whiskey. Man cannot live by work alone. While she was skinning the potatoes, and munching them, a noise behind her made her stop.

“Janey!” she called, lifting the candle and peering into the darkness. “Janey, are you there?”



A heap of ragged coats was heaved up, and the face of a young girl emerged, staring sleepily at the woman.

“Deborah,” she said, at last, “I’m here the night.”

“Yes, child. Hur’s welcome,” she said, quietly eating on.



Page 62

The girl's face was haggard and sickly; her eyes were heavy with sleep and hunger: real Milesian eyes they were, dark, delicate blue, glooming out from black shadows with a pitiful fright.

"I was alone," she said, timidly.

"Where's the father?" asked Deborah, holding out a potato, which the girl greedily seized.

"He's beyant,—wid Haley,—in the stone house." (Did you ever hear the word *jail* from an Irish mouth?) "I came here. Hugh told me never to stay me-lone."

"Hugh?"

"Yes."

A vexed frown crossed her face. The girl saw it, and added quickly,—

"I have not seen Hugh the day, Deb. The old man says his watch lasts till the mornin'."

The woman sprang up, and hastily began to arrange some bread and fitch in a tin pail, and to pour her own measure of ale into a bottle. Tying on her bonnet, she blew out the candle.

"Lay ye down, Janey dear," she said, gently, covering her with the old rags. "Hur can eat the potatoes, if hur 's hungry."

"Where are ye goin', Deb? The rain 's sharp."

"To the mill, with Hugh's supper."

"Let him hide till th' morn. Sit ye down."

"No, no,"—sharply pushing her off. "The boy'll starve."

She hurried from the cellar, while the child wearily coiled herself up for sleep. The rain was falling heavily, as the woman, pail in hand, emerged from the mouth of the alley, and turned down the narrow street, that stretched out, long and black, miles before her. Here and there a flicker of gas lighted an uncertain space of muddy footwalk and gutter; the long rows of houses, except an occasional lager-bier shop, were closed; now and then she met a band of mill-hands skulking to or from their work.

Not many even of the inhabitants of a manufacturing town know the vast machinery of system by which the bodies of workmen are governed, that goes on unceasingly from year to year. The hands of each mill are divided into watches that relieve each other as



regularly as the sentinels of an army. By night and day the work goes on, the unsleeping engines groan and shriek, the fiery pools of metal boil and surge. Only for a day in the week, in half-courtesy to public censure, the fires are partially veiled; but as soon as the clock strikes midnight, the great furnaces break forth with renewed fury, the clamor begins with fresh, breathless vigor, the engines sob and shriek like “gods in pain.”

As Deborah hurried down through the heavy rain, the noise of these thousand engines sounded through the sleep and shadow of the city like far-off thunder. The mill to which she was going lay on the river, a mile below the city-limits. It was far, and she was weak, aching from standing twelve hours at the spools. Yet it was her almost nightly walk to take this man his supper, though at every square she sat down to rest, and she knew she should receive small word of thanks.

Page 63

Perhaps, if she had possessed an artist's eye, the picturesque oddity of the scene might have made her step stagger less, and the path seem shorter; but to her the mills were only "summat deilish to look at by night."

The road leading to the mills had been quarried from the solid rock, which rose abrupt and bare on one side of the cinder-covered road, while the river, sluggish and black, crept past on the other. The mills for rolling iron are simply immense tent-like roofs, covering acres of ground, open on every side. Beneath these roofs Deborah looked in on a city of fires, that burned hot and fiercely in the night. Fire in every horrible form: pits of flame waving in the wind; liquid metal-flames writhing in tortuous streams through the sand; wide caldrons filled with boiling fire, over which bent ghastly wretches stirring the strange brewing; and through all, crowds of half-clad men, looking like revengeful ghosts in the red light, hurried, throwing masses of glittering fire. It was like a street in Hell. Even Deborah muttered, as she crept through, "'T looks like t' Devil's place!" It did, —in more ways than one.

She found the man she was looking for, at last, heaping coal on a furnace. He had not time to eat his supper; so she went behind the furnace, and waited. Only a few men were with him, and they noticed her only by a "Hyur comes t' hunchback, Wolfe."

Deborah was stupid with sleep; her back pained her sharply; and her teeth chattered with cold, with the rain that soaked her clothes and dripped from her at every step. She stood, however, patiently holding the pail, and waiting.

"Hout, woman! ye look like a drowned cat. Come near to the fire,"—said one of the men, approaching to scrape away the ashes.

She shook her head. Wolfe had forgotten her. He turned, hearing the man, and came closer.

"I did no' think; gi' me my supper, woman."

She watched him eat with a painful eagerness. With a woman's quick instinct, she saw that he was not hungry,—was eating to please her. Her pale, watery eyes began to gather a strange light.

"Is't good, Hugh? T'ale was a bit sour, I feared."

"No, good enough." He hesitated a moment. "Ye're tired, poor lass! Bide here till I go. Lay down there on that heap of ash, and go to sleep."

He threw her an old coat for a pillow, and turned to his work. The heap was the refuse of the burnt iron, and was not a hard bed; the half-smothered warmth, too, penetrated her limbs, dulling their pain and cold shiver.



Miserable enough she looked, lying there on the ashes like a limp, dirty rag,—yet not an unfitting figure to crown the scene of hopeless discomfort and veiled crime: more fitting, if one looked deeper into the heart of things,—at her thwarted woman's form, her colorless life, her waking stupor that smothered pain and hunger,—even more fit to be a type of her class. Deeper yet



Page 64

if one could look, was there nothing worth reading in this wet, faded thing, half-covered with ashes? no story of a soul filled with groping passionate love, heroic unselfishness, fierce jealousy? of years of weary trying to please the one human being whom she loved, to gain one look of real heart-kindness from him? If anything like this were hidden beneath the pale, bleared eyes, and dull, washed-out-looking face, no one had ever taken the trouble to read its faint signs: not the half-clothed furnace-tender, Wolfe, certainly. Yet he was kind to her: it was his nature to be kind, even to the very rats that swarmed in the cellar: kind to her in just the same way. She knew that. And it might be that very knowledge had given to her face its apathy and vacancy more than her low, torpid life. One sees that dead, vacant look steal sometimes over the rarest, finest of women's faces,—in the very midst, it may be, of their warmest summer's day; and then one can guess at the secret of intolerable solitude that lies hid beneath the delicate laces and brilliant smile. There was no warmth, no brilliancy, no summer for this woman; so the stupor and vacancy had time to gnaw into her face perpetually. She was young, too, though no one guessed it; so the gnawing was the fiercer.

She lay quiet in the dark corner, listening, through the monotonous din and uncertain glare of the works, to the dull splash of the rain in the far distance,—shrinking back whenever the man Wolfe happened to look towards her. She knew, in spite of all his kindness, that there was that in her face and form which made him loathe the sight of her. She felt by instinct, although she could not comprehend it, the finer nature of the man, which made him among his fellow-workmen something unique, set apart. She knew, that, down under all the vileness and coarseness of his life, there was a groping passion for whatever was beautiful and pure,—that his soul sickened with disgust at her deformity, even when his words were kindest. Through this dull consciousness, which never left her, came, like a sting, the recollection of the dark blue eyes and lithe figure of the little Irish girl she had left in the cellar. The recollection struck through even her stupid intellect with a vivid glow of beauty and of grace. Little Janey, timid, helpless, clinging to Hugh as her only friend: that was the sharp thought, the bitter thought, that drove into the glazed eyes a fierce light of pain. You laugh at it? Are pain and jealousy less savage realities down here in this place I am taking you to than in your own house or your own heart,—your heart, which they clutch at sometimes? The note is the same, I fancy, be the octave high or low.

If you could go into this mill where Deborah lay, and drag out from the hearts of these men the terrible tragedy of their lives, taking it as a symptom of the disease of their class, no ghost Horror would terrify you more. A reality of soul-starvation, of living death, that meets you every day under the besotted faces on the street,—I can paint nothing of this, only give you the outside outlines of a night, a crisis in the life of one man: whatever muddy depth of soul-history lies beneath you can read according to the eyes God has given you.



Page 65

Wolfe, while Deborah watched him as a spaniel its master, bent over the furnace with his iron pole, unconscious of her scrutiny, only stopping to receive orders. Physically, Nature had promised the man but little. He had already lost the strength and instinct vigor of a man, his muscles were thin, his nerves weak, his face (a meek, woman's face) haggard, yellow with consumption. In the mill he was known as one of the girl-men: "Molly Wolfe" was his *sobriquet*. He was never seen, in the cockpit, did not own a terrier, drank but seldom; when he did, desperately. He fought sometimes, but was always thrashed, pommelled to a jelly. The man was game enough, when his blood was up: but he was no favorite in the mill; he had the taint of school-learning on him,—not to a dangerous extent, only a quarter or so in the free-school in fact, but enough to ruin him as a good hand in a fight.

For other reasons, too, he was not popular. Not one of themselves, they felt that, though outwardly as filthy and ash-covered; silent, with foreign thoughts and longings breaking out through his quietness in innumerable curious ways: this one, for instance. In the neighboring furnace-buildings lay great heaps of the refuse from the ore after the pig-metal is run. *Korl* we call it here: a light, porous substance, of a delicate, waxen, flesh-colored tinge. Out of the blocks of this *korl*, Wolfe, in his off-hours from the furnace, had a habit of chipping and moulding figures,—hideous, fantastic enough, but sometimes strangely beautiful: even the mill-men saw that, while they jeered at him. It was a curious fancy in the man, almost a passion. The few hours for rest he spent hewing and hacking with his blunt knife, never speaking, until his watch came again,—working at one figure for months, and, when it was finished, breaking it to pieces perhaps, in a fit of disappointment. A morbid, gloomy man, untaught, unled, left to feed his soul in grossness and crime, and hard, grinding labor.

I want you to come down and look at this Wolfe, standing there among the lowest of his kind, and see him just as he is, that you may judge him justly when you hear the story of this night. I want you to look back, as he does every day, at his birth in vice, his starved infancy; to remember the heavy years he has groped through as boy and man,—the slow, heavy years of constant, hot work. So long ago he began, that he thinks sometimes he has worked there for ages. There is no hope that it will ever end. Think that God put into this man's soul a fierce thirst for beauty,—to know it, to create it; to *be*—something, he knows not what,—other than he is. There are moments when a passing cloud, the sun glinting on the purple thistles, a kindly smile, a child's face, will rouse him to a passion of pain,—when his nature starts up with a mad cry of rage against God, man, whoever it is that has forced this vile, slimy life upon him. With all this groping, this mad desire, a great blind



Page 66

intellect stumbling through wrong, a loving poet's heart, the man was by habit only a coarse, vulgar laborer, familiar with sights and words you would blush to name. Be just; when I tell you about this night, see him as he is. Be just,—not like man's law, which seizes on one isolated fact, but like God's judging angel, whose clear, sad eye saw all the countless cankering days of this man's life, all the countless nights, when, sick with starving, his soul fainted in him, before it judged him for this night, the saddest of all.

I called this night the crisis of his life. If it was, it stole on him unawares. These great turning-days of life cast no shadow before, slip by unconsciously. Only a trifle, a little turn of the rudder, and the ship goes to heaven or hell.

Wolfe, while Deborah watched him, dug into the furnace of melting iron with his pole, dully thinking only how many rails the lump would yield. It was late,—nearly Sunday morning; another hour, and the heavy work would be done,—only the furnaces to replenish and cover for the next day. The workmen were growing more noisy, shouting, as they had to do, to be heard over the deep clamor of the mills. Suddenly they grew less boisterous,—at the far end, entirely silent. Something unusual had happened. After a moment, the silence came nearer; the men stopped their jeers and drunken choruses. Deborah, stupidly lifting up her head, saw the cause of the quiet. A group of five or six men were slowly approaching, stopping to examine each furnace as they came. Visitors often came to see the mills after night: except by growing less noisy, the men took no notice of them. The furnace where Wolfe worked was near the bounds of the works; they halted there hot and tired: a walk over one of these great foundries is no trifling task. The woman, drawing out of sight, turned over to sleep. Wolfe, seeing them stop, suddenly roused from his indifferent stupor, and watched them keenly. He knew some of them: the overseer, Clarke,—a son of Kirby, one of the mill-owners,—and a Doctor May, one of the town-physicians. The other two were strangers. Wolfe came closer. He seized eagerly every chance that brought him into contact with this mysterious class that shone down on him perpetually with the glamour of another order of being. What made the difference between them? That was the mystery of his life. He had a vague notion that perhaps to-night he could find it out. One of the strangers sat down on a pile of bricks, and beckoned young Kirby to his side.

"This *is* hot, with a vengeance. A match, please?"—lighting his cigar. "But the walk is worth the trouble. If it were not that you must have heard it so often, Kirby, I would tell you that your works look like Dante's Inferno."

Kirby laughed.

"Yes. Yonder is Farinata himself in the burning tomb,"—pointing to some figure in the shimmering shadows.



“Judging from some of the faces of your men,” said the other, “they bid fair to try the reality of Dante’s vision, some day.”



Page 67

Young Kirby looked curiously around, as if seeing the faces of his hands for the first time.

“They’re bad enough, that’s true. A desperate set, I fancy. Eh, Clarke?”

The overseer did not hear him. He was talking of net profits just then,—giving, in fact, a schedule of the annual business of the firm to a sharp peering little Yankee, who jotted down notes on a paper laid on the crown of his hat: a reporter for one of the city-papers, getting up a series of reviews of the leading manufactories. The other gentlemen had accompanied them merely for amusement. They were silent until the notes were finished, drying their feet at the furnaces, and sheltering their faces from the intolerable heat. At last the overseer concluded with—“I believe that is a pretty fair estimate, Captain.”

“Here, some of you men!” said Kirby, “bring up those boards. We may as well sit down, gentlemen, until the rain is over. It cannot last much longer at this rate.”

“Pig-metal,”—mumbled the reporter,—“um!—coal facilities,—um!—hands employed, twelve hundred,—bitumen,—um!—’all right, I believe, Mr. Clarke;—sinking-fund,—what did you say was your sinking-fund?”

“Twelve hundred hands?” said the stranger, the young man who had first spoken. “Do you control their votes, Kirby?”

“Control? No.” The young man smiled complacently. “But my father brought seven hundred votes to the polls for his candidate last November. No force-work, you understand,—only a speech or two, a hint to form themselves into a society, and a bit of red and blue bunting to make them a flag. The Invincible Roughs,—I believe that is their name. I forget the motto: ‘Our country’s hope,’ I think.”

There was a laugh. The young man talking to Kirby sat with an amused light in his cool gray eye, surveying critically the half-clothed figures of the puddlers, and the slow swing of their brawny muscles. He was a stranger in the city,—spending a couple of months in the borders of a Slave State, to study the institutions of the South,—a brother-in-law of Kirby’s,—Mitchell. He was an amateur gymnast,—hence his anatomical eye; a patron, in a *blase* way, of the prize-ring; a man who sucked the essence out of a science or philosophy in an indifferent, gentlemanly way; who took Kant, Novalis, Humboldt, for what they were worth in his own scales; accepting all, despising nothing, in heaven, earth, or hell, but one-idead men; with a temper yielding and brilliant as summer water, until his Self was touched, when it was ice, though brilliant still. Such men are not rare in the States.

As he knocked the ashes from his cigar, Wolfe caught with a quick pleasure the contour of the white hand, the blood-glow of a red ring he wore. His voice, too, and that of



Kirby's, touched him like music,—low, even, with chording cadences. About this man Mitchell hung the impalpable atmosphere belonging to the thorough-bred gentleman. Wolfe, scraping away the ashes beside him, was conscious of it, did obeisance to it with his artist sense, unconscious that he did so.



Page 68

The rain did not cease. Clarke and the reporter left the mills; the others, comfortably seated near the furnace, lingered, smoking and talking in a desultory way. Greek would not have been more unintelligible to the furnace-tenders, whose presence they soon forgot entirely. Kirby drew out a newspaper from his pocket and read aloud some article, which they discussed eagerly. At every sentence, Wolfe listened more and more like a dumb, hopeless animal, with a duller, more stolid look creeping over his face, glancing now and then at Mitchell, marking acutely every smallest sign of refinement, then back to himself, seeing as in a mirror his filthy body, his more stained soul.

Never! He had no words for such a thought, but he knew now, in all the sharpness of the bitter certainty, that between them there was a great gulf never to be passed. Never!

The bell of the mills rang for midnight. Sunday morning had dawned. Whatever hidden message lay in the tolling bells floated past these men unknown. Yet it was there. Veiled in the solemn music ushering the risen Saviour was a key-note to solve the darkest secrets of a world gone wrong,—even this social riddle which the brain of the grimy puddler grappled with madly to-night.

The men began to withdraw the metal from the caldrons. The mills were deserted on Sundays, except by the hands who fed the fires, and those who had no lodgings and slept usually on the ash-heaps. The three strangers sat still during the next hour, watching the men cover the furnaces, laughing now and then at some jest of Kirby's.

"Do you know," said Mitchell, "I like this view of the works better than when the glare was fiercest? These heavy shadows and the amphitheatre of smothered fires are ghostly, unreal. One could fancy these red smouldering lights to be the half-shut eyes of wild beasts, and the spectral figures their victims in the den."

Kirby laughed. "You are fanciful. Come, let us get out of the den. The spectral figures, as you call them, are a little too real for me to fancy a close proximity in the darkness,—unarmed, too."

The others rose, buttoning their overcoats, and lighting cigars.

"Raining, still," said Doctor May, "and hard. Where did we leave the coach, Mitchell?"

"At the other side of the works.—Kirby, what's that?"

Mitchell started back, half-frightened, as, suddenly turning a corner, the white figure of a woman faced him in the darkness,—a woman, white, of giant proportions, crouching on the ground, her arms flung out in some wild gesture of warning.

"Stop! Make that fire burn there!" cried Kirby, stopping short.



The flame burst out, flashing the gaunt figure into bold relief.

Mitchell drew a long breath.

“I thought it was alive,” he said, going up curiously.

The others followed.

“Not marble, eh?” asked Kirby, touching it.



Page 69

One of the lower overseers stopped.

“Korl, Sir.”

“Who did it?”

“Can’t say. Some of the hands; chipped it out in off-hours.”

“Chipped to some purpose, I should say. What a flesh-tint the stuff has! Do you see, Mitchell?”

“I see.”

He had stepped aside where the light fell boldest on the figure, looking at it in silence. There was not one line of beauty or grace in it: a nude woman’s form, muscular, grown coarse with labor, the powerful limbs instinct with some one poignant longing. One idea: there it was in the tense, rigid muscles, the clutching hands, the wild, eager face, like that of a starving wolf’s. Kirby and Doctor May walked around it, critical, curious. Mitchell stood aloof, silent. The figure touched him strangely.

“Not badly done,” said Doctor May. “Where did the fellow learn that sweep of the muscles in the arm and hand? Look at them! They are groping,—do you see?—clutching: the peculiar action of a man dying of thirst.”

“They have ample facilities for studying anatomy,” sneered Kirby, glancing at the half-naked figures.

“Look,” continued the Doctor, “at this bony wrist, and the strained sinews of the instep! A working-woman,—the very type of her class.”

“God forbid!” muttered Mitchell.

“Why?” demanded May. “What does the fellow intend by the figure? I cannot catch the meaning.”

“Ask him,” said the other, dryly. “There he stands,”—pointing to Wolfe, who stood with a group of men, leaning on his ash-rake.

The Doctor beckoned him with the affable smile which kind-hearted men put on, when talking to these people.

“Mr. Mitchell has picked you out as the man who did this,—I’m sure I don’t know why. But what did you mean by it?”

“She be hungry.”



Wolfe's eyes answered Mitchell, not the Doctor.

"Oh-h! But what a mistake you have made, my fine fellow! You have given no sign of starvation to the body. It is strong,—terribly strong. It has the mad, half-despairing gesture of drowning."

Wolfe stammered, glanced appealingly at Mitchell, who saw the soul of the thing, he knew. But the cool, probing eyes were turned on himself now,—mocking, cruel, relentless.

"Not hungry for meat," the furnace-tender said at last.

"What then? Whiskey?" jeered Kirby, with a coarse laugh.

Wolfe was silent a moment, thinking.

"I dunno," he said, with a bewildered look. "It mebbe. Summat to make her live, I think,—like you. Whiskey ull do it, in a way."

The young man laughed again. Mitchell flashed a look of disgust somewhere,—not at Wolfe.

"May," he broke out impatiently, "are you blind? Look at that woman's face! It asks questions of God, and says, 'I have a right to know.' Good God, how hungry it is!"

They looked a moment; then May turned to the mill-owner:—



Page 70

“Have you many such hands as this? What are you going to do with them? Keep them at puddling iron?”

Kirby shrugged his shoulders. Mitchell’s look had irritated him.

“*Ce n’est pas mon affaire*. I have no fancy for nursing infant geniuses. I suppose there are some stray gleams of mind and soul among these wretches. The Lord will take care of his own; or else they can work out their own salvation. I have heard you call our American system a ladder which any man can scale. Do you doubt it? Or perhaps you want to banish all social ladders, and put us all on a flat table-land,—eh, May?”

The Doctor looked vexed, puzzled. Some terrible problem lay hid in this woman’s face, and troubled these men. Kirby waited for an answer, and, receiving none, went on, warning with his subject.

“I tell you, there’s something wrong that no talk of ‘*Liberte*’ or ‘*Egalite*’ will do away. If I had the making of men, these men who do the lowest part of the world’s work should be machines,—nothing more,—hands. It would be kindness. God help them! What are taste, reason, to creatures who must live such lives as that?” He pointed to Deborah, sleeping on the ash-heap. “So many nerves to sting them to pain. What if God had put your brain, with all its agony of touch, into your fingers, and bid you work and strike with that?”

“You think you could govern the world better?” laughed the Doctor.

“I do not think at all.”

“That is true philosophy. Drift with the stream, because you cannot dive deep enough to find bottom, eh?”

“Exactly,” rejoined Kirby. “I do not think. I wash my hands of all social problems,—slavery, caste, white or black. My duty to my operatives has a narrow limit,—the pay-hour on Saturday night. Outside of that, if they cut korl, or cut each other’s throats, (the more popular amusement of the two,) I am not responsible.”

The Doctor sighed,—a good honest sigh, from the depths of his stomach.

“God help us! Who is responsible?”

“Not I, I tell you,” said Kirby, testily. “What has the man who pays them money to do with their souls’ concerns, more than the grocer or butcher who takes it?”

“And yet,” said Mitchell’s cynical voice, “look at her! How hungry she is!”



Kirby tapped his boot with his cane. No one spoke. Only the dumb face of the rough image looking into their faces with the awful question, "What shall we do to be saved?" Only Wolfe's face, with its heavy weight of brain, its weak, uncertain mouth, its desperate eyes, out of which looked the soul of his class,—only Wolfe's face turned towards Kirby's. Mitchell laughed,—a cool, musical laugh.

"Money has spoken!" he said, seating himself lightly on a stone with the air of an amused spectator at a play. "Are you answered?"—turning to Wolfe his clear, magnetic face.

Bright and deep and cold as Arctic air, the soul of the man lay tranquil beneath. He looked at the furnace-tender as he had looked at a rare mosaic in the morning; only the man was the more amusing study of the two.



Page 71

“Are you answered? Why, May, look at him! ‘*De profundis clamavi.*’ Or, to quote in English, ‘Hungry and thirsty, his soul faints in him.’ And so Money sends back its answer into the depths through you, Kirby! Very clear the answer, too!—I think I remember reading the same words somewhere:—washing your hands in Eau de Cologne, and saying, ‘I am innocent of the blood of this man. See ye to it!’”

Kirby flushed angrily.

“You quote Scripture freely.”

“Do I not quote correctly? I think I remember another line, which may amend my meaning: ‘Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these, ye did it unto me.’ Deist? Bless you, man, I was raised on the milk of the Word. Now, Doctor, the pocket of the world having uttered its voice, what has the heart to say? You are a philanthropist, in a small way,—*n’est ce pas?* Here, boy, this gentleman can show you how to cut korn better,—or your destiny. Go on, May!”

“I think a mocking devil possesses you to-night,” rejoined the Doctor, seriously.

He went to Wolfe and put his hand kindly on his arm. Something of a vague idea possessed the Doctor’s brain that much good was to be done here by a friendly word or two: a latent genius to be warmed into life by a waited-for sunbeam. Here it was: he had brought it. So he went on complacently:—

“Do you know, boy, you have it in you to be a great sculptor, a great man?—do you understand?” (talking down to the capacity of his hearer: it is a way people have with children, and men like Wolfe,)—“to live a better, stronger life than I, or Mr. Kirby here? A man may make himself anything he chooses. God has given you stronger powers than many men,—me, for instance.”

May stopped, heated, glowing with his own magnanimity. And it was magnanimous. The puddler had drunk in every word, looking through the Doctor’s flurry, and generous heat, and self-approval, into his will, with those slow, absorbing eyes of his.

“Make yourself what you will. It is your right.”

“I know,” quietly. “Will you help me?”

Mitchell laughed again. The Doctor turned now, in a passion,—

“You know, Mitchell, I have not the means. You know, if I had, it is in my heart to take this boy and educate him for”——

“The glory of God, and the glory of John May.”



May did not speak for a moment; then, controlled, he said,—

“Why should one be raised, when myriads are left?—I have not the money, boy,” to Wolfe, shortly.

“Money?” He said it over slowly, as one repeats the guessed answer to a riddle, doubtfully. “That is it? Money?”

“Yes, money,—that is it,” said Mitchell, rising, and drawing his furred coat about him. “You’ve found the cure for all the world’s diseases.—Come, May, find your good-humor, and come home. This damp wind chills my very bones. Come and preach your Saint-Simonian doctrines to-morrow to Kirby’s hands. Let them have a clear idea of the rights of the soul, and I’ll venture next week they’ll strike for higher wages. That will be the end of it.”



Page 72

“Will you send the coach-driver to this side of the mills?” asked Kirby, turning to Wolfe.

He spoke kindly: it was his habit to do so. Deborah, seeing the puddler go, crept after him. The three men waited outside. Doctor May walked up and down, chafed. Suddenly he stopped.

“Go back, Mitchell! You say the pocket and the heart of the world speak without meaning to these people. What has its head to say? Taste, culture, refinement? Go!”

Mitchell was leaning against a brick wall. He turned his head indolently, and looked into the mills. There hung about the place a thick, unclean odor. The slightest motion of his hand marked that he perceived it, and his insufferable disgust. That was all. May said nothing, only quickened his angry tramp.

“Besides,” added Mitchell, giving a corollary to his answer, “it would be of no use. I am not one of them.”

“You do not mean”—said May, facing him.

“Yes, I mean just that. Reform is born of need, not pity. No vital movement of the people’s has worked down, for good or evil; fermented, instead, carried up the heaving, cloggy mass. Think back through history, and you will know it. What will this lowest deep—thieves, Magdalens, negroes—do with the light filtered through ponderous Church creeds, Baconian theories, Goethe schemes? Some day, out of their bitter need will be thrown up their own light-bringer,—their Jean Paul, their Cromwell, their Messiah.”

“Bah!” was the Doctor’s inward criticism. However, in practice, he adopted the theory; for, when, night and morning, afterwards, he prayed that power might be given these degraded souls to rise, he glowed at heart, recognizing an accomplished duty.

Wolfe and the woman had stood in the shadow of the works as the coach drove off. The Doctor had held out his hand in a frank, generous way, telling him to “take care of himself, and to remember it was his right to rise.” Mitchell had simply touched his hat, as to an equal, with a quiet look of thorough recognition. Kirby had thrown Deborah some money, which she found, and clutched eagerly enough. They were gone now, all of them. The man sat down on the cinder-road, looking up into the murky sky.

“T be late, Hugh. Wunnot hur come?”

He shook his head doggedly, and the woman crouched out of his sight against the wall. Do you remember rare moments when a sudden light flashed over yourself, your world, God? when you stood on a mountain-peak, seeing your life as it might have been, as it is? one quick instant, when custom lost its force and every-day usage? when your friend, wife, brother, stood in a new light? your soul was bared, and the grave,—a



foretaste of the nakedness of the Judgment-Day? So it came before him, his life, that night. The slow tides of pain he had borne gathered themselves up and surged against his soul. His squalid daily life, the brutal coarseness eating into his brain, as the ashes into his skin: before, these things had been a dull aching into his consciousness; to-night, they were reality. He griped the filthy red shirt that clung, stiff with soot, about him, and tore it savagely from his arm. The flesh beneath was muddy with grease and ashes,—and the heart beneath that! And the soul? God knows.



Page 73

Then flashed before his vivid poetic sense the man who had left him,—the pure face, the delicate, sinewy limbs, in harmony with all he knew of beauty or truth. In his cloudy fancy he had pictured a Something like this. He had found it in this Mitchell, even when he idly scoffed at his pain: a Man all-knowing, all-seeing, crowned by Nature, reigning,—the keen glance of his eye falling like a sceptre on other men. And yet his instinct taught him that he too—He! He looked at himself with sudden loathing, sick, wrung his hands with a cry, and then was silent. With all the phantoms of his heated, ignorant fancy, Wolfe had not been vague in his ambitious. They were practical, slowly built up before him out of his knowledge of what he could do. Through years he had day by day made this hope a real thing to himself,—a clear, projected figure of himself, as he might become.

Able to speak, to know what was best, to raise these men and women working at his side up with him: sometimes he forgot this defined hope in the frantic anguish to escape,—only to escape,—out of the wet, the pain, the ashes, somewhere, anywhere,—only for one moment of free air on a hill-side, to lie down and let his sick soul throb itself out in the sunshine. But to-night he panted for life. The savage strength of his nature was roused; his cry was fierce to God for justice.

“Look at me!” he said to Deborah, with a low, bitter laugh, striking his puny chest savagely. “What am I worth, Deb? Is it my fault that I am no better? My fault? My fault?”

He stopped, stung with a sudden remorse, seeing her hunchback shape writhing with sobs. For Deborah was crying thankless tears, according to the fashion of women.

“God forgi’ me, woman! Things go harder wi’ you nor me. It’s a worse share.”

He got up and helped her to rise; and they went doggedly down the muddy street, side by side.

“It’s all wrong,” he muttered, slowly,—“all wrong! I dunnot understan’. But it’ll end some day.”

“Come home, Hugh!” she said, coaxingly; for he had stopped, looking around bewildered.

“Home,—and back to the mill!” He went on saying this over to himself, as if he would mutter down every pain in this dull despair.

She followed him through the fog, her blue lips chattering with cold. They reached the cellar at last. Old Wolfe had been drinking since she went out, and had crept nearer the door. The girl Janey slept heavily in the corner. He went up to her, touching softly the worn white arm with his fingers. Some bitterer thought stung him, as he stood there.



He wiped the drops from his forehead, and went into the room beyond, livid, trembling. A hope, trifling, perhaps, but very dear, had died just then out of the poor puddler's life, as he looked at the sleeping, innocent girl,—some plan for the future, in which she had borne a part. He gave it up that moment, then and forever. Only a trifle, perhaps, to us: his face grew a shade paler,—that was all. But, somehow, the man's soul, as God and the angels looked down on it, never was the same afterwards.



Page 74

Deborah followed him into the inner room. She carried a candle, which she placed on the floor, dosing the door after her. She had seen the look on his face, as he turned away: her own grew deadly. Yet, as she came up to him, her eyes glowed. He was seated on an old chest, quiet, holding his face in his hands.

“Hugh!” she said, softly.

He did not speak.

“Hugh, did hur hear what the man said,—him with the clear voice? Did hur hear? Money, money,—that it wud do all?”

He pushed her away,—gently, but he was worn out; her rasping tone fretted him.

“Hugh!”

The candle flared a pale yellow light over the cobwebbed brick walls, and the woman standing there. He looked at her. She was young, in deadly earnest; her faded eyes, and wet, ragged figure caught from their frantic eagerness a power akin to beauty.

“Hugh, it is true! Money ull do it! Oh, Hugh, boy, listen till me! He said it true! It is money!”

“I know. Go back! I do not want you here.”

“Hugh, it is t’ last time. I ’ll never worrit hur again.”

There were tears in her voice now, but she choked them back.

“Hear till me only to-night! If one of t’ witch people wud come, them we heard of t’ home, and gif hur all hur wants, what then? Say, Hugh!”

“What do you mean?”

“I mean money.”

Her whisper shrilled through his brain.

“If one of t’ witch dwarfs wud come from t’ lane moors to-night, and gif hur money, to go out,—*out*, I say,—out, lad, where t’ sun shines, and t’ heath grows, and t’ ladies walk in silken gownds, and God stays all t’ time,—where t’ man lives that talked to us to-night,—Hugh knows, —Hugh could walk there like a king!”

He thought the woman mad, tried to check her, but she went on, fierce in her eager haste.



“If I were t’ witch dwarf, if I had f money, wud hur thank me? Wud hur take me out o’ this place wid hur and Janey? I wud not come into the gran’ house hur wud build, to vex hur wid t’ hunch,—only at night, when t’ shadows were dark, stand far off to see hur.”

Mad? Yes! Are many of us mad in this way?

“Poor Deb! poor Deb!” he said, soothingly.

“It is here,” she said, suddenly jerking into his hand a small roll. “I took it! I did it! Me, me!—not hur! I shall be hanged, I shall be burnt in hell, if anybody knows I took it! Out of his pocket, as he leaned against t’ bricks. Hur knows?”

She thrust it into his hand, and then, her errand done, began to gather chips together to make a fire, choking down hysteric sobs.

“Has it come to this?”

That was all he said. The Welsh Wolfe blood was honest. The roll was a small green pocket-book containing one or two gold pieces, and a check for an incredible amount, as it seemed to the poor puddler. He laid it down, hiding his face again in his hands.



Page 75

“Hugh, don’t be angry wud me! It’s only poor Deb,—hur knows?”

He took the long skinny fingers kindly in his.

“Angry? God help me, no! Let me sleep. I am tired.”

He threw himself heavily down on the wooden bench, stunned with pain and weariness. She brought some old rags to cover him.

It was late on Sunday evening before he awoke. I tell God’s truth, when I say he had then no thought of keeping this money. Deborah had hid it in his pocket. He found it there. She watched him eagerly, as he took it out.

“I must gif it to him,” he said, reading her face.

“Hur knows,” she said with a bitter sigh of disappointment. “But it is hur right to keep it.”

His right! The word struck him. Doctor May had used the same. He washed himself, and went out to find this man Mitchell. His right! Why did this chance word cling to him so obstinately? Do you hear the fierce devils whisper in his ear, as he went slowly down the darkening street?

The evening came on, slow and calm. He seated himself at the end of an alley leading into one of the larger streets. His brain was clear to-night, keen, intent, mastering. It would not start back, cowardly, from any hellish temptation, but meet it face to face. Therefore the great temptation of his life came to him veiled by no sophistry, but bold, defiant, owning its own vile name, trusting to one bold blow for victory.

He did not deceive himself. Theft! That was it. At first the word sickened him; then he grappled with it. Sitting there on a broken cart-wheel, the fading day, the noisy groups, the church-bells’ tolling passed before him like a panorama, while the sharp struggle went on within. This money! He took it out, and looked at it. If he gave it back, what then? He was going to be cool about it.

People going by to church saw only a sickly mill-boy watching them quietly at the alley’s mouth. They did not know that he was mad, or they would not have gone by so quietly: mad with hunger; stretching out his hands to the world, that had given so much to them, for leave to live the life God meant him to live. His soul within him was smothering to death; he wanted so much, thought so much, and *knew*—nothing. There was nothing of which he was certain, except the mill and things there. Of God and heaven he had heard so little, that they were to him what fairy-land is to a child: something real, but not here; very far off. His brain, greedy, dwarfed, full of thwarted energy and unused powers, questioned these men and women going by, coldly, bitterly, that night. Was it not his right to live as they,—a pure life, a good, true-hearted life, full of beauty and kind



words? He only wanted to know how to use the strength within him. His heart warmed, as he thought of it. He suffered himself to think of it longer. If he took the money?

Then he saw himself as he might be, strong, helpful, kindly. The night crept on, as this one image slowly evolved itself from the crowd of other thoughts and stood triumphant. He looked at it. As he might be! What wonder, if it blinded him to delirium,—the madness that underlies all revolution, all progress, and all fall?



Page 76

You laugh at the shallow temptation? You see the error underlying its argument so clearly,—that to him a true life was one of full development rather than self-restraint? that he was deaf to the higher tone in a cry of voluntary suffering for truth's sake than in the fullest flow of spontaneous harmony? I do not plead his cause. I only want to show you the mote in my brother's eye: then you can see clearly to take it out.

The money,—there it lay on his knee, a little blotted slip of paper, nothing in itself; used to raise him out of the pit; something straight from God's hand. A thief! Well, what was it to be a thief? He met the question at last, face to face, wiping the clammy drops of sweat from his forehead. God made this money—the fresh air, too—for his children's use. He never made the difference between poor and rich. The Something who looked down on him that moment through the cool gray sky had a kindly face, he knew,—loved his children alike. Oh, he knew that!

There were times when the soft floods of color in the crimson and purple flames, or the clear depth of amber in the water below the bridge, had somehow given him a glimpse of another world than this,—of an infinite depth of beauty and of quiet somewhere,—somewhere,—a depth of quiet and rest and love. Looking up now, it became strangely real. The sun had sunk quite below the hills, but his last rays struck upward, touching the zenith. The fog had risen, and the town and river were steeped in its thick, gray damp; but overhead, the sun-touched smoke-clouds opened like a cleft ocean,—shifting, rolling seas of crimson mist, waves of billowy silver reined with blood-scarlet, inner depths unfathomable of glancing light. Wolfe's artist-eye grew drunk with color. The gates of that other world! Fading, flashing before him now! What, in that world of Beauty, Content, and Right, were the petty laws, the mine and thine, of mill-owners and mill-hands?

A consciousness of power stirred within him. He stood up. A man,—he thought, stretching out his hands,—free to work, to live, to love! Free! His right! He folded the scrap of paper in his hand. As his nervous fingers took it in, limp and blotted, so his soul took in the mean temptation, lapped it in fancied rights, in dreams of improved existences, drifting and endless as the cloud-seas of color. Clutching it, as if the tightness of his hold would strengthen his sense of possession, he went aimlessly down the street. It was his watch at the mill. He need not go, need never go again, thank God!—shaking off the thought with unspeakable loathing.



Page 77

Shall I go over the history of the hours of that night? how the man wandered from one to another of his old haunts, with a half-consciousness of bidding them farewell,—lanes and alleys and back-yards where the mill-hands lodged,—noting, with a new eagerness, the filth and drunkenness, the pig-pens, the ash-heaps covered with potato-skins, the bloated, pimped women at the doors,—with a new disgust, a new sense of sudden triumph, and, under all, a new, vague dread, unknown before, smothered down, kept under, but still there? It left him but once during the night, when, for the second time in his life, he entered a church. It was a sombre Gothic pile, where the stained light lost itself in far-retreating arches; built to meet the requirements and sympathies of a far other class than Wolfe's. Yet it touched, moved him uncontrollably. The distances, the shadows, the still, marble figures, the mass of silent kneeling worshippers, the mysterious music, thrilled, lifted his soul with a wonderful pain. Wolfe forgot himself, forgot the new life he was going to live, the mean terror gnawing underneath. The voice of the speaker strengthened the charm; it was clear, feeling, full, strong. An old man, who had lived much, suffered much; whose brain was keenly alive, dominant; whose heart was summer-warm with charity. He taught it to-night. He held up Humanity in its grand total; showed the great world-cancer to his people. Who could show it better? He was a Christian reformer; he had studied the age thoroughly; his outlook at man had been free, world-wide, over all time. His faith stood sublime upon the Rock of Ages; his fiery zeal guided vast schemes by which the gospel was to be preached to all nations. How did he preach it to-night? In burning, light-laden words he painted the incarnate Life, Love, the universal Man: words that became reality in the lives of these people,—that lived again in beautiful words and actions, trifling, but heroic. Sin, as he defied it, was a real foe to them; their trials, temptations, were his. His words passed far over the furnace-tender's grasp, toned to suit another class of culture; they sounded in his ears a very pleasant song in an unknown tongue. He meant to cure this world-cancer with a steady eye that had never glared with hunger, and a hand that neither poverty nor strychnine-whiskey had taught to shake. In this morbid, distorted heart of the Welsh puddler he had failed.

Wolfe rose at last, and turned from the church down the street. He looked up; the night had come on foggy, damp; the golden mists had vanished, and the sky lay dull and ash-colored. He wandered again aimlessly down the street, idly wondering what had become of the cloud-sea of crimson and scarlet. The trial-day of this man's life was over, and he had lost the victory. What followed was mere drifting circumstance,—a quicker walking over the path,—that was all. Do you want to hear the end of it? You wish me to make a tragic story out of it? Why, in the police-reports of the morning paper you can find a dozen such tragedies: hints of ship-wrecks unlike any that ever befell on the high seas; hints that here a power was lost to heaven,—that there a soul went down where no tide can ebb or flow. Commonplace enough the hints are,—jocose sometimes, done up in rhyme.



Page 78

Doctor May, a month after the night I have told you of, was reading to his wife at breakfast from this fourth column of the morning-paper: an unusual thing,—these police-reports not being, in general, choice reading for ladies; but it was only one item he read.

“Oh, my dear! You remember that man I told you of, that we saw at Kirby’s mill?—that was arrested for robbing Mitchell? Here he is; just listen:—’Circuit Court. Judge Day, Hugh Wolfe, operative in Kirby & John’s Loudon Mills. Charge, grand larceny. Sentence, nineteen years hard labor in penitentiary.’—Scoundrel! Serves him right! After all our kindness that night! Picking Mitchell’s pocket at the very time!”

His wife said something about the ingratitude of that kind of people, and then they began to talk of something else.

Nineteen years! How easy that was to read! What a simple word for Judge Day to utter! Nineteen years! Half a lifetime!

Hugh Wolfe sat on the window-ledge of his cell, looking out. His ankles were ironed. Not usual in such cases; but he had made two desperate efforts to escape. “Well,” as Haley, the jailer, said, “small blame to him! Nineteen years’ imprisonment was not a pleasant thing to look forward to.” Haley was very good-natured about it, though Wolfe had fought him savagely.

“When he was first caught,” the jailer said afterwards, in telling the story, “before the trial, the fellow was cut down at once,—laid there on that pallet like a dead man, with his hands over his eyes. Never saw a man so cut down in my life. Time of the trial, too, came the queerest dodge of any customer I ever had. Would choose no lawyer. Judge gave him one, of course. Gibson it was. He tried to prove the fellow crazy; but it wouldn’t go. Thing was plain as daylight: money found on him. ’Twas a hard sentence, —all the law allows; but it was for ’xample’s sake. These mill-hands are gettin’ unbearable. When the sentence was read, he just looked up, and said the money was his by rights, and that all the world had gone wrong. That night, after the trial, a gentleman came to see him here, name of Mitchell,—him as he stole from. Talked to him for an hour. Thought he came for curiosity, like. After he was gone, thought Wolfe was remarkable quiet, and went into his cell. Found him very low; bed all bloody. Doctor said he had been bleeding at the lungs. He was as weak as a cat; yet, if ye’ll b’lieve me, he tried to get a-past me and get out. I just carried him like a baby, and threw him on the pallet. Three days after, he tried it again: that time reached the wall. Lord help you! he fought like a tiger,—giv’ some terrible blows. Fightin’ for life, you see; for he can’t live long, shut up in the stone crib down yonder. Got a death-cough now. ’T took two of us to bring him down that day; so I just put the irons on his feet. There he sits, in there. Goin’ to-morrow, with a batch more of ’em. That woman, hunchback,



Page 79

tried with him,—you remember?—she’s only got three years. ‘Complice. But *she’s* a woman, you know. He’s been quiet ever since I put on irons: giv’ up, I suppose. Looks white, sick-lookin’. It acts different on ‘em, bein’ sentenced. Most of ‘em gets reckless, devilish-like. Some prays awful, and sings them vile songs of the mills, all in a breath. That woman, now, she’s desper’t’. Been beggin’ to see Hugh, as she calls him, for three days. I’m a-goin’ to let her in. She don’t go with him. Here she is in this next cell. I’m a-goin’ now to let her in.”

He let her in. Wolfe did not see her. She crept into a corner of the cell, and stood watching him. He was scratching the iron bars of the window with a piece of tin which he had picked up, with an idle, uncertain, vacant stare, just as a child or idiot would do.

“Tryin’ to get out, old boy?” laughed Haley. “Them irons will need a crowbar beside your tin, before you can open ‘em.”

Wolfe laughed, too, in a senseless way.

“I think I’ll get out,” he said.

“I believe his brain’s touched,” said Haley, when he came out.

The puddler scraped away with the tin for half an hour. Still Deborah did not speak. At last she ventured nearer, and touched his arm.

“Blood?” she said, looking at some spots on his coat with a shudder.

He looked up at her. “Why, Deb!” he said, smiling,—such a bright, boyish smile, that it went to poor Deborah’s heart directly, and she sobbed and cried out loud.

“Oh, Hugh, lad! Hugh! dunnot look at me, when it wur my fault! To think I brought hur to it! And I loved hur so! Oh, lad, I dud!”

The confession, even in this wretch, came with the woman’s blush through the sharp cry.

He did not seem to hear her,—scraping away diligently at the bars with the bit of tin.

Was he going mad? She peered closely into his face. Something she saw there made her draw suddenly back,—something which Haley had not seen, that lay beneath the pinched, vacant look it had caught since the trial, or the curious gray shadow that rested on it. That gray shadow,—yes, she knew what that meant. She had often seen it creeping over women’s faces for months, who died at last of slow hunger or consumption. That meant death, distant, lingering: but this—Whatever it was the



woman saw, or thought she saw, used as she was to crime and misery, seemed to make her sick with a new horror. Forgetting her fear of him, she caught his shoulders, and looked keenly, steadily, into his eyes.

“Hugh!” she cried, in a desperate whisper,—“oh, boy, not that! for God’s sake, not *that!*”

The vacant laugh went off his face, and he answered her in a muttered word or two that drove her away. Yet the words were kindly enough. Sitting there on his pallet, she cried silently a hopeless sort of tears, but did not speak again. The man looked up furtively at her now and then. Whatever his own trouble was, her distress vexed him with a momentary sting.



Page 80

It was market-day. The narrow window of the jail looked down directly on the carts and wagons drawn up in a long line, where they had unloaded. He could see, too, and hear distinctly the clink of money as it changed hands, the busy crowd of whites and blacks shoving, pushing one another, and the chaffering and swearing at the stalls. Somehow, the sound, more than anything else had done, wakened him up,—made the whole real to him. He was done with the world and the business of it. He let the tin fall, and looked out, pressing his face close to the rusty bars. How they crowded and pushed! And he, —he should never walk that pavement again! There came Neff Sanders, one of the feeders at the mill, with a basket on his arm. Sure enough, Neff was married the other week. He whistled, hoping he would look up; but he did not. He wondered if Neff remembered he was there,—if any of the boys thought of him up there, and thought that he never was to go down that old cinder-road again. Never again! He had not quite understood it before; but now he did. Not for days or years, but never!—that was it.

How clear the light fell on that stall in front of the market! and how like a picture it was, the dark-green heaps of corn, and the crimson beets, and golden melons! There was another with game: how the light flickered on that pheasant's breast, with the purplish blood dripping over the brown feathers! He could see the red shining of the drops, it was so near. In one minute he could be down there. It was just a step. So easy, as it seemed, so natural to go! Yet it could never be—not in all the thousands of years to come—that he should put his foot on that street again! He thought of himself with a sorrowful pity, as of some one else. There was a dog down in the market, walking after his master with such a stately, grave look!—only a dog, yet he could go backwards and forwards just as he pleased: he had good luck! Why, the very vilest cur, yelping there in the gutter, had not lived his life, had been free to act out whatever thought God had put into his brain; while he—No, he would not think of that! He tried to put the thought away, and to listen to a dispute between a countryman and a woman about some meat; but it would come back. He, what had he done to bear this?

Then came the sudden picture of what might have been, and now. He knew what it was to be in the penitentiary,—how it went with men there. He knew how in these long years he should slowly die, but not until soul and body had become corrupt and rotten,—how, when he came out, if he lived to come, even the lowest of the mill-hands would jeer him, —how his hands would be weak, and his brain senseless and stupid. He believed he was almost that now. He put his hand to his head, with a puzzled, weary look. It ached, his head, with thinking. He tried to quiet himself. It was only right, perhaps; he had done wrong. But was there right or wrong for such as he? What was right? And who had ever taught him? He thrust the whole matter away. A dark, cold quiet crept through his brain. It was all wrong; but let it be! It was nothing to him more than the others. Let it be!



Page 81

The door grated, as Haley opened it.

“Come, my woman! Must lock up for t’night. Come, stir yerself!”

She went up and took Hugh’s hand.

“Good-night, Deb,” he said, carelessly.

She had not hoped he would say more; but the Sired pain on her mouth just then was bitterer than death. She took his passive hand and kissed it.

“Hur ’ll never see Deb again!” she ventured, her lips growing colder and more bloodless.

What did she say that for? Did he not know it! Yet he would not impatient with poor old Deb. She had trouble of her own, as well as he.

“No, never again,” he said, trying to be cheerful.

She stood just a moment, looking at him. Do you laugh at her, standing there, with her hunchback, her rags, her bleared, withered face, and the great despised love tugging at her heart?

“Come, you!” called Haley, impatiently.

She did not move.

“Hugh!” she whispered.

It was to be her last word. What was it?

“Hugh, boy, not THAT!”

He did not answer. She wrung her hands, trying to be silent, looking in his face in an agony of entreaty. He smiled again, kindly.

“It is best, Deb. I cannot bear to be hurted any more.”

“Hur knows,” she said, humbly.

“Tell my father good-bye; and—and kiss little Janey.”

She nodded, saying nothing, looked in his face again, and went out of the door. As she went, she staggered.



“Drinkin’ to-day?” broke out Haley, pushing her before him. “Where the Devil did you get it? Here, in with ye!” and he shoved her into her cell, next to Wolfe’s, and shut the door.

Along the wall of her cell there was a crack low down by the floor, through which she could see the light from Wolfe’s. She had discovered it days before. She hurried in now, and, kneeling down by it, listened, hoping to hear some sound. Nothing but the rasping of the tin on the bars. He was at his old amusement again. Something in the noise jarred on her ear, for she shivered as she heard it. Hugh rasped away at the bars. A dull old bit of tin, not fit to cut korn with.

He looked out of the window again. People were leaving the market now. A tall mulatto girl, following her mistress, her basket on her head, crossed the street just below, and looked up. She was laughing; but, when she caught sight of the haggard face peering out through the bars, suddenly grew grave, and hurried by. A free, firm step, a clear-cut olive face, with a scarlet turban tied on one side, dark, shining eyes, and on the head the basket poised, filled with fruit and flowers, under which the scarlet turban and bright eyes looked out half-shadowed. The picture caught his eye. It was good to see a face like that. He would try to-morrow, and cut one like it. *To-morrow!* He threw down the tin, trembling, and covered his face with his hands. When he looked up again, the daylight was gone.



Page 82

Deborah, crouching near by on the other side of the wall, heard no noise. He sat on the side of the low pallet, thinking. Whatever was the mystery which the woman had seen on his face, it came out now slowly, in the dark there, and became fixed,—a something never seen on his face before. The evening was darkening fast. The market had been over for an hour; the rumbling of the carts over the pavement grew more infrequent: he listened to each, as it passed, because he thought it was to be for the last time. For the same reason, it was, I suppose, that he strained his eyes to catch a glimpse of each passer-by, wondering who they were, what kind of homes they were going to, if they had children,—listening eagerly to every chance word in the street, as if—(God be merciful to the man! what strange fancy was this?)—as if he never should hear human voices again.

It was quite dark at last. The street was a lonely one. The last passenger, he thought, was gone. No,—there was a quick step: Joe Hill, lighting the I Joe was a good old chap; never passed a fellow without some joke or other. He remembered once seeing the place where he lived with his wife. “Granny Hill” the boys called her. Bedridden she was; but so kind as Joe was to her! kept the room so clean!—and the old woman, when he was there, was laughing at “some of t’ lad’s foolishness.” The step was far down the street; but he could see him place the ladder, run up, and light the gas. A longing seized him to be spoken to once more.

“Joe!” he called, out of the grating. “Good-bye, Joe!”

The old man stopped a moment, listening uncertainly; then hurried on. The prisoner thrust his hand out of the window, and called again, louder; but Joe was too far down the street. It was a little thing; but it hurt him,—this disappointment.

“Good-bye, Joe!” he called, sorrowfully enough.

“Be quiet!” said one of the jailers, passing the door, striking on it with his club.

Oh, that was the last, was it?

There was an inexpressible bitterness on his face, as he lay down on the bed, taking the bit of tin, which he had rasped to a tolerable degree of sharpness, in his hand,—to play with, it may be. He bared his arms, looking intently at their corded veins and sinews. Deborah, listening in the next cell, heard a slight clicking sound, often repeated. She shut her lips tightly, that she might not scream; the cold drops of sweat broke over her, in her dumb agony.

“Hur knows best,” she muttered at last, fiercely clutching the boards where she lay.

If she could have seen Wolfe, there was nothing about him to frighten her. He lay quite still, his arms outstretched, looking at the pearly stream of moonlight coming into the



window. I think in that one hour that came then he lived back over all the years that had gone before. I think that all the low, vile life, all his wrongs, all his starved hopes, came then, and stung him with a farewell poison that made him sick unto death. He made neither moan nor cry, only turned his worn face now and then to the pure light, that seemed so far off, as one that said, "How long, O Lord? how long?"



Page 83

The hour was over at last. The moon, passing over her nightly path, slowly came nearer, and threw the light across his bed on his feet. He watched it steadily, as it crept up, inch by inch, slowly. It seemed to him to carry with it a great silence. He had been so hot and tired there always in the mills! The years had been so fierce and cruel! There was coming now quiet and coolness and sleep. His tense limbs relaxed, and settled in a calm languor. The blood ran fainter and slow from his heart. He did not think now with a savage anger of what might be and was not; he was conscious only of deep stillness creeping over him. At first he saw a sea of faces: the mill-men,—women he had known, drunken and bloated,—Janeys timid and pitiful,—poor old Debs: then they floated together like a mist, and faded away, leaving only the clear, pearly moonlight.

Whether, as the pure light crept up the stretched-out figure, it brought with it calm and peace, who shall say? His dumb soul was alone with God in judgment. A Voice may have spoken for it from far-off Calvary, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!" Who dare say? Fainter and fainter the heart rose and fell, slower and slower the moon floated from behind a cloud, until, when at last its full tide of white splendor swept over the cell, it seemed to wrap and fold into a deeper stillness the dead figure that never should move again. Silence deeper than the Night! Nothing that moved, save the black, nauseous stream of blood dripping slowly from the pallet to the floor!

There was outcry and crowd enough in the cell the next day. The coroner and his jury, the local editors, Kirby himself, and boys with their hands thrust knowingly into their pockets and heads on one side, jammed into the corners. Coming and going all day. Only one woman. She came late, and outstayed them all. A Quaker, or Friend, as they call themselves. I think this woman was known by that name in heaven. A homely body, coarsely dressed in gray and white. Deborah (for Haley had let her in) took notice of her. She watched them all—sitting on the end of the pallet, holding his head in her arms—with the ferocity of a watch-dog, if any of them touched the body. There was no meekness, sorrow, in her face; the stuff out of which murderers are made, instead. All the time Haley and the woman were laying straight the limbs and cleaning the cell, Deborah sat still, keenly watching the Quaker's face. Of all the crowd there that day, this woman alone had not spoken to her,—only once or twice had put some cordial to her lips. After they all were gone, the woman, in the same still, gentle way, brought a vase of wood-leaves and berries, and placed it by the pallet, then opened the narrow window. The fresh air blew in, and swept the woody fragrance over the dead face. Deborah looked up with a quick wonder.

"Did hur know my boy wud like it? Did hur know Hugh?"

"I know Hugh now."



Page 84

The white fingers passed in a slow, pitiful way over the dead, worn face. There was a heavy shadow in the quiet eyes.

“Did hur know where they’ll bury Hugh?” said Deborah in a shrill tone, catching her arm.

This had been the question hanging on her lips all day.

“In t’ town-yard? Under t’mud and ash? T’lad ’ll smother, woman! He wur born on t’lane moor, where t’air is frick and strong. Take hur out, for God’s sake, take hur out where t’air blows!”

The Quaker hesitated, but only for a moment. She put her strong arm around Deborah and led her to the window.

“Thee sees the hills, friend, over the river? Thee sees how the light lies warm there, and the winds of God blow all the day? I live there,—where the blue smoke is, by the trees. Look at me.” She turned Deborah’s face to her own, clear and earnest. “Thee will believe me? I will take Hugh and bury him there to-morrow.”

Deborah did not doubt her. As the evening wore on, she leaned against the iron bars, looking at the hills that rose far off, through the thick sodden clouds, like a bright, unattainable calm. As she looked, a shadow of their solemn repose fell on her face: its fierce discontent faded into a pitiful, humble quiet. Slow, solemn tears gathered in her eyes: the poor weak eyes turned so hopelessly to the place where Hugh was to rest, the grave heights looking higher and brighter and more solemn than ever before. The Quaker watched her keenly. She came to her at last, and touched her arm.

“When thee comes back,” she said, in a low, sorrowful tone, like one who speaks from a strong heart deeply moved with remorse or pity, “thee shall begin thy life again,—there on the hills. I came too late; but not for thee,—by God’s help, it may be.”

Not too late. Three years after, the Quaker began her work. I end my story here. At evening-time it was light. There is no need to tire you with the long years of sunshine, and fresh air, and slow, patient Christ-love, needed to make healthy and hopeful this impure body and soul. There is a homely pine house, on one of these hills, whose windows overlook broad, wooded slopes and clover-crimsoned meadows,—nched into the very place where the light is warmest, the air freest. It is the Friends’ meeting-house. Once a week they sit there, in their grave, earnest way, waiting for the Spirit of Love to speak, opening their simple hearts to receive His words. There is a woman, old, deformed, who takes a humble place among them: waiting like them: in her gray dress, her worn face, pure and meek, turned now and then to the sky. A woman much loved by these silent, restful people; more silent than they, more humble, more loving. Waiting: with her eyes turned to hills higher and purer than these on which she lives,—

dim and far off now, but to be reached some day. There may be in her heart some latent hope to meet there the love denied her here,—that



Page 85

she shall find him whom she lost, and that then she will not be all-unworthy. Who blames her? Something is lost in the passage of every soul from one eternity to the other,—something pure and beautiful, which might have been and was not: a hope, a talent, a love, over which the soul mourns, like Esau deprived of his birthright. What blame to the meek Quaker, if she took her lost hope to make the hills of heaven more fair?

Nothing remains to tell that the poor Welsh puddler once lived, but this figure of the mill-woman cut in korl. I have it here in a corner of my library. I keep it hid behind a curtain,—it is such a rough, ungainly thing. Yet there are about it touches, grand sweeps of outline, that show a master's hand. Sometimes,—to-night, for instance,—the curtain is accidentally drawn back, and I see a bare arm stretched out imploringly in the darkness, and an eager, wolfish face watching mine: a wan, woful face, through which the spirit of the dead korl-cutter looks out, with its thwarted life, its mighty hunger, its unfinished work. Its pale, vague lips seem to tremble with a terrible question, "Is this the End?" they say,—"nothing beyond?—no more?"

Why, you tell me you have seen that look in the eyes of dumb brutes,—horses dying under the lash. I know.

The deep of the night is passing while I write. The gas-light wakens from the shadows here and there the objects which lie scattered through the room: only faintly, though; for they belong to the open sunlight. As I glance at them, they each recall some task or pleasure of the coming day. A half-moulded child's head; Aphrodite; a bough of forest-leaves; music; work; homely fragments, in which lie the secrets of all eternal truth and beauty. Prophetic all! Only this dumb, woful face seems to belong to and end with the night. I turn to look at it Has the power of its desperate need commanded the darkness away? While the room is yet steeped in heavy shadow, a cool, gray light suddenly touches its head like a blessing hand, and its groping arm points through the broken cloud to the far East, where, in the nicker, nebulous crimson, God has set the promise of the Dawn.

* * * * *

THE REIGN OF KING COTTON.

To every age and to all nations belong their peculiar maxims and political or religious cries, which, if collected by some ingenious philosopher, would make a striking compendium of universal history. Sometimes a curious outward similarity exists between these condensed national sentences of peoples dissimilar in every other respect. Thus, to-day is heard in the senescent East the oft-repeated formula of the

Mussulman's faith, "There is no God but Allah, and Mahomet is his Prophet," while in the youthful West a new cry, as fully believed, not less devout, and scarcely less often repeated, arises from one great and influential portion of the political and social



Page 86

thinkers of this country,—the cry that “There is no King but Cotton, and the African is its High-Priest.” According to the creed of philosophy, philanthropy, and economy in vogue among the sect whose views take utterance in this formula, King Cotton has now reigned supreme over the temporal affairs of the princes, potentates, and people of this earth for some thirty years. Consequently, it is fair to presume that its reign has fully developed its policy and tendencies and is producing its fruit for good or evil, especially in the land of its disciples. It is well, therefore, sometimes to withdraw a little from the dust and smoke of the battle, which, with us at least, announces the spread of this potentate’s power, and to try to disentangle the real questions at issue in the struggle from the eternal complications produced by short-sighted politicians and popular issues. Looking at the policy and tendency of the reign of King Cotton, as hitherto developed and indicated by its most confidential advisers and apostles and by the lapse of time in the so-called Slave States, to what end does it necessarily tend? to what results must it logically lead?

What is coarsely, but expressively, described in the political slang of this country as “*The Everlasting Nigger Question*” might perhaps fairly be considered exhausted as a topic of discussion, if ever a topic was. Is it exhausted, however? Have not rather the smoke and sweat and dust of the political battle in which we have been so long and so fiercely engaged exercised a dimming influence on our eyes as to the true difficulty and its remedy, as they have on the vision of other angry combatants since the world began? It is easy to say, in days like these, that men seem at once to lose their judgment and reason when they approach this question,—to look hardly an arm’s length before them,—to become mere tools of their own passions; and all this is true, and, in conceding it all, no more is conceded than that the men of the present day are also mortal. How many voters in the last election, before they went to the polls, had seriously thought out for themselves the real issue of the contest, apart from party names and platforms and popular cries and passionate appeals to the conscience and the purse? In all parties, some doubtless were impelled by fanaticism,—many were guided by instinct,—more by the voice of their leaders,—most by party catchwords and material interests,—but how many by real reflection and the exercise of reason? Was it every fifth man, or every tenth? Was it every fiftieth? Let every one judge for himself. The history of the reigning dynasty, its policy and tendency, are still open questions, the discussion of which, though perhaps become tedious, is not exhausted, and, if conducted in a fair spirit, will at least do no harm. What, then, is all this thirty years’ turmoil, of which the world is growing sick, about? Are we indeed only fighting, as the party-leaders at



Page 87

the North seem trying to persuade us, for the control, by the interests of free labor or of slave-labor, of certain remaining national territories into which probably slavery never could be made to enter?—or rather is there not some deep innate principle,—some strong motive of aggrandizement or preservation,—some real Enceladus,—the cause of this furious volcano of destructive agitation? If, indeed, the struggle be for the possession of a sterile waste in the heart of the continent,—useless either as a slave-breeding or a slave-working country,—clearly, whatever the politician might say to the contrary, the patriot and the merchant would soon apply to the struggle the principle, that sometimes the game is not worth the candle. If, however, there be an underlying principle, the case is different, and the cost of the struggle admits of no limit save the value of the motive principle. He who now pretends to discuss this question should approach it neither as a Whig, a Democrat, nor a Republican, but should look at it by the light of political philosophy and economy, forgetful of the shibboleth of party or appeals to passion. So far as may be, in this spirit it is proposed to discuss it here.

“By its fruits ye shall know it.” Look, then, for a moment, at the fruits of the Cotton dynasty, as hitherto developed in the working of its policy and its natural tendency,—observe its vital essence and logical necessities,—seek for the result of its workings, when brought in contact with the vital spirits and life-currents of our original policy as a people,—and then decide whether this contest in which we are engaged is indeed an irrepressible and inextinguishable contest, or whether all this while we have not been fighting with shadows. King Cotton has now reigned for thirty years, be the same less or more. To feel sure that we know what its policy has wrought in that time, we must first seek for the conditions under which it originally began its work.

Ever since Adam and Eve were forced, on their expulsion from Paradise, to try the first experiment at self-government, their descendants have been pursuing a course of homoeopathic treatment. It was the eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge which caused all their woes; and in an increased consumption of the fruit of that tree they have persistently looked for alleviation of them. Experience seems to prove the wisdom of the treatment. The greater the consumption of the fruit, the greater the happiness of man. Knowledge has at last become the basis of all things,—of power, of social standing, of material prosperity, and, finally, in America, of government itself. Until within a century past, political philosophy in the creation of government began at the wrong end. It built from the pinnacle downward. The stability of the government depended on the apex,—the one or the few,—and not on the base,—the foundation of the many. At length, in this country, fresh from the hand of Nature, the astonished world



Page 88

saw a new experiment tried,—a government systematically built up from the foundation of the many,—a government drawing its being from, and dependent for its continued existence on, the will and the intelligence of the governed. The foundation had first been laid deep and strong, and on it a goodly superstructure of government was erected. Yet, even to this day, the very subjects of that government itself do not realize that they, and not the government, are the sources of national prosperity. In times of national emergency like the present,—amid clamors of secession and of coercion,—angry threats and angrier replies,—wars and rumors of wars,—what is more common than to hear sensible men—men whom the people look to as leaders—picturing forth a dire relapse into barbarism and anarchy as the necessary consequence of the threatened convulsions? They forget, if they ever realized, that the people made this government, and not the government the people. Destroy the intelligence of the people, and the government could not exist for a day;—destroy this government, and the people would create another, and yet another, of no less perfect symmetry. While the foundations are firm, there need be no fears of the superstructure, which may be renewed again and again; but touch the foundations, and the superstructure must crumble at once. Those who still insist on believing that this government made the people are fond of triumphantly pointing to the condition of the States of Mexico, as telling the history of our own future, let our present government be once interrupted in its functions. Are Mexicans Yankees? Are Spaniards Anglo-Saxons? Are Catholicism and religious freedom, the Inquisition and common schools, despotism and democracy, synonymous terms? Could a successful republic, on our model, be at once instituted in Africa on the assassination of the King of Timbuctoo? Have two centuries of education nothing to do with our success, or an eternity of ignorance with Mexican failure? Was our government a lucky guess, and theirs an unfortunate speculation? The one lesson that America is destined to teach the world, or to miss her destiny in failing to teach, has with us passed into a truism, and is yet continually lost sight of; it is the magnificent result of three thousand years of experiment: the simple truth, that no government is so firm, so truly conservative, and so wholly indestructible, as a government founded and dependent for support upon the affections and good-will of a moral, intelligent, and educated community. In our politics, we hear much of State-rights and centralization,—of distribution of power,—of checks and balances,—of constitutions and their construction,—of patronage and its distribution,—of banks, of tariffs, and of trade,—all of them subjects of moment in their sphere; but their sphere is limited. Whether they be decided one way or the other is of comparatively little consequence: for, however they are decided, if the people are educated and informed,



Page 89

the government will go on, and the community be prosperous, be they decided never so badly,—and if decided badly, the decision will be reversed; but let the people become ignorant and debased, and all the checks and balances and wise regulations which the ingenuity of man could in centuries devise would, at best, but for a short space defer the downfall of a republic. A well-founded republic can, then, be destroyed only by destroying its people,—its decay need be looked for only in the decay of their intelligence; and any form of thought or any institution tending to suppress education or destroy intelligence strikes at the very essence of the government, and constitutes a treason which no law can meet, and for which no punishment is adequate.

Education, then, as universally diffused as the elements of God, is the life-blood of our body politic. The intelligence of the people is the one great fact of our civilization and our prosperity,—it is the beating heart of our age and of our land. It is education alone which makes equality possible without anarchy, and liberty without license. It is this—which makes the fundamental principles of our Declaration of Independence living realities in New England, while in France they still remain the rhetorical statement of glittering generalities. From this source flow all our possibilities. Without it, the equality of man is a pretty figure of speech; with it, democracy is possible. This is a path beaten by two hundred years of footprints, and while we walk it we are safe and need fear no evil; but if we diverge from it, be it for never so little, we stumble, and, unless we quickly retrace our steps, we fall and are lost. The tutelary goddess of American liberty should be the pure marble image of the Professor's Yankee school-mistress. Education is the fundamental support of our system. It was education which made us free, progressive, and conservative; and it is education alone which can keep us so.

With this fact clearly established, the next inquiry should be as to the bearing and policy of the Cotton dynasty as touching this question of general intelligence. It is a mere truism to say that the cotton-culture is the cause of the present philosophical and economical phase of the African question. Throughout the South, whether justly or not, it is considered as well settled that cotton can be profitably raised only by a forced system of labor. This theory has been denied by some writers, and, in experience, is certainly subject to some marked exceptions; but undoubtedly it is the creed of the Cotton dynasty, and must here, therefore, be taken for true.[A] With this theory, the Southern States are under a direct inducement, in the nature of a bribe, to the amount of the annual profit on their cotton-crop, to see as many perfections and as few imperfections as possible in the system of African slavery, and to follow it out unflinchingly into all its logical necessities.



Page 90

Thus, under the direct influence of the Cotton dynasty, the whole Southern tone on this subject has undergone a change. Slavery is no longer deplored as a necessary evil, but it is maintained as in all respects a substantial good. One of the logical necessities of a thorough slave-system is, in at least the slave-portion of the people, extreme ignorance. Whatever theoretically may be desirable in this respect among the master-class, ignorance, in its worst form,—ignorance of everything except the use of the tools with which their work is to be done,—is the necessary condition of the slaves. But it is said that slaves are property, without voice or influence in the government, and that the ignorance of the black is no obstacle to the intelligence of the white. This possibly may be true; but a government founded on ignorance, as the essential condition of one portion of its people, is not likely long to regard education as its vital source and essence. Still the assertion that the rule of education does not apply to slaves must be allowed; for we must deal with facts as we find them; and undoubtedly the slave has no rights which the master is bound to respect; and in speaking of the policy of the Cotton dynasty, the servile population must be regarded as it is, ignoring the question of what it might be; it must be taken into consideration only as a terrible inert mass of domesticated barbarism, and there left. The question here is solely with the policy and tendency of the Cotton dynasty as affecting the master-class, and the servile class is in that consideration to be summarily disposed of as so much labor owned by so much capital.

[Footnote A: “In truth,” the institution of slavery, as an agency for cotton-cultivation, “is an expensive luxury, a dangerous and artificial state, and, even in a worldly point of view, an error. The cost of a first-class negro in the United States is about L800, and the interest on the capital invested in and the wear and tear of this human chattel are equal to 10 per cent., which, with the cost of maintaining, clothing, and doctoring him, or another 5 per cent, gives an annual cost of L45; and the pampered Coolies in the best paying of all the tropical settlements, Trinidad, receive wages that do not exceed on an average on the year round 6s. per week, or about two-fifths, while in the East Indies, with perquisites, they do not receive so much as two-thirds of this. In Cuba, the Chinese emigrants do not receive so much even as one-third of this.”—*Cotton Trade of Great Britain*, by J.A. MANN. —In India, labor is 80 per cent cheaper than in the United States.]



Page 91

The dynasty of Cotton is based on the monopoly of the cotton-culture in the Cotton States of the Union; its whole policy is directed to the two ends of making the most of and retaining that monopoly; and economically it reduces everything to subserviency to the question of cotton-supply;—thus Cotton is King. The result necessarily is, that the Cotton States have turned all their energies to that one branch of industry. All other branches they abandon or allow to languish. They have no commerce of their own, few manufactories, fewer arts; and in their abandonment of self in their devotion to their King, they do not even raise their own hay or corn, dig their own coal, or fell their own timber; and at present, Louisiana is abandoning the sugar-culture, one of the few remaining exports of the South, to share more largely in the monopoly of cotton. Thus the community necessarily loses its fair proportions; it ceases to be self-sustaining; it exercises one faculty alone, until all the others wither and become impotent for very lack of use. This intense and all-pervading devotion to one pursuit, and that a pursuit to which the existence of a servile class is declared essential, must, in a republic more than in any other government, produce certain marked politico-philosophical and economical effects on the master-class as a whole. In a country conducted on a system of servile labor, as in one conducted on free, the master-class must be divided into the two great orders of the rich and poor,—those who have, and those who have not. That the whole policy of the Cotton dynasty tends necessarily to making broader the chasm between these orders is most apparent. It makes the rich richer, and the poor poorer; for, as, according to the creed of the dynasty, capital should own labor, and the labor thus owned can alone successfully produce cotton, he who has must be continually increasing his store, while he who has not can neither raise the one staple recognized by the Cotton dynasty, nor turn his labor, his only property, to other branches of industry; for such have, in the universal abandonment of the community to cotton, been allowed to languish and die. The economical tendency of the Cotton dynasty is therefore to divide the master-class yet more distinctly into the two great opposing orders of society. On the one hand we see the capitalist owning the labor of a thousand slaves, and on the other the laboring white unable, under the destructive influence of a profitable monopoly, to make any use of that labor which is his only property.

What influence, then, has the Cotton dynasty on that portion of the master-class who are without capital? Its tendency has certainly necessarily been to make their labor of little value; but they are still citizens of a republic, free to come and go, and, in the eye of the law, equal with the highest;—on them, in times of emergency, the government must rest; their education and intelligence are its only sure

Page 92

foundations. But, having made this class the vast majority of the master-caste, what are the policy and tendency of the Cotton dynasty as touching them? The story is almost too old to bear even the shortest repetition. Philosophically, it is a logical necessity of the Cotton dynasty that it should be opposed to universal intelligence;—economically, it renders universal intelligence an impossibility. That slavery is in itself a positive good to society is a fundamental doctrine of the Cotton dynasty, and a proposition not necessary to be combated here; but, unfortunately, universal intelligence renders free discussion a necessity, and experience tells us that the suppression of free discussion is necessary to the existence of slavery. We are but living history over again. The same causes have often existed before, and they have drawn after them the necessary effects. Other peoples, at other times, as well as our Southern brethren at present, have felt, that the suppression of general discussion was necessary to the preservation of a prized and peculiar institution. Spain, Italy, Germany, France, the Netherlands, England, and Scotland have all, at different times, experienced the forced suppression of some one branch of political or religious thought. Their histories have recorded the effect of that suppression; and the rule to be deduced therefrom is simply this: If the people among whom such suppression is attempted are ignorant, and are kept so as part of a system, the attempt may be successful, though in its results working destruction to the community;—if, however, they are intelligent, and the system incautiously admits into itself any plan of education, the attempt at suppression will be abandoned, as the result either of policy or violence. In this respect, then, on philosophical grounds, the Cotton dynasty is not likely to favor the education of the masses. Again, it is undoubtedly the interest of the man who has not, that all possible branches of industry should be open to his labor, as rendering that labor of greater value; but the whole tendency of the Cotton monopoly is to blight all branches of industry in the Cotton States save only that one. General intelligence might lead the poor white to suspect this fact of an interest of his own antagonistic to the policy of the Cotton King, and therefore general intelligence is not part of that monarch's policy. This the philosophers of the Cotton dynasty fairly avow and class high among those dangers against which it behooves them to be on their guard. They theorize thus:—

“The great mass of our poor white population begin to understand that they have rights, and that they, too, are entitled to some of the sympathy which falls upon the suffering. They are fast learning that there is an almost infinite world of industry opening before them, by which they can elevate themselves and their families from wretchedness and ignorance to competence and intelligence. It is this great upheaving of our masses which we have to fear, so far as our institutions are concerned.”[B]



Page 93

[Footnote B: *De Bow's Review*, January, 1850. Quoted in Olmsted's *Back Country*, p. 451.]

Further, the policy of the Cotton King, however honestly in theory it may wish to encourage it, renders general education and consequent intelligence an impossibility. A system of universal education is made for a laboring population, and can be sustained only among a laboring population; but if that population consist of slaves, universal education cannot exist. The reason is simple; for the children of all must be educated, otherwise the scholars will not support the schools. It is an absolute necessity of society that in agricultural districts cultivated by slave-labor the free population should be too sparsely scattered to support a system of schools, even on starvation wages for the cheapest class of teachers.

Finally, though it is a subject not necessary now to discuss, the effect of the Cotton monopoly and dynasty in depressing the majority of the whites into a species of labor competition in the same branch of industry as the blacks, because the only branch open to all, can hardly have a self-respect-inspiring influence on that portion of the community, but should in its results rather illustrate old Falstaff's remark,—that “there is a thing often heard of, and it is known to many in our land, by the name of pitch; this pitch, as ancient writers do report, doth defile: so doth the company thou keepest.”

Such, reason tells us, should be the effect on the intelligence and education of the free masses of the South of the policy and dynasty of King Cotton. That experience in this case verifies the conclusions of reason who can doubt who has ever set foot in a thorough Slave State,—or in Kansas, or in any Free State half-peopled by the poor whites of the South?—or who can doubt it, that has ever even talked on the subject with an intelligent and fair-minded Southern gentleman? Who that knows them will deny that the poor whites of the South make the worst population in the country? Who ever heard a Southern gentleman speak of them, save in Congress or on the hustings, otherwise than with aversion and contempt?[C]

[Footnote C: Except when used by the accomplished statistician, there is nothing more fallacious than the figures of the census. As the author of this article is a disciple neither of Buckle nor De Bow, they have not been used at all; but a few of the census figures are nevertheless instructive, as showing the difference between the Free and the Servile States in respect to popular education. According to the census of 1850, the white population of the Slave States amounted to 6,184,477 souls, and the colored population, free and slave, brought the total population up to an aggregate of 9,612,979, of which the whole number of school-pupils was 581,861. New York, with a population of 3,097,894 souls, numbered 675,221 pupils, or 98,830 more than all the Slave States. The eight Cotton States, from South Carolina to Arkansas,

Page 94

with a population of 2,137,264 whites and a grand total of 3,970,337 human beings, contained 141,032 pupils; the State of Massachusetts, with a total population of 994,514, numbered 176,475, or 35,443 pupils more than all the Cotton States. In popular governments the great sources of general intelligence are newspapers and periodicals; in estimating these, metropolitan New York should not be considered; but of these the whole number, in 1850, issued annually in all the Slave States was 61,038,698, and the number in the not peculiarly enlightened State of Pennsylvania was 84,898,672, or 3,859,974 more than in all the Slave States. In the eight Cotton States, the whole number was 30,041,991; and in the single State of Massachusetts, 64,820,564, or 34,778,573 more, and in the single State of Ohio, 30,473,407, or 431,416 more, than in all the above eight States.]

Here, then, we come at once to the foundation of a policy and the cause of this struggle. Whether it will or no, it is the inevitable tendency of the Cotton dynasty to be opposed to general intelligence. It is opposed to that, then, without which a republic cannot hope to exist; it is opposed to and denies the whole results of two thousand years of experience. The social system of which the government of to-day is the creature is founded on the principle of a generally diffused intelligence of the people; but if now Cotton be King, as is so boldly asserted, then an influence has obtained control of the government of which the whole policy is in direct antagonism with, the very elementary ideas of that government. History tells us that eight bags of cotton imported into England in 1784 were seized by the custom-house officers at Liverpool, on the ground that so much cotton could not have been produced in these States. In 1860, the cotton-crop was estimated at 3,851,481 bales. Thus King Cotton was born with this government, and has strengthened with its strength; and to-day, almost the creature of destiny, sent to work the failure of our experiment as a people, it has led almost one-half of the Republic to completely ignore, if not to reject, the one principle absolutely essential to that Republic's continued existence. What two thousand years ago was said of Rome applies to us:—"Those abuses and corruptions which in time destroy a government are sown along with the very seeds of it and both grow up together; and as rust eats away iron, and worms devour wood, and both are a sort of plagues born and bred with the substance they destroy; so with every form and scheme of government that man can invent, some vice or corruption creeps in with the very institution, which grows up along with and at last destroys it." No wonder, then, that the conflict is irrepressible and hot; for two instinctive principles of self-preservation have met in deadly conflict: the South, with the eager loyalty of the Cavalier, rallies to the standard of King Cotton, while the North, with the earnest devotion of the Puritan, struggles hard in defence of the fundamental principles of its liberties and the ark of its salvation.

Page 95

Thus over nearly half of the national domain and among a large minority of the citizens of the Republic, the dynasty of Cotton has worked a divergence from original principle. Wherever the sway of King Cotton extends, the people have for the present lost sight of the most essential of our national attributes. They are seeking to found a great and prosperous republic on the cultivation of a single staple product, and not on intelligence universally diffused: consequently they have founded their house upon the sand. Among them, cotton, and not knowledge, is power. When thus reduced to its logical necessities,—brought down, as it were, to the hard pan,—the experience of two thousand years convincingly proves that their experiment as a democracy must fail. It is, then, a question of vital importance to the whole people,—How can this divergence be terminated? Is there any result, any agency, which can destroy this dynasty, and restore us as a people to the firm foundations upon which our experiment was begun? Can the present agitation effect this result? If it could, the country might joyfully bid a long farewell to “the canker of peace,” and “hail the blood-red blossom of war with a heart of fire”; but the sad answer, that it cannot, whether resulting in the successor Democrat or Republican, seems almost too evident for discussion. The present conflict is good so far as it goes, but it touches only the surface of things. It is well to drive the Cotton dynasty from the control of the national government; but the aims of the Republican party can reach no farther, even if it meet with complete success in that. But even that much is doubtful. The danger at this point is one ever recurring. Those Northern politicians, who, in pursuit of their political objects and ambition, unreservedly bind up their destinies with those of the Cotton dynasty,—the Issachars of the North, whose strong backs are bowed to receive any burden,—the men who in the present conflict will see nought but the result of the maudlin sentimentality of fanatics and the empty cries of ambitious demagogues,—are not mistaken in their calculations. While Cotton is King, as it now is, nothing but time or its own insanity can permanently shake its hold on the national policy. In moments of fierce convulsion, as at present, the North, like a restive steed, may contest its supremacy. Let the South, however, bend, not break, before the storm, and history is indeed “a nurse’s tale,” if the final victory does not rest with the party of unity and discipline. While the monopoly of cotton exists with the South, and it is cultivated exclusively by native African labor, the national government will as surely tend, in spite of all momentarily disturbing influences, towards a united South as the needle to the pole. But even if the government were permanently wrested from its control, would the evil be remedied? Surely not. The disease which is sapping the foundations of our liberty is not eradicated because



Page 96

its workings are forced inward. What remedy is that which leaves a false and pernicious policy—a policy in avowed war with the whole spirit of our civilization and in open hostility to our whole experiment as a government—in full working, almost a religious creed with near one-half of our people? As a remedy, this would be but a quack medicine at the best. The cure must be a more thorough one. The remedy we must look for—the only one which can meet the exigencies of the case—must be one which will restore to the South the attributes of a democracy. It must cause our Southern brethren of their own free will to reverse their steps,—to return from their divergence. It must teach them a purer Christianity, a truer philosophy, a sounder economy. It must lead them to new paths of industry. It must gently persuade them that a true national prosperity is not the result of a total abandonment of the community to the culture of one staple. It must make them self-dependent, so that no longer they shall have to import their corn from the Northwest, their lumber-men and hay from Maine, their manufactures from Massachusetts, their minerals from Pennsylvania, and to employ the shipping of the world. Finally, it must make it impossible for one overgrown interest to plunge the whole community unresistingly into frantic rebellion or needless war. They must learn that a well-conditioned state is, so far as may be, perfect in itself,—and, to be perfect in itself, must be intelligent and free. When these lessons are taught to the South, then will their divergence cease, and they will enter upon a new path of enjoyment, prosperity, and permanence. The world at present pays them an annual bribe of some \$65,000,000 to learn none of these lessons. Their material interest teaches them to bow down to the shrine of King Cotton. Here, then, lies the remedy with the disease. The prosperity of the country in general, and of the South in particular, demands that the reign of King Cotton should cease,—that his dynasty should be destroyed. This result can be obtained but in one way, and that seemingly ruinous. The present monopoly in their great staple commodity enjoyed by the South must be destroyed, and forever. This result every patriot and well-wisher of the South should ever long for; and yet, by every Southern statesman and philosopher, it is regarded as the one irremediable evil possible to their country. What miserable economy! what feeble foresight! What principle of political economy is better established than that a monopoly is a curse to both producer and consumer? To the first it pays a premium on fraud, sloth, and negligence; and to the second it supplies the worst possible article, in the worst possible way, at the highest possible price. In agriculture, in manufactures, in the professions, and in the arts, it is the greatest bar to improvement with which any branch of industry can be cursed. The South is now showing to the world an example of a great people borne down, crushed



Page 97

to the ground, cursed, by a monopoly. A fertile country of magnificent resources, inhabited by a great race, of inexhaustible energy, is abandoned to one pursuit;—the very riches of their position are as a pestilence to their prosperity. In the presence of their great monopoly, science, art, manufactures, mining, agriculture,—word, all the myriad branches of industry essential to the true prosperity of a state,—wither and die, that sanded cotton may be produced by the most costly of labor. For love of cotton, the very intelligence of the community, the life-blood of their polity, is disregarded and forgotten. Hence it is that the marble and freestone quarries of New England alone are far more important sources of revenue than all the subterranean deposits of the Servile States. Thus the monopoly which is the apparent source of their wealth is in reality their greatest curse; for it blinds them to the fact, that, with nations as with individuals, a healthy competition is the one essential to all true economy and real excellence. Monopolists are always blind, always practise a false economy. Adam Smith tells us that “it is not more than fifty years ago that some of the counties in the neighborhood of London petitioned the Parliament against the extension of the turnpike roads into the remoter counties. Those remoter counties, they pretended, from the cheapness of labor, would be able to sell their grass and corn cheaper in the London market than themselves, and would thereby reduce their rents and ruin their cultivation.” The great economist significantly adds,—“Their rents, however, have risen, and their cultivation has been improved, since that time.” Finally, to-day, would the cultivation of cereals in the Northwest be improved, if made a monopoly? would its inhabitants be richer? would their economy be better? Certainly not. Yet to-day they undersell the world, and, in spite of competition, are far richer, far more contented and prosperous, than their fellow-citizens in the South in the full enjoyment of their boasted dynasty of Cotton.

“Here,” said Wellington, on the Eton football ground, “we won the battle of Waterloo.” Not in angry declamation and wordy debate, in threats of secession and cries for coercion, amid the clash of party-politics, the windy declamation of blatant politicians, or the dirty scramble for office, is the destruction of the dynasty of King Cotton to be looked for. The laws of trade must be the great teacher; and here, as elsewhere, England, the noble nation of shopkeepers, must be the agent for the fulfilment of those laws. It is safe to-day to say, that, through the agency of England, and, in accordance with those laws, under a continuance of the present profit on that staple, the dynasty of King Cotton is doomed,—the monopoly which is now the basis of his power will be a monopoly no more. If saved at all from the blight of this monopoly, the South will be saved, not in New York or Boston, but in Liverpool,—not



Page 98

by the thinkers of America, but by the merchants of England. The real danger of the Cotton dynasty lies not in the hostility of the North, but in the exigencies of the market abroad; they struggle not against the varying fortunes of political warfare, but against the irreversible decrees of Fate. It is the old story of the Rutulian hero; and now, in the very crisis and agony of the battle, while the Cotton King is summoning all his resources and straining every nerve to cope successfully with its more apparent, but less formidable adversary, in the noisy struggle for temporary power, if it would listen for a moment to the voice of reason, and observe the still working of the laws of our being, it, too, might see cause to abandon the contest, with the angry lament, that, not by its opponent was it vanquished, but by the hostility of Jupiter and the gods. The operation of the laws of trade, as touching this monopoly, is beautifully simple. Already the indications are sufficient to tell us, that, under the sure, but silent working of those laws, the very profits of the Southern planter foreshadow the destruction of his monopoly. His dynasty rests upon the theory, that his negro is the only practical agency for the production of his staple. But the supply of African labor is limited, and the increased profit on cotton renders the cost of that labor heavier in its turn,—the value of the negro rising one hundred dollars for every additional cent of profit on a pound of cotton. The increased cost of the labor increases the cost of producing the cotton. The result is clear; and the history of the cotton-trade has twice verified it. The increased profits on the staple tempt competition, and, in the increased cost of production, render it possible. Two courses only are open to the South: either to submit to the destruction of their monopoly, or to try to retain it by a cheaper supply of labor. They now feel the pressure of the dilemma; and hence the cry to reopen the slave-trade. According to the iron policy of their dynasty, they must inundate their country with freshly imported barbarism, or compete with the world. They cry out for more Africans; and to their cry the voice of the civilized world returns its veto. The policy of King Cotton forces them to turn from the daylight of free labor now breaking in Texas. On the other hand, it is not credible that all the land adapted to the growth of the cotton-plant is confined to America; and, at the present value of the commodity, the land adapted to its growth would be sought out and used, though buried now in the jungles of India, the wellnigh impenetrable wildernesses of Africa, the table-lands of South America, or the islands of the Pacific. Already the organized energy of England has pushed its explorations, under Livingstone, Barth, and Clegg, into regions hitherto unknown. Already, under the increased consumption, one-third of the cotton consumed at Liverpool is the product of climes other than our own. Hundreds of miles



Page 99

of railroad in India are opening to the market vast regions to share in our profits and break down our monopoly. To-day, India, for home-consumption and exportation, produces twice the amount of cotton produced in America; and, under the increased profit of late years, the importation into England from that country has risen from 12,324,200 pounds in 1830, to 77,011,839 pounds in 1840, and, finally, to 250,338,144 pounds in 1857, or nearly twenty per cent of the whole amount imported, and more than one-fourth of the whole amount imported from America. The staple there produced does not, indeed, compare in quality with our own; but this remark does not apply to the staple produced in Africa,—the original home of the cotton-plant, as of the negro,—or to that of the cotton-producing islands of the Pacific. The inexhaustible fertility of the valley of the Nile—producing, with a single exception, the finest cotton of the world,—lying on the same latitude as the cotton-producing States of America, and overflowing with unemployed labor—will find its profit, at present prices, in the abandonment of the cultivation of corn, its staple product since the days of Joseph, to come in competition with the monopoly of the South. Peru, Australia, Cuba, Jamaica, and even the Feejee Islands, all are preparing to enter the lists. And, finally, the interior of Africa, the great unknown and unexplored land, which for centuries has baffled the enterprise of travellers, seems about to make known her secrets under the persuasive arguments of trade, and to make her cotton, and not her children, her staple export in the future. In the last fact is to be seen a poetic justice. Africa, outraged, scorned, down-trodden, is, perhaps, to drag down forever the great enslaver of her offspring.

Thus the monopoly of King Cotton hangs upon a thread. Its profits must fall, or it must cease to exist. If subject to no disturbing influence, such as war, which would force the world to look elsewhere for its supply, and thus unnaturally force production elsewhere, the growth of this competition will probably be slow. Another War of 1812, or any long-continued civil convulsions, would force England to look to other sources of supply, and, thus forcing production, would probably be the death-blow of the monopoly. Apart from all disturbing influences arising from the rashness of his own lieges, or other causes, the reign of King Cotton at present prices may be expected to continue some ten years longer. For so long, then, this disturbing influence may be looked for in American politics; and then we may hope that this tremendous material influence, become subject, like others, to the laws of trade and competition, will cease to threaten our liberties by silently sapping their very foundation. As in the course of years competition gradually increases, the effect of this competition on the South will probably be most beneficial. The change from monopoly to competition, distributed over many years, will



Page 100

come with no sudden and destructive shock, but will take place imperceptibly. The fall of the dynasty will be gradual; and with the dynasty must fall its policy. Its fruits must be eradicated by time. Under the healing influence of time, the South, still young and energetic, ceasing to think of one thing alone, will quickly turn its attention to many. Education will be more sought for, as the policy which resisted it, and made its diffusion impossible, ceases to exist. With the growth of other branches of industry, labor will become respectable and profitable, and laborers will flock to the country; and a new, a purer, and more prosperous future will open upon the entire Republic. Perhaps, also, it may in time be discovered that even slave-labor is most profitable when most intelligent and best rewarded,—that the present mode of growing cotton is the most wasteful and extravagant, and one not bearing competition. Thus even the African may reap benefit from the result, and in his increased self-respect and intelligence may be found the real prosperity of the master. And thus the peaceful laws of trade may do the work which agitation has attempted in vain. Sweet concord may come from this dark chaos, and the world receive another proof, that material interest, well understood, is not in conflict, but in beautiful unison with general morality, all-pervading intelligence, and the precepts of Christianity. Under these influences, too, the very supply of cotton will probably be immensely increased. Its cultivation, like the cultivation of their staple products by the English counties mentioned by Smith, will not languish, but flourish, under the influence of healthy competition.—These views, though simply the apparently legitimate result of principle and experience, are by no means unsupported by authority. They are the same results arrived at from the reflections of the most unprejudiced of observers. A shrewd Northern gentleman, who has more recently and thoroughly than any other writer travelled through the Southern States, in the final summary of his observations thus covers all the positions here taken. “My conclusion,” says Mr. Olmsted, “is this,—that there is no physical obstacle in the way of our country’s supplying ten bales of cotton where it now does one. All that is necessary for this purpose is to direct to the cotton-producing region an adequate number of laborers, either black or white, or both. No amalgamation, no association on equality, no violent disruption of present relations is necessary. It is necessary that there should be more objects of industry, more varied enterprises, more general intelligence among the people,—and, especially, that they should become, or should desire to become, richer, more comfortable, than they are.”



Page 101

It is not pleasant to turn from this, and view the reverse of the picture. But, unless our Southern brethren, in obedience to some great law of trade or morals, return from their divergence,—if, still being a republic in form, the South close her ears to the great truth, that education is democracy's first law of self-preservation,—if the dynasty of King Cotton, unshaken by present indications, should continue indefinitely, and still the South should bow itself down as now before its throne,—it requires no gift of prophecy to read her future. As you sow, so shall you reap; and communities, like individuals, who sow the wind, must, in the fulness of time, look to reap the whirlwind. The Constitution of our Federal Union guaranties to each member composing it a republican form of government; but no constitution can guaranty that universal intelligence of the people without which, soon or late, a republican government must become, not only a form, but a mockery. Under the Cotton dynasty, the South has undoubtedly lost sight of this great principle; and unless she return and bind herself closely to it, her fate is fixed. Under the present monopolizing sway of King Cotton,—soon or late, in the Union, or out of the Union,—her government must cease to be republican, and relapse into anarchy, unless previously, abandoning the experiment of democracy in despair, she take refuge in a government of force. The Northern States, the educational communities, have apparently little to fear while they cling closely to the principles inherent in their nature. With the Servile States, or away from them, the experiment of a constitutional republic can apparently be carried on with success through an indefinite lapse of time; but though, with the assistance of an original impetus and custom, they may temporarily drag along their stumbling brethren of the South, the catastrophe is but deferred, not avoided. Out of the Union, the more extreme Southern States—those in which King Cotton has already firmly established his dynasty—are, if we may judge by passing events, ripe for the result. The more Northern have yet a reprieve of fate, as having not yet wholly forgotten the lessons of their origin. The result, however, be it delayed for one year or for one hundred years, can hardly admit of doubt. The emergency which is to try their system may not arise for many years; but passing events warn us that it maybe upon them now. The most philosophical of modern French historians, in describing the latter days of the Roman Empire, tells us that “the higher classes of a nation can communicate virtue and wisdom to the government, if they themselves are virtuous and wise: but they can never give it strength; for strength always comes from below; it always proceeds from the masses.” The Cotton dynasty pretends not only to maintain a government where the masses are slaves, but a republican government where the vast majority of the higher classes are ignorant. On the intelligence of the mass



Page 102

of the whites the South must rely for its republican permanence, as on their arms it must rely for its force; and here again, the words of Sismondi, written of falling Rome, seem already applicable to the South: —“Thus all that class of free cultivators, who more than any other class feel the love of country, who could defend the soil, and who ought to furnish the best soldiers, disappeared almost entirely. The number of small farmers diminished to such a degree, that a rich man, a man of noble family, had often to travel more than ten leagues before falling in with an equal or a neighbor.” The destruction of the republican form of government is, then, almost the necessary catastrophe; but what will follow that catastrophe it is not so easy to foretell. The Republic, thus undermined, will fall; but what shall supply its place? The tendency of decaying republics is to anarchy; and men take refuge from the terrors of anarchy in despotism. The South least of all can indulge in anarchy, as it would at once tend to servile insurrection. They cannot long be torn by civil war, for the same reason. The ever-present, all-pervading fear of the African must force them into some government, and the stronger the better. The social divisions of the South, into the rich and educated whites, the poor and ignorant whites, and the servile class, would seem naturally to point to an aristocratic or constitutional-monarchical form of government. But, in their transition state, difficulties are to be met in all directions; and the well-ordered social distinctions of a constitutional monarchy seem hardly consistent with the time-honored licentious independence and rude equality of Southern society. The reign of King Cotton, however, conducted under the present policy, must inevitably tend to increase and aggravate all the present social tendencies of the Southern system,— all the anti-republican affinities already strongly developed. It makes deeper the chasm dividing the rich and the poor; it increases vastly the ranks of the uneducated; and, finally, while most unnaturally forcing the increase of the already threatening African infusion, it also tends to make the servile condition more unendurable, and its burdens heavier.

The modern Southern politician is the least far-seeing of all our short-sighted classes of American statesmen. In the existence of a nation, a generation should be considered but as a year in the life of man, and a century but as a generation of citizens. Soon or late, in the lives of this generation or of their descendants, in the Union or out of the Union, the servile members of this Confederacy must, under the results of the prolonged dynasty of Cotton, make their election either to purchase their security, like Cuba, by dependence on the strong arm of external force, or they must meet national exigencies, pass through revolutions, and destroy and reconstruct governments, making every movement on the surface of a seething,



Page 103

heaving volcano. All movements of the present, looking only to the forms of government of the master, must be carried on before the face of the slave, and the question of class will ever be complicated by that of caste. What the result of the ever-increasing tendencies of the Cotton dynasty will be it is therefore impossible to more than dream. But is it fair to presume that the immense servile population should thus see upturnings and revolutions, dynasties rising and falling before their eyes, and ever remain quiet and contented? “Nothing,” said Jefferson, “is more surely written in the Book of Fate than that this people must be free.” Fit for freedom at present they are not, and, under the existing policy of the Cotton dynasty, never can be. “Whether under any circumstances they could become so is not here a subject of discussion; but, surely, the day will come when the white caste will wish the experiment had been tried. The argument of the Cotton King against the alleviation of the condition of the African is, that his nature does not admit of his enjoyment of true freedom consistently with the security of the community, and therefore he must have none. But certainly his school has been of the worst. Would not, perhaps, the reflections applied to the case of the French peasants of a century ago apply also to them?” It is not under oppression that we learn how to use freedom. The ordinary sophism by which misrule is defended is, when truly stilted, this: The people must continue in slavery, because slavery has generated in them all the vices of slaves; because they are ignorant, they must remain under a power which has made and which keeps them ignorant; because they have been made ferocious by misgovernment, they must be misgoverned forever. If the system under which they live were so mild and liberal that under its operation they had become humane and enlightened, it would be safe to venture on a change; but, as this system has destroyed morality, and prevented the development of the intellect,—as it has turned men, who might, under different training, have formed a virtuous and happy community, into savage and stupid wild beasts, therefore it ought to last forever. Perhaps the counsellors of King Cotton think that in this case it will; but all history teaches us another lesson. If there be one spark of love for freedom in the nature of the African,—whether it be a love common to him with the man or the beast, the Caucasian or the chimpanzee,—the love of freedom as affording a means of improvement or an opportunity for sloth,—the policy of King Cotton will cause it to work its way out. It is impossible to say how long it will be in so doing, or what weight the broad back of the African will first be made to bear; but, if the spirit exist, some day it must out. This lesson is taught us by the whole recorded history of the world. Moses leading the Children of Israel up out of Egypt,—Spartacus at the gates of Rome,—the Jacquerie in



Page 104

France,—Jack Cade and Wat Tyler in England,—Nana Sahib and the Sepoys in India,—Toussaint l'Ouverture and the Haytiens,—and, finally, the insurrection of Nat Turner in this country, with those in Guiana, Jamaica, and St. Lucia: such examples, running through all history, point the same moral. This last result of the Cotton dynasty may come at any moment after the time shall once have arrived when, throughout any great tract of country, the suppressing force shall temporarily, with all the advantages of mastership, including intelligence and weapons, be unequal to coping with the force suppressed. That time may still be far off. Whether it be or not depends upon questions of government and the events of the chapter of accidents. If the Union should now be dissolved, and civil convulsions should follow, it may soon be upon us. But the superimposed force is yet too great under any circumstances, and the convulsion would probably be but temporary. At present, too, the value of the slave insures him tolerable treatment; but, as numbers increase, this value must diminish. Southern statesmen now assert that in thirty years there will be twelve million slaves in the South; and then, with increased numbers, why should not the philosophy of the sugar-plantation prevail, and it become part of the economy of the Cotton creed, that it is cheaper to work slaves to death and purchase fresh ones than to preserve their usefulness by moderate employment? Then the value of the slave will no longer protect him, and then the end will be nigh. Is this thirty or fifty years off? Perhaps not for a century hence will the policy of King Cotton work its legitimate results, and the volcano at length come to its head and defy all compression.

In one of the stories of the “Arabian Nights” we are told of an Afrite confined by King Solomon in a brazen vessel; and the Sultana tells us, that, during the first century of his confinement, he said in his heart,—“I will enrich whosoever will liberate me”; but no one liberated him. In the second century he said,—“Whosoever will liberate me, I will open to him the treasures of the earth”; but no one liberated him. And four centuries more passed, and he said,—“Whosoever shall liberate me, I will fulfil for him three wishes”; but still no one liberated him. Then despair at his long bondage took possession of his soul, and, in the eighth century, he swore,—“Whosoever shall liberate me, him will I surely slay!” Let the Southern statesmen look to it well that the breaking of the seal which confines our Afrite be not deferred till long bondage has turned his heart, like the heart of the Spirit in the fable, into gall and wormwood; lest, if the breaking of that seal be deferred to the eighth or even the sixth century, it result to our descendants like the breaking of the sixth seal of Revelation,—“And, lo! there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood, and



Page 105

the heaven departed as a scroll, when it is rolled together; and the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every free man hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, 'Fall on us and hide us, for the great day of wrath is come'" On that day, at least, will end the reign of King Cotton.

* * * * *

GLIMPSES OF GARIBALDI.

FIRST GLIMPSE.

It is a sultry morning in October, and we are steaming in a small Sardinian boat from Leghorn towards Naples. This city has fallen into the power of Garibaldi, who is concentrating his forces before Capua, while the King of Sardinia bears down with a goodly army from the North.

The first object of special interest which comes into view, after we pass the island of Elba, is Gaeta. Though care is taken not to run near enough to invite a chase from the Neapolitan frigates, we are yet able to obtain a distinct view of the last stronghold—the jumping-off place, as we hope it will prove—of Francis II. The white walls of the fortress rise grimly out of the sea, touching the land only upon one side, and looking as though they might task well the resources of modern warfare to reduce them. We soon make out the smoke of four or five steamers, which we suppose to be armed vessels, heading towards Gaeta.

About two o'clock we glide into the far-famed Bay of Naples, in company with the cool sea-breeze which there each afternoon sends to refresh the heated shore. As we swing round to our moorings, we pass numerous line-of-battle-ships and frigates bearing the flags of England, France, and Sardinia, but look in vain and with disappointment for the star-spangled banner. A single floating representative of American nationality is obliged to divide the favor of her presence between the ports of both the Two Sicilies, and at this time she is at the island portion of the kingdom.

Our craft is at once beset by boats, their owners pushing, vociferating, and chaffering for fares, as though Mammon, and not Moloch, were the ruling spirit. Together with a chance companion of the voyage, Signor Alvigini, *Intendente* of Genoa, and his party, we are soon in the hands of the *commissionnaire* of the Hotel de Rome. As we land, our passports are received by the police of Victor Emmanuel, who have replaced those of the late *regime*.



As we enter our carriage, we expect to see streets filled with crowds of turbulent people, or dotted with knots of persons conversing ominously in suppressed tones; and streets deserted, with shops closed; and streets barricaded. But in this matter we are agreeably disappointed. The shops are all open, the street venders are quietly tending their tables, people go about their ordinary affairs, and wear their



Page 106

commonplace, every-day look. The only difference apparent to the eye between the existing state of things and that which formerly obtained is, that there are few street brawls and robberies, though every one goes armed,—that the uniform of the soldiers of Francis II. is replaced by the dark gray dress of the National Guard,—and that the Hag of the Tyrant King no longer waves over the castle-prison of Sant' Elmo. Garibaldi, on leaving Naples, had formally confided the city to the National Guard; and they had nobly sustained the trust reposed in them.

A letter of introduction to General Orsini, brought safely with us, though not without adventure, through the Austrian dominions, gains a courteous reception from General Turr, chief aide-de-camp to the "Dictator," and a pass to the camp. General Turr, an Hungarian refugee, is a person of distinguished appearance, not a little heightened by his peculiar dress, which consists of the usual Garibaldian uniform partially covered with a white military cloak, which hangs gracefully over his elegant figure.

After a brief, but pleasant, interview with this gentleman, we climb to the Castle of Sant' Elmo, built on a high eminence commanding the town, and with its guns mounted, not so as to defend it against an invading enemy, but to hurl destruction on the devoted subjects of the Bourbon. We are told that the people had set their hearts on seeing this fortress, which they look upon as a standing menace, razed to the ground, and its site covered with peaceful dwellings. And it is not without regret that we have since learned that Victor Emmanuel has thought it inexpedient to comply with this wish. Nor, in our ignorance, can we divest ourselves entirely of the belief that it would have been a wise as well as conciliatory policy to do so.

We are politely shown over the castle by one of the National Guard, who hold it in charge, and see lounging upon one of its terraces, carefully guarded, but kindly allowed all practicable liberty, several officers of the late power, prisoners where they had formerly held despotic sway. We descend into the now empty dungeons, dark and noisome as they have been described, where victims of political accusation or suspicion have pined for years in dreary solitude. It produces a marked sensation in the minds of our Italian companions in this sad tour of inspection, when we tell them, through our guide Antonio, that these cells are the counterpart of the dungeons of the condemned in the prison of the Doges of Venice, as we had seen them a few days before,—save that the latter were better, in their day, in so far as in them the cold stone was originally lined and concealed by wooden casings, while in those before us the helpless prisoner in his gropings could touch only the hard rock, significant of the relentless despotism which enchained him. The walls are covered with the inscriptions of former tenants. In One place we discover a long line



Page 107

of marks in groups of fives,—like the tallies of our boyish sports,—but here used for how different a purpose! Were these the records of days, or weeks, or months? The only furniture of the cells is a raised platform of wood, the sole bed of the miserable inmate. The Italian visitors, before leaving, childishly vent their useless rage at the sight of these places of confinement, by breaking to pieces the windows and shutters, and scattering their fragments on the floor.

We have returned from Sant' Elmo, and, evening having arrived, are sitting in the smoking-room of the Hotel de Grande Bretagne, conversing with one of the English Volunteers, when our friend General J—n of the British Army, one of the lookers-on in Naples, comes in, having just returned from “the front.” He brings the news of a smart skirmish which has taken place during the day; of the English “Excursionists” being ordered out in advance; of their rushing with alacrity into the thickest of the fight, and bravely sustaining the conflict,—being, indeed, with difficulty withheld by their officers from needlessly exposing themselves. But this inspiring news is tinged with sadness. One of their number, well known and much beloved, had fallen, killed instantly by a bullet through the head. Military ardor, aroused by the report of brave deeds, is for a few moments held in abeyance by grief, and then rekindled by the desire of vengeance. Hot blood is up, and the prevailing feeling is a longing for a renewal of the fight. We are told, if we wish to see an action, to go to “the front” to-morrow. Accordingly we decide to be there.

The following day, our faithful *commissionnaire*, Antonio, places us in a carriage drawn by a powerful pair of horses, and headed for the Garibaldian camp. A hamper of provisions is not forgotten, and before starting we cause Antonio to double the supplies: we have a presentiment that we may find with whom to share them.

There are twelve miles before us to the nearest point in the camp, which is Caserta. Our chief object being to see the hero of Italy, if we do not find him at Caserta, we shall push on four miles farther, to Santa Maria; and, missing him there, ride still another four miles to Sant' Angelo, where rests the extreme right of the army over against Capua.

As we ride over the broad and level road from Naples to Caserta, bordered with lines of trees through its entire length, we are surprised to see not only husbandmen quietly tilling the fields, but laborers engaged in public works upon the highway, as if in the employ of a long established authority, and making it difficult to believe that we are in the midst of civil war, and under a provisional government of a few weeks' standing. But this and kindred wonders are fruits of the spell wrought by Garibaldi, who wove the most discordant elements into harmony, and made hostile factions work together for the common good, for the sake of the love they bore to him.



Page 108

About mid-day we arrive at a redoubt which covers a part of the road, leaving barely enough space for one vehicle to pass. We are of course stopped, but are courteously received by the officer of the guard. We show our pass from General Turr, giving us permission "freely to traverse all parts of the camp," and being told to drive on, find ourselves within the lines. As we proceed, we see laborers busily engaged throwing up breastworks, soldiers reposing beneath the trees, and on every side the paraphernalia of war.

Garibaldi is not here, nor do we find him at Santa Maria. So we prolong our ride to the twentieth mile by driving our reeking, but still vigorous horses to Sant' Angelo.

We are now in sight of Capua, where Francis II. is shut up with a strong garrison. The place is a compact walled town, crowned by the dome of a large and handsome church, and situated in a plain by the side of the Volturno. Though, contrary to expectation, there is no firing to-day, we see all about us the havoc of previous cannonadings. The houses we pass are riddled with round shot thrown by the besieged, and the ground is strewn with the limbs of trees severed by iron missiles. But where is Garibaldi? No one knows. Yonder, however, is a lofty hill, and upon its summit we descry three or four persons. It is there, we are told, that the Commander-in-Chief goes to observe the enemy, and among the forms we see is very probably the one we seek.

We have just got into our carriage again, and are debating as to whither we shall go next, when we are addressed from the road-side in English. There, dressed in the red shirt, are three young men, all not far from twenty years of age, members of the British regiment of "Excursionists." They are out foraging for their mess, and ask a ride with us to Santa Maria. We are only too glad of their company; and off we start, a carriage-full. Then commences a running fire of question and response. We find the society of our companions a valuable acquisition. They are from London,—young men of education, and full of enthusiasm for the cause of Italian liberty. One of them is a connection of our distinguished countrywoman, Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe. Before going to Santa Maria, they insist on doing the honors, and showing the objects of interest the vicinity. So they take us to their barrack, a large farm-house, and thence to "the front." To the latter spot our coachman declines driving, as his horses are not bullet-proof, and the enemy is not warranted to abstain from firing during our visit. So, proceeding on foot, we reach a low breastwork of sand-bags, with an orchard in advance of it. Here, our companions tell us, was the scene of yesterday's skirmish, in which they took an active part. The enemy had thrown out a detachment of sharp-shooters, who had entered the wood, and approached the breastwork. A battalion of the English Volunteers was ordered up. As they marched eagerly forwards, a body of Piedmontese,



Page 109

stationed a little from the road, shouted, "*Vivano gl' Inglesi! Vivano gl' Inglesi!*" At the breastworks where we are standing, the word was given to break ranks, and skirmish. Instantly they sprang over the wall, and took position behind the trees, to shoot "wherever they saw a head." Each soldier had his "covering man,"—a comrade stationed about ten feet behind him, whose duty it was to keep his own piece charged ready to kill any of the enemy who might attempt to pick off the leading man while the latter was loading. One of my young friends had the hammer of his rifle shot off in his hand. He kept his position till another weapon was passed out to him. The action lasted till evening, when the enemy drew off, there being various and uncertain reports as to their loss. Our British cousins had some ten wounded, besides the one killed. Fighting royalists, we will mention here, was no fancy-work about that time, as the Neapolitans had an ugly trick of extinguishing the eyes of their prisoners, and then putting their victims to death.

We return to our carriage, drive into a sheltered spot, and give the word of command to Antonio to open the hamper and deploy his supplies, when hungry soldiers vie with the ravenous traveller in a knife-and-fork skirmish. No fault was found with the *cuisine* of the Hotel de Grande Bretagne.

The rations disposed of, we set off again for Santa Maria. Arrived at the village, at the request of our companions, we visit with them a hospital, to see one of their comrades, wounded in the action of the preceding day, and, as we are known to profess the healing art, to give our opinion as to his condition. We enter a large court-yard surrounded with farm-buildings, one wing of which is devoted to hospital purposes. We find the wards clean and well ventilated, and wearing the look of being well attended. This favorable condition is owing in great measure to the interposition and supervision of several ladies, among whom are specially mentioned the two daughters of an English clergyman, without omitting the name of the Countess della Torres. The wounded comrade of our friends had been struck by a ball, which had not been readied by the probe, and was supposed to have entered the lung. The poor young fellow draws his rapid breath with much pain, but is full of pluck, and meets the encouraging assurances of his friends with a smile and words of fortitude. Some time afterwards we learn that he is convalescent, though in a disabled state.

It now becomes necessary to say our mutual farewells, which we do as cordially as though we had been old friends. We go our respective ways, to meet once more in Italy, and to renew our acquaintance again in London, where we subsequently spend a pleasant evening together by a cheerful English fireside.



Page 110

Scarcely have we parted with these new-found friends of kindred blood and common language, when we are provided with another companion. An Italian officer asks a seat with us to Caserta. Our letter of introduction to General Orsini being shown to him, he volunteers to assist us in attaining our object, that of seeing the hero of Italy. At five, we are before the palace of Caserta, now a barrack, and the head-quarters of the Commander-in-Chief. The building is one of great size and beauty of architecture. A lofty arch, sustained by elegant and massive marble pillars, bisects the structure, and on either side one may pass from the archway into open areas of spacious dimensions, from which lead passages to the various offices. We approach a very splendid marble staircase leading to the state apartments. A sentinel forbids us to pass. This is, then, perhaps, the part of the building occupied by the Commander-in-Chief. Not so. The state apartments are unoccupied, and are kept sacred from intrusion, as the property of the nation to which they are to belong. Garibaldi's apartments are among the humblest in the palace. We go on to the end of the archway, and see, stretching as far as the eye can reach, the Royal Drive, leading through a fine avenue of trees, and reminding us of the "Long Walk" at Windsor Castle. Retracing our steps, and crossing one of the courtyards, we ascend a modest staircase, and are in the antechamber of the apartments of the Commander-in-Chief. There are sentinels at the outer door, others at the first landing, and a guard of honor, armed with halberds, in the antechamber. Our courteous companion, by virtue of his official rank, has passed us without difficulty by the sentries, and quits us to discharge the duty which brought him to Caserta.

We are now eagerly expectant of the arrival of him whose face we have so long sought. The hour is at hand when he joins his military family at an unostentatious and very frugal dinner. In about half an hour there is a sudden cessation in the hum of conversation, the guard is ordered to stand to arms, and in a moment more, amid profound silence, Garibaldi has passed through the antechamber, leaving the place, as it were, pervaded by his presence. We had beheld an erect form, of rather low stature, but broad and compact, a lofty brow, a composed and thoughtful face, with decision and reserved force depicted on every line of it. In the mien and carriage we had seen realized all that we had read and heard of the air of one born to command.

Our hero wore the characteristic red shirt and gray trousers, and, thrown over them, a short gray cloak faced with red. When without the cloak, there might be seen, hanging upon the back, and fastened around the throat, the party-colored kerchief usually appertaining to priestly vestments.

Returning to Naples, and sitting that night at our window, with the most beautiful of bays before us, we treasure up for perpetual recollection the picture of Garibaldi at head-quarters.



Page 111

GARIBALDI AT POMPEII.

It is Sunday, the 21st of October. We have to-day observed the people, in the worst quarters of the city as well as in the best, casting their ballots in an orderly and quiet manner, under the supervision of the National Guard, for Victor Emmanuel as their ruler. To-morrow we have set apart for exploring Pompeii, little dreaming what awaits us there. Our friend, General J—n, of the British Army, learning that there is no likelihood of active operations at “the front,” proposes to join us in our excursion.

We are seated in the restaurant at the foot of the acclivity which leads to the exhumed city, when suddenly Antonio appears and exclaims, “Garibaldi!” We look in the direction he indicates, and, in an avenue leading from the railway, we behold the Patriot-Soldier of Italy advancing toward us, accompanied by the Countess Pallavicini, the wife of the Dictator of Naples, and attended by General Turr, with several others of his staff. We go out to meet them. General J—n, a warm admirer of Garibaldi, gives him a cordial greeting, and presents us as an American. We say a few words expressive of the sympathy entertained by the American people for the cause of Italy and its apostle. He whom we thus address, in his reply, professes his happiness in enjoying the good wishes of Americans, and, gracefully turning to our friend, adds, “I am grateful also for the sympathy of the English.” The party then pass on, and we are left with the glowing thought that we have grasped the hand of Garibaldi.

Half an hour later, we are absorbed in examining one of the structures of what was once Pompeii, when suddenly we hear martial music. We follow the direction of the sound, and presently find ourselves in the ancient forum. In the centre of the inclosure is a military band playing the “Hymn of Garibaldi”; while at its northern extremity, standing, facing us, between the columns of the temple of Jupiter, with full effect given to the majesty of his bearing, is Garibaldi. Moved by the strikingly contrasting associations of the time and the place, we turn to General J—n, saying, “Behold around us the symbols of the death of Italy, and there the harbinger of its resurrection.” Our companion, fired with a like enthusiasm, immediately advances to the base of the temple, and, removing his hat, repeats the words in the presence of those there assembled.

GARIBALDI AT “THE FRONT.”

Once again we look in the eye of this wonderful man, and take him by the hand. This time it is at “the front.” On Saturday, the 27th of October, we are preparing to leave Naples for Rome by the afternoon boat, when we receive a message from General J—n that the bombardment of Capua is to begin on the following day at ten o’clock, and inviting us to join his party to the camp. Accordingly, postponing our departure for the North, we get together a few surgical instruments, and take a military train upon the railway in the afternoon for the field of action.



Page 112

Our party consists of General J—n, General W., of Virginia, Captain G., a Scotch officer serving in Italy, and ourself. Arrived at Caserta, Captain G., showing military despatches, is provided with a carriage, in which we all drive to the advanced post at Sant' Angelo. We reach this place at about eight o'clock, when we ride and walk through the camp, which presents a most picturesque aspect, illuminated as it is by a brilliant moon. We see clusters of white tents, with now and then the general silence broken by the sound of singing wafted to us from among them,—here and there tired soldiers lying asleep on the ground, covered with their cloaks,—horses picketed in the fields,—camp-fires burning brightly in various directions; while all seems to indicate the profound repose of men preparing for serious work on the morrow. We pass and repass a bridge, a short time before thrown across the Volturno. A portion of the structure has broken down; but our English friends congratulate themselves that the part built by their compatriots has stood firm. We exchange greetings with Colonel Bourdonne, who is on duty here for the night, superintending the repairs of the bridge, and who kindly consigns us to his quarters.

Arrived at the farm-house where Colonel Bourdonne has established himself, and using his name, we are received with the utmost attention by the servants. The only room at their disposal, fortunately a large one, they soon arrange for our accommodation. To General J—n, the senior of the party, is assigned the only bed; an Italian officer occupies a sofa; while General W., Captain G., and ourself are ranged, "all in a row," on bags of straw placed upon the floor. Of the merriment, prolonged far into the night, and making the house resound with peals of laughter,—not at all to the benefit, we fear, of several wounded officers in a neighboring room,—we may not write.

Sunday is a warm, clear, summer-like day, and our party climb the principal eminence of Sant' Angelo to witness the expected bombardment. We reach the summit at ten minutes before ten, the hour announced for opening fire. We find several officers assembled there,—among them General H., of Virginia. Low tone of conversation and a restrained demeanor are impressed on all; for, a few paces off, conferring with two or three confidential aids, is the man whose very presence is dignity,—Garibaldi.

Casting our eye over the field, we cannot realize that there are such hosts of men under arms about us, till a military guide by our side points out their distribution to us.

"Look there!" says General H., pointing to an orchard beneath. "Under those trees they are swarming thick as bees. There are ten thousand men, at least, in that spot alone."



Page 113

With an opera-glass we can distinctly scan the walls of Capua, and observe that they are not yet manned. But the besieged are throwing out troops by thousands into the field before our lines. We remark one large body drawn up in the shelter of the shadow cast by a large building. Every now and then, from out this shadow, a piercing ray of light is shot, reflected from the helm or sword-case of the commanding officer, who is gallantly riding up and down before his men, and probably haranguing them in preparation for the expected conflict. All these things strike the attention with a force and meaning far different from the impression produced by the holiday pageantry of mimic war.

The Commander-in-Chief is now disengaged, and our party approach him to pay their respects. By the advice of General J—n, we proffer our medical services for the day; and we receive a pressure of the hand, a genial look, and a kind acknowledgment of the offer. But we are told there will be no general action to-day. Our report of these words, as we rejoin our companions, is the first intimation given that the bombardment is deferred. But, though, there is some disappointment, their surprise is not extreme. For Garibaldi never informs even his nearest aide-de-camp what he is about to do. In fact, he quaintly says, "If his shirt knew his plans, he would take it off and burn it." Some half-hour later, having descended from the eminence, we take our last look of Garibaldi. He has retired with a single servant to a sequestered place upon the mount, whither he daily resorts, and where his mid-day repast is brought to him. Here he spends an hour or two secure from interruption. What thoughts he ponders in his solitude the reader may perhaps conjecture as well as his most intimate friend. But for us, with the holy associations of a very high mountain before our mind, we can but trust that a prayer, "uttered or unexpressed," invokes the divine blessing upon the work to which Garibaldi devotes himself,—the political salvation of his country.

* * * * *

TWO OR THREE TROUBLES.

[Concluded.]

Every day, and twice a day, came Mr. Sampson,—though I have not said much about it; and now it was only a week before our marriage. This evening he came in very weary with his day's work,—getting a wretched man off from hanging, who probably deserved it richly. (It is said, women are always for hanging: and that is very likely. I remember, when there had been a terrible murder in our parlors, as it were, and it was doubtful for some time whether the murderer would be convicted, Mrs. Harris said, plaintively, "Oh, do hang somebody!") Mr. Sampson did not think so, apparently, but sat on the sofa by the window, dull and abstracted.



Page 114

If I had been his wife, I should have done as I always do now in such a case: walked up to him, settled the sofa-cushion, and said,—“Here, now! lie down, and don’t speak a word for two hours. Meantime I will tell you who has been here, and everything.” Thus I should rest and divert him by idle chatter, bathing his tired brain with good Cologne; and if, in the middle of my best story and funniest joke, he fairly dropped off to sleep, I should just fan him softly, keep the flies away, say in my heart, “Bless him! there he goes! hands couldn’t mend him!”—and then look at him with as much more pride and satisfaction than, at any other common wide-awake face as it is possible to conceive.

However, not being married, and having a whole week more to be silly in, I was both silly and suspicious. This was partly his fault. He was reserved, naturally and habitually; and as he didn’t tell me he was tired and soul-weary, I never thought of that. Instead, as he sat on the sofa, I took a long string of knitting-work and seated myself across the room,—partly so that he might come to me, where there was a good seat. Then, as he did not cross the room, but still sat quietly on the sofa, I began to wonder and suspect. Did he work too hard? Did he dread undertaking matrimony? Did he wish he could get off? Why did he not come and speak to me? What had I done? Nothing! Nothing!

Here Laura came in to say she was going to Mrs. Harris’s to get the newest news about sleeves. Mrs. Harris for sleeves; Mrs. Gore for bonnets; and for housekeeping, recipes, and all that, who but Mrs. Parker, who knew that, and a hundred other things? Many-sided are we all: talking sentiment with this one, housekeeping with that, and to a third saying what wild horses would not tear from us to the two first!

Laura went. And presently he said, wearily, but / thought drearily,—

“Delphine, are you all ready to be married?”

The blood flushed from my heart to my forehead and back again. So, then, he thought I was ready and waiting to drop like a ripe plum into his mouth, without his asking me! Am I ready, indeed? And suppose I am not? Perhaps I, too, may have my misgivings. A woman’s place is not a sinecure. Troubles, annoyances, as the sparks fly upward! Buttons to begin with, and everything to end with! What did Mrs. Hemans say, poor woman?

“Her lot is on you! silent tears to weep,
And patient smiles to wear through suffering’s hour,
And sumless riches from affection’s deep
To pour on”—something—“a wasted shower!”

Yes, wasted, indeed! I hadn’t answered a word to his question.

“It seems warm in this room,” said he again, languidly; “shall we walk on the piazza?”



“I think not,” I answered, curtly; “I am not warm.”

Even that, did not bring him to me. He still leaned his head on his hand for a minute or two, and then rose from the sofa and sat by the window, looking at the western sky, where the sun had long gone down. I could see his profile against the outer light, however, and it did not look placid. His brow was knit and mouth compressed. So, then, it was all very likely!



Page 115

Having set out on my race of suspecting, my steeds did not lag. They were winged already, and I goaded them continually with memories. There was nothing I did not think of or accuse him of,—especially, the last and worst sin of breaking off our engagement at the eleventh hour!—and I, who had suffered silently, secretly, untold torments about that name of his,—nobody, no man, could ever guess how keenly, because no man can ever feel as a woman does about such things! Men,—they would as soon marry Tabitha as Juliana. They could call her “Wife.” It made no matter to them. What did any man care, provided she chronicled small beer, whether she had taste, feeling, sentiment, anything? Here I was wrong, as most passionate people are at some time in their lives. Some men do care.

At the moment I had reached the top-most pinnacle of my wrath, and was darting lightnings on all mankind, Polly showed in Lieutenant Herbert, with his book of promised engravings.

With a natural revulsion of temper, I descended rapidly from my pinnacle, and, stepping half-way across the room, met the Lieutenant with unusual cordiality. Mr. Sampson bowed slightly and sat still. I drew two chairs towards the centre-table, lighted the argand, and seated myself with the young officer to examine and admire the beautiful forms in which the gifted artist has clothed the words rather than the thoughts of the writer,—out of the coarse real, lifting the scenes into the sweet ideal,—and out of the commonest, rudest New-England life, bringing the purest and most charming idyllic song. We did not say this.

I looked across at the window, where still sat the figure, motionless. Not a word from him. I looked at Lieutenant Herbert. He was really very handsome, with an imperial brow, and roseate lips like a girl’s. Somehow he made me think of Claverhouse,—so feminine in feature, so martial in action! Then he talked,—talked really quite well,—reflected my own ideas in an animated and eloquent manner.

Why it was,—whether Herbert suspected we had had a lovers’ quarrel,—or whether his vanity was flattered at my attention to him, which was entirely unusual,—or whether my own excited, nervous condition led me to express the most joyous life and good-humor, and shut down all my angry sorrow and indignant suspicions, while I smiled and danced over their sepulchre,—however it was, I know not,—but a new sparkle came into the blue eyes of the young militaire. He was positively entertaining. Conscious that he was talking well, he talked better. He recited poetry; he was even witty, or seemed so. With the magnetism of cordial sympathy, I called out from his memory treasures new and old. He became not only animated, but devoted.



Page 116

All this time the figure at the window sat calm and composed. It was intensely, madly provoking. He was so very sure of me, it appeared, he would not take the trouble to enter the lists to shiver a lance with this elegant young man with the beautiful name, the beautiful lips, and with, for the last half-hour at least, the beautiful tongue. He would not trouble himself to entertain his future wife. He would not trouble himself even to speak. Very well! Very well indeed! Did the Lieutenant like music? If "he" did not care a jot for me, perhaps others did. My heart beat very fast now; my cheeks burned, and my lips were parched. A glass of water restored me to calmness, and I sat at the piano. Herbert turned over the music, while I rattled off whatever came to my fingers' ends,—I did not mind or know what. It was very fine, I dare say. He whispered that it was "so beautiful!"—and I answered nothing, but kept on playing, playing, playing, as the little girl in the Danish story keeps on dancing, dancing, dancing, with the fairy red shoes on. Should I play on forever? In the church,—out of it,—up the street,—down the street,—out in the fields,—under the trees,—by the wood,—by the water,—in cathedrals,—I heard something murmuring,—something softly, softly in my ear. Still I played on and on, and still something murmured softly, softly in my ear. I looked at the window. The head was leaned down, and resting on both arms. Fast asleep, probably. Then I played louder, and faster, and wilder.

Then, for the first time, as deaf persons are said to hear well in the noise of a crowded street, or in a rail-car, so did I hear in the musical tumult, for the first time, the words of Herbert. They had been whispered, and I had heard, but not perceived them, till this moment.

I turned towards him, looked him full in the face, and dropped both hands into my lap. Well might I be astonished! He started and blushed violently, but said nothing. As for me, I was never more calm in my life. In the face of a real mistake, all imaginary ones fell to the ground, motionless as so many men of straw. With an instinct that went before thought, and was born of my complete love and perfect reliance on my future husband, I pushed back the music-stool, and walked straight across the room to the window.

His head was indeed leaned on his arms; but he was white and insensible.

"Come here!" I said, sternly and commandingly, to Herbert, who stood where I had left him. "Now, if you can, hold him, while I wheel this sofa;—and now, ring the bell, if you please."

We placed him on the couch, and Polly came running in.

"Now, good-night, Sir; we can take care of him. With very many thanks for your politeness," I added, coldly; "and I will send home the book to-morrow."



He muttered something about keeping it as long as I wished, and I turned my back on him.

“Oh! oh!—what had *he* thought all this time?—what had he suffered? How his heart must have been agonized!—how terribly he must have felt the mortification,—the distress! Oh!”



Page 117

We recovered him at length from the dead faint into which he had fallen. Polly, who thought but of the body, insisted on bringing him “a good heavy-glass of Port-wine sangaree, with toasted crackers in it”; and wouldn’t let him speak till he had drunken and eaten. Then she went out of the room, and left me alone with my justly incensed lover.

I took a *brioche*, and sat down humbly at the head of the sofa. He held out his hand, which I took and pressed in mine,—silently, to be sure; but then no words could tell how I had felt, and now felt,—how humiliated! how grieved! How wrongly I must have seemed to feel and to act! how wrongly I must have acted,—though my conscience excused me from feeling wrongly,—so to have deluded Herbert!

At last I murmured something regretful and tearful about Lieutenant Herbert—Herbert! how I had admired that name!—and now, this Ithuriel touch, how it had changed it and him forever to me! What was in a name?—sure enough! As I gazed on the pale face on the couch, I should not have cared, if it had been named Alligator,—so elevated was I beyond all I had thought or called trouble of that sort! so real was the trouble that could affect the feelings, the sensitiveness, of the noble being before me!

At length he spoke, very calmly and quietly, setting down the empty tumbler. I trembled, for I knew it must come.

“I was so glad that fool came in, Del! For, to tell the truth, I felt really too weak to talk. I haven’t slept for two nights, and have been on my feet and talking for four hours,—then I have had no dinner”—

“Oh!”

“And a damned intelligent jury, (I beg your pardon, but it’s a great comfort to swear, sometimes,) that I can’t humbug. But I must! I must, to-morrow!” he exclaimed, springing up from the sofa and walking hurriedly across the room.

“Oh, do sit down, if you are so tired!”

“I cannot sit down, unless you will let me stop thinking. I have but one idea constantly.”

“But if the man is guilty, why do you want to clear him?” said I.

Not a word had he been thinking of me or of Herbert all this time! But then he had been thinking of a matter of life and death. How all, all my foolish feelings took to flight! It was some comfort that my lover had not either seen or suspected them. He thought he must have been nearly senseless for some time. The last he remembered was, we were looking at some pictures.



Laura came in from Mrs. Harris's, and, hearing how the case was, insisted on having a chicken broiled, and that he should eat some green-apple tarts, of her own cooking,—not sentimental, nor even wholesome, but they suited the occasion; and we sat, after that, all three talking, till past twelve o'clock. No danger now, Laura said, of bad dreams, if he did go to bed.

“But why do you care so very much, if you don't get him off?—you suppose him guilty, you say?”



Page 118

“Because, Delphine, his punishment is abominably disproportioned to his offence. This letter of the law killeth. And then I would get him off, if possible, for the sake of his son and the family. And besides all that, Del, it is not for me to judge, you know, but to defend him.”

“Yes,—but if you do your best?” I inquired.

“A lawyer never does his best,” he replied, hastily, “unless he succeeds. He must get his client’s case, or get him off, I must get some sleep to-night,” he added, “and take another pull. There’s a man on the jury,—he is the only one who holds out. I know I don’t get him. And I know why. I see it in the cold steel of his eyes. His sister was left, within a week of their marriage-day, by a scoundrel,—left, too, to disgrace, as well as desertion,—and his heart is bitter towards all offences of the sort. I must get that man somehow!”

He was standing on the steps, as he spoke, and bidding me good-night; but I saw his head and heart were both full of his case, *and nothing else*.

The words rang in my ear after he went away: “Within a week of their marriage-day!” In a week we were to have been married. Thank Heaven, we were still to be married in a week. And he had spoken of the man as “a scoundrel,” who left her. America, indeed! what matters it? Still, there would be the same head, the same heart, the same manliness, strength, nobleness,—all that a woman can truly honor and love. Not military, and not a scoundrel; but plain, massive, gentle, direct. He would do. And a sense of full happiness pressed up to my very lips, and bubbled over in laughter.

“You are a happy girl, Del. Mrs. Harris says the court and everybody is talking of Mr. Sampson’s great plea in that Shore case. Whether he gets it or not, his fortune is made. They say there hasn’t been such an argument since Webster’s time,—so irresistible. It took every body off their feet.”

I did not answer a word,—only clothed my soul with sackcloth and ashes, and called it good enough for me.

We went to bed. But in the middle of the night I waked Laura.

“What’s the matter?” said she, springing out of bed.

“Don’t, Laura!—nothing,” said I.

“Oh, I thought you were ill! I’ve been sleeping with one eye open, and just dropped away. What is it?”

“Do lie down, then. I only wanted to ask you a question.”



“Oh, *do* go to sleep! It’s after three o’clock now. We never shall get up. Haven’t you been asleep yet?”

“No,—I’ve been thinking all the time. But you are impatient. It’s no matter. Wait till to-morrow morning.”

“No. I am awake now. Tell me, and be done with it, Del.”

“But I shall want your opinion, you know.”

“Oh, *will* you tell me, Del?”

“Well, it is this. How do you think a handsome, a *very* handsome chess-table would do?”



Page 119

“Do!—for what?”

“Why,—for my aunt’s wedding-gift, you know.”

“Oh, that! And you have waked me up, at this time of night, from the nicest dream! You cruel thing!”

“I am so sorry, Laura! But now that you are awake, just tell me how you like the idea;—I won’t ask you another word.”

“Very well,—very good,—excellent,” murmured Laura.

In the course of the next ten minutes, however, I remembered that Laura never played chess, and that I had heard Mr. Sampson say once that he never played now,—that it was too easy for work, and too hard for amusement. So I put the chess-table entirely aside, and began again.

A position for sleep is, unluckily, the one that is sure to keep one awake. Lying down, all the blood in my body kept rushing to my brain, keeping up perpetual images of noun substantives. If I could have spent my fifty dollars in verbs, in taking a journey, in giving a *fete champetre*! (Garden lighted with Chinese lanterns, of course,—house covered inside and out with roses.) Things enough, indeed, there were to be bought. But the right thing!

A house, a park, a pair of horses, a curricule, a pony-phaeton. But how many feet of ground would fifty dollars buy?—and scarcely the hoof of a horse.

There was a diamond ring. Not for me; because “he” had been too poor to offer me one. But I could give it to him. No,—that wouldn’t do. He wouldn’t wear it,—nor a pin of ditto. He had said, simplicity in dress was good economy and always good taste. No. Then something else,—that wouldn’t wear, wouldn’t tear, wouldn’t lose, rust, break.

As to clothes, to which I swung back in despair,—this very Aunt Allen had always sent us all our clothes. So it would only be getting more, and wouldn’t seem to be anything. She was an odd kind of woman,—generous in spots, as most people are, I believe. Laura and I both said, (to each other,) that, if she would allow us a hundred dollars a year each, we could dress well and suitably on it. But, instead of that, she sent us every year, with her best love, a trunk full of her own clothes, made for herself, and only a little worn,—always to be altered, and retrimmed, and refurbished: so that, although worth at first perhaps even more than two hundred dollars, they came, by their unfitness and non-fitness, to be worth to us only three-quarters of that sum; and Laura and I reckoned that we lost exactly fifty dollars a year by Aunt Allen’s queerness. So much for our gratitude! Laura and I concluded it would be a good lesson to us about giving; and she had whispered to me something of the same sort, when I insisted on dressing Betsy



Ann Hemmenway, a little mulatto, in an Oriental caftan and trousers, and had promised her a red sash for her waist. To be sure, Mrs. Hemmenway despised the whole thing, and said she “wouldn’t let Betsy Ann be dressed up like a circus-rider, for nobody”; and that she should “wear a bonnet



Page 120

and mantilly, like the rest of mankind.” Which, indeed, she did,—and her bonnet rivalled the *coiffures* of Paris in brilliancy and procrastination; for it never came in sight till long after its little mistress. However, of that by-and-by. I was only too glad that Aunt Allen had not sent me another silk gown “with her best love, and, as she was only seventy, perhaps it might be useful.” No,—here was the fifty-dollar note, thank Plutus!

But then, what to do with it? Sleeping, that was the question. Waking, that was the same.

At twelve o’clock Mr. Sampson came to dine with us, and to say he was the happiest of men.

“That is, of course, I shall be, next week,” said he, smiling and correcting himself. “But I am rather happy now; for I’ve got my case, and Shore has sailed for Australia. Good riddance, and may he never touch *these* shores any more!”

He had been shaking hands with everybody, he said,—and was so glad to be out of it!

“Now that it is all over, I wish you would tell me why you are so glad, when you honestly believe the man guilty,” said I.

“Oh, my child, you are supposing the law to be perfect. Suppose the old English law to be in force now, making stealing a capital offence. You wouldn’t hang a starving woman or child who stole the baker’s loaf from your window-sill this morning before Polly had time to take it in, would you? Yet this was the law until quite lately.”

“After all, I don’t quite see either how you can bear to defend him, if you think him guilty, or be glad to have him escape, if he is,—I mean, supposing the punishment to be a fair one.”

“Because I am a frail and erring man, Delphine, and like to get my case. If my client is guilty,—as we will suppose, for the sake of argument, he is,—he will not be likely to stop his evil career merely because he has got off now, and will be caught and hanged next time, possibly. If he does stop sinning, why, so much the better to have time for repentance, you know.”

“Don’t laugh,—now be serious.”

“I am. Once, I made up my mind as to my client’s guilt from what he told and did not tell me, and went into court with a heavy heart. However, in the course of the trial, evidence, totally unexpected to all of us, was brought forward, and my client’s innocence fully established. It was a good lesson to me. I learned by experience that



the business of counsel is to defend or to prosecute, and not to judge. The judge and jury are stereoscopic and see the whole figure.”

How wise and nice it sounded! Any way, I wasn’t a stereoscope, for I saw but one side,—the one “he” was on.

Monday morning. And we were to be married in the evening,—by ourselves, —nobody else. That was all the stipulation my lover made.

“I will be married morning, noon, or night, as you say, and dress and behave as you say; but not in a crowd of even three persons.”



Page 121

“Not even Laura?”

“Oh, yes! Laura.”

“Not even Polly?”

“Oh, yes! the household.”

And then he said, softly, that, if I wanted to please him,—and he knew his darling Del did,—I would dress in a white gown of some sort, and put a tea-rose in my beautiful dark hair, and have nobody by but just the family and old Mr. Price, the Boynton minister.

“I know that isn’t what you thought of, exactly. You thought of being married in church”——

“Oh, dear, dear! old Mr. Price!”—but I did not speak.

“But if you would be willing?”——

“I supposed it would be more convenient,” I muttered.

Visions of myself walking up the aisle, with a white silk on, tulle veil, orange-flowers, of course, (so becoming!) house crowded with friends, collation, walking under the trees, —all faded off with a mournful cry.

It was of no use talking. Whatever he thought best, I should do, if it were to be married by the headsman, supposing there were such a person. This was all settled, then, and had been for a week.

Nobody need say that lovers, or even married lovers, have but one mind. They have two minds always. And that is sometimes the best of it; since the perpetual sacrifices made to each other are made no sacrifices, but sweet triumphs, by their love. Still, just as much as green is composed of yellow and blue, and purple of red and blue, the rays can any time be separated, and they always have a conscious life of their own. Of course, I had a sort of pleasure even in giving up my marriage in church; but I kept my blue rays, for all that,—and told Laura I dreaded the long, long prayer in that evening’s service, and that I hoped in mercy old Mr. Price would have his wits about him, and not preach a funeral discourse.

“Old Mr. Price is eighty-nine years old, Laura says,” said I.

“Yes. He was the minister who married my father and mother, and has always been our minister,” answered my lover.



And so it was settled.

Laura was rolling up tape, Monday morning, as quietly as if there were to be no wedding. For my part, I wandered up and down, and could not set myself about anything.

“Old Mr. Price! and a great long prayer! And that is to be the end of it! My wedding-dress all made, and not to be worn! Flowers ditto! Nowhere to go, and so I shall stay at home. He has no house; so Taffy is to come to mine!”

And here I burst out laughing; for it was as well to laugh as cry; and besides, I said a great many things on purpose to have Laura say what she always did,—and which, after all, it was sweet to me to hear. Those were silly days!

“No, Del,—that is not the end of it,—only the beginning of it,—of a happy, useful, good life,—your path growing brighter and broader every year,—and—and—we won’t talk of the garlands, dear; but your heart will have bridal-blossoms, whether your head has or not.”



Page 122

Laura kissed me, with tears in her sisterly eyes. She never talks fine, and went directly out of the room after this.

I thought that women shouldn't swear at all, or, if they did, should break their oaths as gracefully as I did mine, when I whispered it was "so good of him, to be willing I should stay in the cottage where I had always lived, and where every rose-tree and lilac knew me!" And that was true, too. But not all the truth. What need to be telling truths all the time? And what had women tongues for, but to hold them sometimes? Perhaps "he," too, would have preferred a journey to Europe, and a house on the Mill-Dam.

Things gradually settled themselves. My troubles seemed coming to a close by mechanical pressure. As to the name, it was better than Fire, Famine, and Slaughter,—and I was to take it into consideration, any way, and get used to it, if I could. The other trouble I put aside for the moment. After it was concluded on that the wedding should be strictly private, it was not necessary to buy my aunt's present under a few days, and I could have the decided advantage, in that way, of avoiding a duplicate.

The Monday of my marriage sped away swiftly. Polly had come up early to say to "Laury" (for Polly was a free and independent American girl of forty-five) that "there'd be so much goin' to the door, and such, Betsy Ann had best be handy by, to answer the bell. Fin'ly, she's down there with her bunnet off, and goin' to stay."

As usual, Polly's plans were excellent, and adopted. There would be all the wedding-presents to arrive, congratulatory notes, *etc.* Everything to arrange, and a thousand and one things that neither one nor three pairs of hands could do. How I wished Betsy Ann would consent to dress like an Oriental child, and look pretty and picturesque,—like a Barbary slave bearing vessels of gold and silver chalices, instead of her silly pointed waist and "mantilly," which she persisted in wearing, and which, of course, gave the look only of a stranger and sojourner in the land!

I hoped she was a careful child,—there were so many things which might be spoiled, even if they came in boxes. Betsy Ann was instructed, on pain of—almost death, to be very, very careful, and to put everything on the table in the library. She was by no means to unpack an article, not even a bouquet. Laura and myself preferred to arrange everything ourselves. We proposed to place each of the presents, for that evening only, in the library, and spread them out as usual; but the very next day, we determined, they should all be put away, wherever they were to go,—of course, we could not tell where, till we saw them. That was Laura's taste, and had come, on reflection, to be mine.

Laura said she should make me presents only of innumerable stitches: which she had done. Polly, whom it is both impossible and irrelevant to describe, took the opportunity to scrub the house from top to bottom. Her own wedding-present to me, homely though it was, I wrapped in silver paper, and showed it to her lying in state on the library-table, to her infinite amusement.



Page 123

Like the North American Indian, the race of Pollies is fast going out of American life. You read an advertisement of “an American servant who wants a place in a genteel family,” and visions of something common in American households, when you were children, come up to your mind’s eye. Without considering the absurdity of an American girl calling herself by such a name, your eyes fill with tears at the thought of the faithful and loving service of years ago, when neither sickness, nor sorrow, nor death itself separated the members of the household, but the nurse-maid was the beloved friend, living and dying under the same roof that witnessed her untiring and faithful devotion.

So, when you look after this “American servant,” you find alien blood, lip-service, a surface-warmth that flatters, but does not delude,—a fidelity that fails you in sickness, or increased toil, or the prospect of higher wages; and you say to the “American servant,”—

“How long have you been in Boston?”

“Born in Boston, Ma’m,—in Eliot Street, Ma’m.”

So was not Polly. Polly had lived with us always. She had a farm of her own, and needn’t have “lived out” five minutes, unless she had chosen. But she did choose it, and chose to keep her place. And that was a true friend,—in a humble position, possibly, yet one of her own choosing. She rejoiced and wept with us, knew all about us,—corresponded regularly with us when away, and wrote poetry. She had a fair mind, great shrewdness, and kept a journal of facts. We loved her dearly,—next to each other, and a hundred times better than we did Aunt Allen or any of them.

Of course, as the day wore on, and afternoon came, and then almost night came, and still the bell had not once rung,—not once!—Polly was not the person to express or to permit the least surprise. Not Caleb Balderstone himself had a sharper eye to the “honor of the family.” *Why* it was left to the doctrine of chances to decide. *That* it was grew clearer and clearer every hour, as every hour came slowly by, unladen with box or package, even a bouquet.

Betsy Ann had grinned a great many times, and asked Polly over and over, “Where the presents all was?” and, “When I was to Miss Russell’s, and Miss Sally was married, the things come in with a rush,—silver, and gold, and money, ever so much!”

However, here Polly snubbed her, and told her to “shet up her head quick. Most of the presents was come long ago.”

“Such a piece of work as I hed to ghet up that critter’s mouth!” said Polly, laughing, as she assisted Laura in putting the last graces to my simple toilet before tea.

“There, now, Miss Sampson to be! I declare to man, you never looked better.



“Roses red, violets blue,
Pinks is pooty, and so be you.”

“How did you shut it, Polly?” said Laura, who was very much surprised, like myself, at the non-arrivals, and who constantly imagined she heard the bell. Ten arrivals we had both counted on,—ten, certainly,—fifteen, probably.



Page 124

“Well, I told her the presents was all locked up; and if she was a clever, good child, and went to school regular, and got her learnin’ good, I’d certain show ’em to her some time. I told her,” added Polly, whisperingly, and holding her hand over her mouth to keep from loud laughter,—“I told her I’d seen a couple on ’em done up in beautiful silver paper!”

The bell rang at last, and we all sprang as with an electric shock. It was old Mr. Price, led in reverently by Mr. Sampson. Tea was ready; so we all sat down to it.

I don’t know what other people think of, when they are going to be married,—I mean at the moment. Books are eloquent on the subject. For my part. I must confess, I thought of nothing. And let that encourage the next bride, who will imagine herself a dunce, because she isn’t thinking of something fine and solemn. Perhaps I had so many ideas pressing in, in all directions, that the mind itself couldn’t act. Be it as it may, I stood as if stupefied,—while old Mr. Price talked and prayed, it seemed, an age. I was roused, however, and glad enough I wasn’t in church, when he called out,—

“*Ameriky!* do you take this woman for your wedded wife?” and still more rejoiced when he added, sternly,—

“*Delphiny!*” (using the long *i*,) “do you take *Ameriky?*”

We both said “Yes.” And then he commended us affectionately and reverently to the protection and love of Him who had himself come to a wedding. He then came to a close, to Polly’s delight, who said she “had expected nothin’ but what the old gentleman would hold on an hour, —missionaries to China, and all.”

Old Mr. Price took a piece of cake and a full glass of wine, and wished us joy. He was fast passing away, and with him the old-class ministers, now only traditional, who drank their half-mug of flip at funerals, went to balls to look benignantly on the scene of pleasure, came home at ten o’clock to write “the improvement” to their Sunday’s sermon, took the other half-mug, and went to bed peaceably and in charity with the whole parish. They have gone, with the stagecoaches and country-newspapers; and the places that knew them will know them no more.

Betsy Ann, who was mercifully admitted to the wedding, pronounced it without hesitation the “flattest thing she ever see,”—and was straightway dismissed by Polly, with an extra frosted cake, and a charge to “get along home with herself.” Then Mr. Sampson walked slowly home with Mr. Price, and Laura and myself were left looking at each other.

“*Delphiny!*” said Laura.

“*Ameriky!*” said I.

“Well,—it’s over now. If you had happened to be Mrs. Conant’s daughter, you know, your name would have been *Keren-happuch!*”



“On the whole, I am glad it wasn’t in church,” said I.

Mr. Sampson returned before we had finished talking of that. And then Laura, said, suddenly,—



Page 125

“But you *must* decide on Aunt Allen’s gift, Del. What shall it be? What will be pretty?”

“You shall decide,” said I, amiably, turning to my husband.

“Oh, I have no notion of what is pretty,—at least of but one thing,—and that is not in Aunt Allen’s gift.”

He laughed, and I blushed, of course, as he pointed the compliment straight at me.

“But you *must* think. I cannot decide, I have thought of five hundred things already.”

“Well, Laura,—what do you say?” said he.

“I think a silver salver would be pretty, and useful, too.”

“Pretty and useful. Then let it be a silver salver, and be done with it,” said he.

This notion of being “done with it” is so mannish! Here was my Gordian knot cut at once! However, there was no help for it,—though now, more than ever, since there was no danger of a duplicate, did I long for the fifty thousand different beautiful things the fifty dollars would buy.

Circumstances aided us, too, in coming to a conclusion. I was rather tired of rocking on these billows of uncertainty, even with the chance of plucking gems from the depths. And Mrs. Harris was coming the next day to tea, and to go away early to see Piccolomini sing and sparkle.

When we sat down that next day at the table, I poured the tea into a cup, and placed it on the prettiest little silver tray, and Polly handed it to Mrs. Harris as if she had done that particular thing all her life.

“Beautiful!” said Mrs. Harris, as it sparkled along back; “one of your wedding-gifts?”

“Yes,” I answered, carelessly,—“Aunt Allen’s.”

So much was well got over. My hope was that Mrs. Harris, who talked well, and was never weary of that sort of well-doing, would keep on her own subjects of interest, to the exclusion of mine. Therefore, when she said pleasantly, *en passant*,—

“By the way, Delphine, I see you have taken my advice about wedding-presents. You know I always abominated that parading of gifts.”

Laura hastened to the rescue, saying,—



“Yes, we quite agree with you, and remember your decided opinions on that subject. Did you say you had been to the Aquarial Gardens?”

How I wished I had been self-possessed enough to tell the whole story, with its ridiculous side out, and make a good laugh over it, as it deserved!—for Mrs. Harris wouldn’t stay in the Aquarial Gardens, which she pronounced a disgusting exhibition of “Creep and Crawl,” and that it was all a set of little horrors; but swung back to wedding-gifts and wedding-times.

“When I was young,—ah! woful *when!*—
That I should say *when* I was young!”

“it wasn’t fashionable, or, I should say, necessary, to buy something for a bride,” said Mrs. Harris, meditatively, and looking back—as we could see by her eyes—a long way.

For my part, I thought she had much better choose some other subject, considering everything. Certainly she had been one of the ten I had counted on. But she suddenly collected herself!



Page 126

“I never look at a great needle-book, (‘housewife,’ we used to call it,) full of all possible and impossible contrivances and conveniences, without recalling my Aunt Hovey’s patient smile when she gave it to me. She was rheumatic, and confined for twenty years to her chair; and these ‘housewives’ she made exquisitely, and each of her young friends on her wedding-day might count on one. Then Sebah Collins,—she brought me a bag of holders,—poor old soul! And Aunt Patty Hobbs gave me a bundle of rags! She said, ‘Young housekeepers was allers a-wantin’ rags, and, in course, there wa’n’t nothin’ but what was bran’-new out of the store.’ Can I ever forget the Hill children, with their mysterious movements, their hidings, and their unaccountable absences? and then the work-basket on my toilet-table, on my wedding-morning! the little pin-cushions and emery-sacks, the fantastic thimble-cases, and the fish-shaped needle-books! all as nice as their handy little fingers could make, and every stitch telling of their earnest love and bright faces!—Every one of those children is dead. But I keep the work-basket sacred. I don’t know whether it is more pleasure or pain.”

She looked up again, as if before her passed a long procession. I had often seen that expression in the eyes of old, and even of middle-aged persons, who had had much mental vicissitude, but I had not interpreted it till now. It was only for a moment; and she added, cheerfully,—

“The future is always pleasant; so we will look that way.”

Just then a gentleman wished to see Mr. Sampson on business, and they two went into the library.

Mrs. Harris talked on, and I led the way to the parlor. She said she should be called for presently; and then Laura lighted the argand, and dropped the muslin curtains.

“Oh, isn’t this sweet?” exclaimed Mrs. Harris, rapturously, approaching the table. “How the best work of Art pales before Nature!”

It was only a tall small vase of ground glass, holding a pond-lily, fully opened. But it was perfect in its way, and I knew by the smile on Laura’s lips that it was her gift.

“Mine is in that corner, Delphine,” said Mrs. Harris. “I wouldn’t have it brought here till to-night, when I could see Laura, for fear you should have a duplicate. So here is my Mercury, that I have looked at till I love it. I wouldn’t give you one that had only the odor of the shop about it; but you will never look at this, Del, without thoughts of our little cozy room and your old friend.”

“Beautiful! No, indeed! Always!” murmured I.

She drew a little box from her pocket, and took out of it a taper-stand of chased silver.



“Mrs. Gore asked me to bring it to you, with her love. She wouldn’t send it yesterday, she said, because it would look so like nothing by the side of costly gifts. Pretty, graceful little thing! isn’t it? It is an evening-primrose, I think,—’love’s own light,’—hey, Delphine?”



Page 127

We had scarcely half admired the taper-stand and the Mercury when the carriage came for Mrs. Harris, who insisted on taking away Laura with her to the opera.

“No matter whether you thought of going or not; and, happily, there’s no danger of Delphine being lonely. ‘Two are company,’ you know Emerson says, ‘but three are a congregation.’ So they will be glad to spare you. There, now! that is all you want,—and this shawl.”

After they went, I sat listening for nearly half an hour to the low murmurs in the next room, and wishing the stranger would only go, so that I might exhibit my new treasures. At last the strange gentleman opened the door softly, talking all the way, across the room, through the entry, and finally whispering himself fairly out-of-doors. When my husband came in, I was eager to show him the Mercury, and the lily, and the taper-stand.

“And do you know, after all, I hadn’t the real nobleness and truthfulness and right-mindedness to tell Mrs. Harris that these and Aunt Allen’s gift were all I had received! I am ashamed of myself, to have such a mean mortification about what is really of no importance. Certainly, if my friends don’t care enough for me to send me something, I ought to be above caring for it.”

“I don’t know that, Del. Your mortification is very natural. How can we help caring? Do you like your Aunt Allen very much?” added he, abruptly.

“Because she gave me fifty dollars? Yes, I begin to think I do,” said I, laughing.

He looked at me quickly.

“Your Aunt Allen is very rich, is she not?”

“I believe so. Why? You look very serious. I neither respect nor love her for her riches; and I haven’t seen her these ten years.”

He looked sober and abstracted; but when I spoke, he smiled a little.

“Do you remember Ella’s chapter on Old China?” said he, sitting down on the sofa, and—I don’t mind saying—putting one arm round my waist.

“Yes,—why?”

“Do you remember Bridget’s plaintive regret that they had no longer the good old times when they were poor? and about the delights of the shilling gallery?”

“Yes,—what made you think of it?”



“What a beautiful chapter that is!—their gentle sorrow that they could no longer make nice bargains for books! and his wearing new, neat, black clothes, alas! instead of the overworn suit that was made to hang on a few weeks longer, that he might buy the old folio of Beaumont and Fletcher! Do you remember it, Delphine?”

“Yes, I do. And I think there is a deal of pleasure in considering and contriving,—though it’s prettier in a book”—

“For my part,” interrupted my husband, as though he had not heard me speak,—“for my part, I am sorry one cannot have such an exquisite appreciation of pleasure but through pain; for—I am tired of labor—and privation—and, in short, poverty. To work so hard, and so constantly!—with such a long, weary vista before one!—and these petty gains! Don’t you think poverty is the one thing hateful, Delphine?”



Page 128

He sprang up suddenly, and began walking up and down the room,—up and down,—up and down; and without speaking any more, or seeming to wish me to answer.

“Why, what is it? What do you mean?” said I, faintly; for my heart felt like lead in my bosom.

He did not answer at first, but walked towards me; then, turning suddenly away, sprang out of the window at the side of the room, saying, with a constrained laugh,—

“I shall be in again, presently. In the mean time I leave you to meditations on the shilling gallery!”

What a strange taunting sound his voice had! There was no insane blood among the Sampsons, or I might have thought he had suddenly gone crazy. Or if I had believed in demoniacal presences, I might have thought the murmuring, whispering old man was some tempter. Some evil influence certainly had been exerted over him. Scarcely less than deranged could I consider him now, to be willing thus to address me. It was true, he was poor,—that he had struggled with poverty. But had it not been my pride, as I thought it was his, that his battle was bravely borne, and would be bravely won? I could not, even to myself, express the cruel cowardice of such words as he had used to his helpless wife. That he felt deeply and gallingly his poverty was plain. Even in that there was a weakness which induced more of contempt than pity for him; but was it not base to tell me of it now? Now, when his load was doubled, he complained of the burden! Why, I would have lain down and died far sooner than he should have guessed it of me. And he had thought it—and—said it!

There are emotions that seem to crowd and supersede each other, so that the order of time is inverted. I came to the point of disdainful composure, even before the struggle and distress began. I sat quietly where my husband left me,—such a long, long time! It seemed hours. I remembered how thoughtful I had determined to be of all our expenses,—the little account-book in which I had already entered some items; how I had thought of various ways in which I could assist him; yes, even little I was to be the most efficient and helpful of wives. Had I not taken writing-lessons secretly, and formed a thorough business-hand, and would I not earn many half-eagles with my eagle’s quill? I remembered how I had thought, though I had not said it, (and how glad now I was I had not!) that we would help each other in sickness and health,—that we would toil up that weary hill where wealth stands so lusciously and goldenly shining. But then, hand in hand we were to have toiled,—hopefully, smilingly, lovingly,—not with this cold recrimination, nor, hardest of all, with—reproach!

Suddenly, a strange suspicion fell over me. It fell down on me like a pall. I shuddered with the cold of it.



I knew it wasn't so. I knew he loved me,—that Le meant nothing,—that it was a passing discontent, a hateful feeling engendered by the sight of the costly trifles before us. Yes,—I knew that. But, good heavens! to tell his wife of it!



Page 129

I sat, with my head throbbing, and holding my hands, utterly tearless; for tears were no expression of the distressful pain, and blank disappointment of a life, that I felt. I said I felt this damp, dark suspicion. It was there like a presence, but it was as indefinite as dark; and I had a sort of control, in the midst of the tumult in my brain and heart, as to what thoughts I would let come to me. Not that! Faults there might be,—great ones,—but not that, the greatest! At least, if I could not respect, I could forgive,—for he loved me. Surely, surely, that must be true!

It would come, that flash, like lightning, or the unwilling memories of the drowning. I remembered the rich Miss Kate Stuart, who, they said, liked him, and that her father would have been glad to have him for a son-in-law. And I had asked him once about it, in the careless gayety of happy love. He had said, he supposed it might have happened—perhaps—who knows?—if he had not seen me. But he had seen me! Could it be that he was thinking of?

My calmness was giving way. As soon as I spoke, though it was only in a word of ejaculation, my pity for myself broke all the flood-gates down, and I fell on my face in a paroxysm of sobs.

A very calm, loving voice, and a strong arm raising me, brought me back at once from the wild ocean of passion on which I was tossing. I had not heard him come in. I was too proud and grieved to speak or to weep. So I dried my tears and sat stiffly silent.

“You are tired, dear!” said my husband, tenderly.

“No,—it’s no matter.”

“Everything is matter to me that concerns you. You know that,—you believe that, Delphine?”

“Why, what a strange sound! just as it used to sound!” I said to myself, whisperingly.

I know not what possessed me; but I was determined to have the truth, and the whole truth. I turned towards him and looked straight into his eyes.

“Tell me, truly, as you hope God will save you at your utmost need, *do* you love me? Did you marry me from any motive but that of pure, true love?”

“From no other,” answered he, with a face of unutterable surprise; and then added, solemnly, “And may God take me, Delphine, when you cease to love me!”

It was enough. There was truth in every breath, in every glance of his deep eyes. A delicious languor took the place of the horrible tension that had been every faculty,—a repose so sweet and perfect, that, if reason had placed the clearest possible proofs of



my husband's perfidy before me, I should simply have smiled and fallen asleep on his true heart, as I did.

When I opened my eyes, I met his anxious look.

"Why, what has come over you, Del? I did not know you were nervous."

And then remembering, that, although I might be weakest among the weak, yet that it was his wisdom that was to sustain and comfort me, I said,—



Page 130

“By-and-by I will tell you all about it,—certainly I will. I must tell you some time, but not to-night.”

“And—I had thought to keep a secret from you, to-night, Del; but, on the whole, I shall feel better to tell you.”

“Yes,—perhaps,—perhaps.”

“Oh, yes! Secrets are safest, told. First, then, Del, I will tell you this secret. I am very foolish. Don’t tell of it, will you? See here!”

He held up his closed hand before my face, laughingly.

That man’s name, Del, is Drake”——

“And not the Devil!” said I to myself.

“Solitude Drake.”

“Really? Is that it, truly? What’s in your hand?”

“Truly,—really. He lives in Albany. He is the son of a queer man, and is something of a humorist himself. I have seen one of his sons. He has two. One’s name is Paraclete, and the other Preserved. His daughter is pretty, very, and her name is Deliverance. They call her Del, for short. They do, on my word! Worse than Delphine, is it not?”

“Why, don’t you like my name?” stammered I, with astonishment.

“Yes, very well. I don’t care much about names. But I can tell you, Uncle Zabdiel and Aunt Jerusha, ‘from whom I have expectations,’ Del, think it is ‘just about the poorest kind of a name that ever a girl had.’ And our Cousin Abijah thought you were named Delilah, and that it was a good match for Sampson! I rectified him there; but he still insists on your being called ‘Finy,’ in the family, to distinguish you from the Midianitish woman.”

“And so Uncle *Zabdiel* thinks I have a poor name?” said I, laughing heartily. “The shield looks neither gold nor silver, from which side soever we gaze. But I think *he* might put up with *my* name!”

My husband never knew exactly what I was laughing at. And why should he? I was fast overcoming my weakness about names, and thinking they were nothing, compared to things, after all.

When our laugh (for his was sympathetic) had subsided into a quiet cheerfulness, he said, again holding up his hand,—



“Not at all curious, Del? You don’t ask what Mr. Solitude Drake wanted?”

“I don’t think I care what he wanted: company, I suppose.”

And I went on making bad puns about solitude sweetened, and ducks and drakes, as happy people do, whose hearts are quite at ease.

“And you don’t want to know at all, Del?” said he, laughing a little nervously, and dropping from his hand an open paper into mine. “It shall be my wedding-present to you. It is Mr. Drake’s retainer. Pretty stout one, is it not? This is what made me jump out of the window,—this and one other thing.”

“Why, this is a draft for five hundred dollars!” said I, reading and staring stupidly at the paper.

“Yes, and I am retained in that great Albany land-case. It involves millions of property. That is all, Del. But I was so glad, so happy, that I was likely to do well at last, and that I could gratify all the wishes, reasonable and unreasonable, of my darling!”



Page 131

“Is it a good deal?” said I, simply; for, after all, five hundred dollars did not seem such an Arabian fortune.

“Yes, Del, a good deal. Whichever way it is decided, it will make my fortune. And now—the other thing. You are sure you are very calm, and all this won’t make you sleepless?”

“Oh, no! I am calm as a clock.”

“Well, then,—your Aunt Allen is dead.”

“Dead! Is she? Did she leave us all her money?”

“Why, no, you little cormorant. She has left it all about: Legacies, and Antioch College, and Destitute Societies. But I believe you have some clothes left to you and Laura. Any way, the will is in there, in the library: Mr. Drake had a copy of it. And the best of all is, I am to be the executor, which is enough better than residuary legatee.”

“It is very strange!” said I, thinking of the multitude of old gowns I should have to alter over.

“Yes, it is, indeed, very strange. One of the strangest things about the matter is, that my good friend Solitude was so taken with ‘my queer name,’ as he calls it, that he ‘took a fancy to me out of hand.’ To be sure, he listened through my argument in the Shore case, and that may have helped his opinion of me as a lawyer.—Here comes Laura. Who would have thought it was one o’clock?”

And who would have thought that my little ugly chrysalis of troubles would have turned out such beautiful butterflies of blessings?

* * * * *

MARION DALE.

Marion Dale, I remember you once,
In the days when you blushed like a rose half-blown,
Long ere that wealthy respectable dunce
Sponged up your beautiful name in his own.

I remember you, Marion Dale,
Artless and cordial and modest and sweet:
You never walked in that glittering mail
That covers you now from your head to your feet.



Well I remember your welcoming smile,
When Alice and Annie and Edward and I
Came over to see you;—you lived but a mile
From my uncle's old house, and the grove that stood nigh.

I was no lover of yours, (pray, excuse me!)—
Our minds were different in texture and hue:
I never gave you a chance to refuse me;
Already I loved one less changeful than you.

Still it was ever a pride and a pleasure
Just to be near you,—the Rose of our vale.
Often I thought, "Who will own such a treasure?
Who win the rich love of our Marion Dale?"

I wonder now if you ever remember,
Ever sigh over fifteen years ago,—
Whether your June is all turned to December,—
Whether your life now is happy or no.

Gone are those winters of chats and of dances!
Gone are those summers of picnics and rides!
Gone the aroma of life's young romances!
Gone the swift flow of our passionate tides!



Page 132

Marion Dale,—no longer our Marion,—
You have gone your way, and I have gone mine:
Lowly I've labored, while fashion's gay clarion
Trumpets your name through the waltz and the wine.

And when I meet you, your smile it is colder;
Statelier, prouder your features have grown;
Rounder each white and magnificent shoulder;
(Rather too low-necked your waist, I must own.)

Jewelled and muslined, your rich hair gold-netted,
Queenly 'mid flattering voices you move,—
Half to your own native graces indebted,
Half to the station and fortune you love.

"Marion" we called you; my wife you called "Alice";
I was plain "Phil";—we were intimate all:
Strange, as we leave now our cards at your palace,
On Mrs. Prime Goldbanks of Bubblemere Hall!

Six golden lackeys illumine the doorway:
Sure, one would think, by the glances they throw,
That we were fresh from the mountains of Norway,
And had forgotten to shake off the snow!

They will permit us to enter, however;
Usher us into her splendid saloon:
There we sit waiting and waiting forever,
As one would watch for the rise of the moon.

Or it may be to-day's not her "reception":
Still she's at home, and a little unbends,—
Framing, while dressing, some harmless deception,
How she shall meet her "American" friends.

Smiling you meet us,—but not quite sincerely;
Low-voiced you greet us,—but this is the *ton*:
This, we must feel it, is courtesy merely,—
Not the glad welcome of days that are gone.

You are in England,—the land where they freeze one,
When they've a mind to, with fashion and form:
Yet, if you choose, you can thoroughly please one:
Currents run through you still youthful and warm.



So one would think, at least, seeing you moving,
Radiant and gay, at the Countess's *fete*.
Say, was that babble so sweeter than loving?
Where was the charm, that you lingered so late?

Ah, well enough, as you dance on in joyance!
Still well enough, at your dinners and calls!
Fashion and riches will mask much annoyance.
Float on, fair lady, whatever befalls!

Yet, Lady Marion, for hours and for hours
You are alone with your husband and lord.
There is a skeleton hid in yon flowers;
There is a spectre at bed and at board.

Needs no confession to tell there is acting
Somewhere about you a tragedy grim.
All your bright rays have a sullen refracting;
Everywhere looms up the image of *him*:

Him,—whom you love not, there is no concealing.
How *could* you love him, apart from his gold?
Nothing now left but your fire-fly wheeling,—
Flashing one moment, then pallid and cold!



Page 133

Yet you've accepted the life that he offers,—
Sunk to his level,—not raised him to yours.
All your fair flowers have their roots in his coffers:
Empty the gold-dust, and then what endures?

So, then, we leave you! Your world is not ours.
Alice and I will not trouble you more.
Almost too heavy the scent of these flowers
Down the broad stairway. Quick, open the door!

Here, in the free air, we'll pray for you, lady!
You who are changed to us,—gone from us,—lost!
Soon the Atlantic shall part us, already
Parted by gulfs that can never be crossed!

CHARLESTON UNDER ARMS.

On Saturday morning, January 19, 1861, the steamer Columbia, from New York, lay off the harbor of Charleston in full sight of Fort Sumter. It is a circumstance which perhaps would never have reached the knowledge of the magazine-reading world, nor have been of any importance to it, but for the attendant fact that I, the writer of this article, was on board the steamer. It takes two events to make a consequence, as well as two parties to make a bargain.

The sea was smooth; the air was warmish and slightly misty; the low coast showed bare sand and forests of pines. The dangerous bar of the port, now partially deprived of its buoys, and with its main channel rendered perilous by the hulks of sunken schooners, revealed itself plainly, half a mile ahead of us, in a great crescent of yellow water, plainly distinguishable from the steel-gray of the outer ocean. Two or three square-rigged vessels were anchored to the southward of us, waiting for the tide or the tugs, while four or five pilot-boats tacked up and down in the lazy breeze, watching for the cotton-freighters which ought at this season to crowd the palmetto wharves.

"I wish we could get the duties on those ships to pay some of our military bills," said a genteel, clean-spoken Charlestonian, to a long, green, kindly-faced youth, from I know not what Southern military academy.

We had arrived off the harbor about midnight, but had not entered, for lack of a beacon whereby to shape our course. Now we must wait until noon for the tide, standing off and on the while merely to keep up our fires. A pilot came under our quarter in his little schooner, and told us that the steamer Nashville had got out the day before with only a hard bumping. No other news had he: Fort Sumter had not been taken, nor assaulted; the independence of South Carolina had not been recognized; various desirable events had not happened. In short, the political world had remained during our voyage in that

chaotic *status quo* so loved by President Buchanan. At twelve we stood for the bar, sounding our way with extreme caution. Without accident we passed over the treacherous bottom, although in places it could not have been more than eighteen inches below our keel. The shores closed in on both sides



Page 134

as we passed onward. To the south was the long, low, gray Morris Island, with its extinguished lighthouse, its tuft or two of pines, its few dwellings, and its invisible batteries. To the north was the long, low, gray Sullivan's Island, a repetition of the other, with the distinctions of higher sand-rolls, a village, a regular fort, and palmettos. We passed the huge brown Moultrie House, in summer a gay resort, at present a barrack; passed the hundred scattered cottages of the island, mostly untenanted now, and looking among the sand-drifts as if they had been washed ashore at random; passed the low walls of Fort Moultrie, once visibly yellow, but now almost hidden by the new *glacis*, and surmounted by piles of barrels and bags of sand, with here and there palmetto stockades as a casing for the improvised embrasures; passed its black guns, its solidly built, but rusty barracks, and its weather-worn palmetto flag waving from a temporary flag-staff. On the opposite side of the harbor was Fort Johnstone, a low point, exhibiting a barrack, a few houses, and a sand redoubt, with three forty-two pounders. And here, in the midst of all things, apparent master of all things, at the entrance of the harbor proper, and nearly equidistant from either shore, though nearest the southern, frowned Fort Sumter, a huge and lofty and solid mass of brickwork with stone embrasures, all rising from a foundation of ragged granite boulders washed by the tides. The port-holes were closed; a dozen or so of monstrous cannon peeped from the summit; two or three sentinels paced slowly along the parapet; the stars and stripes blew out from the lofty flag-staff. The plan of Fort Sumter may be briefly described as five-sided, with each angle just so much truncated as to give room for one embrasure in every story. Its whole air is massive, commanding, and formidable.

Eighty or a hundred citizens, volunteers, cadets from the military academy, policemen, and negroes, greeted the arrival of the Columbia at her wharf. It was a larger crowd than usual, partly because a report had circulated that we should be forced to bring to off Fort Sumter and give an account of ourselves, and partly because many persons in Charleston have lately been perplexed with an abundant leisure. As I drove to my hotel, I noticed that the streets showed less movement of business and population than when I knew them four years ago. The place seemed dirtier, too,—worse paved, shabbier as to its brick-work and stucco, and worse painted,—but whether through real deterioration, or by comparison with the neatly finished city which I had lately left, I cannot decide. There was surely not a third of the usual shipping, nor a quarter of the accustomed cotton. Here and there were wharves perfectly bare, not only of masting and of freight, but even of dust, as if they had not been used for days, or possibly for weeks.



Page 135

My old hotel was as well kept, and its table as plentiful and excellent as ever. I believe we are all aware by this time that Charleston has not suffered from hunger; that beef has not sold at thirty-five cents a pound, but rather at ten or fifteen; that its Minute Men have not been accustomed to come down upon its citizens for forced dinners and dollars; that the State loan was taken willingly by the banks, instead of unwillingly by private persons; that the rich, so far from being obliged to give a great deal for the cause of Secession, have generally given very little; that the streets are well-policed, untrodden by mobs, and as orderly as those of most cities; that, in short, the revolution so far has been political, and not social. At the same time exports and imports have nearly ceased; business, even in the retail form, is stagnant; the banks have suspended; debts are not paid.

After dinner I walked up to the Citadel square and saw a drill of the Home Guard. About thirty troopers, all elderly men, and several with white hair and whiskers, uniformed in long overcoats of homespun gray, went through some of the simpler cavalry evolutions in spite of their horses' teeth. The Home Guard is a volunteer police force, raised because of the absence of so many of the young men of the city at the islands, and because of the supposed necessity of keeping a strong hand over the negroes. A malicious citizen assured me that it was in training to take Fort Sumter by charging upon it at low water. On the opposite side of the square from where I stood rose the Citadel, or military academy, a long and lofty reddish-yellow building, stuccoed and castellated, which, by the way, I have seen represented in one of our illustrated papers as the United States Arsenal. Under its walls were half a dozen iron cannon which I judged at that distance to be twenty-four pounders. A few negroes, certainly the most leisurely part of the population at this period, and still fewer white people, leaned over the shabby fence and stared listlessly at the horsemen, with the air of people whom habit had made indifferent to such spectacles. Near me three men of the middle class of Charleston talked of those two eternal subjects, Secession and Fort Sumter. One of them, a rosy-faced, kindly-eyed, sincere, seedy, pousy gentleman of fifty, congratulated the others and thanked God because of the present high moral stand of South Carolina, so much loftier than if she had seized the key to her main harbor, when she had the opportunity. Her honor was now unspotted; her good faith and her love of the right were visible to the whole world; while the position of the Federal Government was disgraced and sapped by falsity. Better Sumter treacherously in the hands of the United States than in the hands of South Carolina; better suffer for a time under physical difficulties than forever under moral dishonor.



Page 136

Simple-hearted man, a fair type of his fellow-citizens, he saw but his own side of the question, and might fairly claim in this matter to be justified by his faith. His bald crown, sandy side-locks, reddish whiskers, sanguineous cheeks, and blue eyes were all luminous with confidence in the integrity of his State, and with scorn for the meanness and wickedness of her enemies. No doubt had he that the fort ought to be surrendered to South Carolina; no suspicion that the Government could show a reason for holding it, aside from low self-interest and malice. He was the honest mouthpiece of a most peculiar people, local in its opinions and sentiments beyond anything known at the North, even in self-poised Boston. Changing his subject, he spoke with hostile, yet chivalrous, respect of the pluck of the Black Republicans in Congress. They had never faltered; they had vouchsafed no hint of concession; while, on the other hand, Southerners had shamed him by their craven spirit. It grieved, it mortified him, to see such a man as Crittenden on his knees to the North, begging, actually with tears, for what he ought to demand as a right, with head erect and hands clenched. He departed with a mysterious allusion to some secret of his for taking Fort Sumter,—some disagreeably odorous chemical preparation, I guessed, by the scientific terms in which he beclouded himself,—something which he expected would soon be called for by the Governor. May he never smell anything worse, even in the other world, than his own compounds! Unionist, and perhaps Consolidationist, as I am, I could not look upon his honest, persuaded face, and judge him a traitor, at least not to any sentiment of right that was in his own soul.

Our hotel was full of legislators and volunteer officers, mostly planters or sons of planters, and almost without exception men of standing and property. South Carolina is an oligarchy in spirit, and allows no plebeians in high places. Two centuries of plenteous feeding and favorable climate showed their natural results in the *physique* of these people. I do not think that I exaggerate, when I say that they averaged six feet or nearly in height, and one hundred and seventy pounds or thereabouts in weight. One or two would have brought in money, if enterprisingly heralded as Swiss or Belgian giants. The general physiognomy was good, mostly high-featured, often commanding, sometimes remarkable for massive beauty of the Jovian type, and almost invariably distinguished by a fearless, open-eyed frankness, in some instances running into arrogance and pugnacity. I remember one or two elderly men, in particular, whose faces would help an artist to idealize a Lacedaemonian general, or a baron of the Middle Ages. In dress somewhat careless, and wearing usually the last fashion but one, they struck me as less tidy than the same class when I saw it four years ago; and I made a similar remark concerning the citizens of Charleston,—not



Page 137

only men, but women,—from whom dandified suits and superb silks seem to have departed during the present martial time. Indeed, I heard that economy was the order of the day; that the fashionables of Charleston bought nothing new, partly because of the money pressure, and partly because the guns of Major Anderson might any day send the whole city into mourning; that patrician families had discharged their foreign cooks and put their daughters into the kitchen; that there were no concerts, no balls, and no marriages. Even the volunteers exhibited little of the pomp and vanity of war. The small French military cap was often the only sign of their present profession. The uniform, when it appeared, was frequently a coarse homespun gray, charily trimmed with red worsted, and stained with the rains and earth of the islands. One young dragoon in this sober dress walked into our hotel, trailing the clinking steel scabbard of his sabre across the marble floor of the vestibule with a warlike rattle which reminded me of the Austrian officers whom I used to see, yes, and hear, stalking about the *cafe's* of Florence. Half a dozen surrounded him to look at and talk about the weapon. A portly, middle-aged legislator must draw it and cut and thrust, with a smile of boyish satisfaction between his grizzled whiskers, bringing the point so near my nose, in his careless eagerness, that I had to fall back upon a stronger, that is, a more distant position. Then half a dozen others must do likewise, their eyes sparkling like those of children examining a new toy.

“It’s not very sharp,” said one, running his thumb carefully along the edge of the narrow and rather light blade.

“Sharp enough to cut a man’s head open,” averred the dragoon.

“Well, it’s a dam’ shame that sixty-five men tharr in Sumter should make such an expense to the State,” declared a stout, blonde young rifleman, speaking with a burr which proclaimed him from the up-country. “We haven’t even troyed to get ’em out. We ought at least to make a troyal.”

All strangers at Charleston walk to the Battery. It is the extreme point of the city peninsula, its right facing on the Ashley, its left on the Cooper, and its outlook commanding the entire harbor, with Fort Sumter, Port Pinckney, Fort Moultrie, and Fort Johnstone in the distance. Plots of thin clover, a perfect wonder in this grassless land; promenades, neatly fenced, and covered with broken shells instead of gravel; a handsome bronze lantern-stand, twenty-five feet high, meant for a beacon; a long and solid stone quay, the finest sea-walk in the United States; a background of the best houses in Charleston, three-storied and faced with verandas: such are the features of the Battery. Lately four large iron guns, mounted like field-pieces, form an additional attraction to boys and soldierly-minded men. Nobody knew their calibre; the policemen who watched them could not say; the idlers who gathered about them disputed



Page 138

upon it: they were eighteen pounders; they were twenty-fours; they were thirty-sixes. Nobody could tell what they were there for. They were aimed at Fort Sumter, but would not carry half way to it. They could hit Fort Pinckney, but that was not desirable. The policeman could not explain; neither could the idlers; neither can I. At last it got reported about the city that they were to sink any boats which might come down the river to reinforce Anderson; though how the boats were to get into the river, whether by railroad from Washington, or by balloon from the Free States, nobody even pretended to guess. Standing on this side of the Ashley, and looking across it, you naturally see the other side. The long line of nearly dead level, with its stretches of thin pine-forest and its occasional glares of open sand, gives you an idea of nearly the whole country about Charleston, except that in general you ought to add to the picture a number of noble evergreen oaks bearded with pendent, weird Spanish moss, and occasional green spikes of the tropical-looking Spanish bayonet. Of palmettos there are none that I know of in this immediate region, save the hundred or more on Sullivan's Island and the one or two exotics in the streets of Charleston. In the middle of the Ashley, which is here more than a quarter of a mile wide, lies anchored a topsail schooner, the nursery of the South Carolina navy. I never saw it sail anywhere; but then my opportunities of observation were limited. Quite a number of boys are on board of it, studying maritime matters; and I can bear witness that they are sufficiently advanced to row themselves ashore. Possibly they are moored thus far up the stream to guard them from seasickness, which might be discouraging to young sailors. However, I ought not to talk on this subject, for I am the merest civilian and land-lubber.

My first conversation in Charleston on Secession was with an estimable friend, Northern-born, but drawing breath of Southern air ever since he attained the age of manhood. After the first salutation, he sat down, his hands on his knees, gazing on the floor, and shaking his head soberly, if not sadly.

"You have found us in a pretty fix,—in a pretty fix!"

"But what are you going to do? Are you really going out? You are not a politician, and will tell me the honest facts."

"Yes, we are going out,'—there is no doubt of it, I have not been a seceder,—I have even been called one of the disaffected; but I am obliged to admit that secession is the will of the community. Perhaps you at the North don't believe that we are honest in our professions and actions. We are so. The Carolinians really mean to go out of the Union, and don't mean to come back. They say that they *are* out, and they believe it. And now, what are you going to do with us? What is the feeling at the North?"



“The Union must and shall be preserved, at all hazards. That famous declaration expresses the present Northern popular sentiment. When I left, people were growing martial; they were joining military companies; they wanted to fight; they were angry.”



Page 139

“So I supposed. That agrees with what I hear by letter. Well, I am very sorry for it. Our people here will not retreat; they will accept a war, first. If you preserve the Union, it must be by conquest. I suppose you can do it, if you try hard enough. The North is a great deal stronger than the South; it can desolate it,—crush it. But I hope it won’t be done. I wish you would speak a good word for us, when you go back. You can destroy us, I suppose. But don’t you think it would be inhuman? Don’t you think it would be impolitic? Do you think it would result in sufficient good to counterbalance the evident and certain evil?”

“Why, people reason in this way. They say, that, even if we allow the final independence of the seceding States, we must make it clear that there is no such thing as the right of secession, but only that of revolution or rebellion. We must fix a price for going out of the Union, which shall be so high that henceforward no State will ever be willing to pay it. We must kill, once for all, the doctrine of peaceable secession, which is nothing else than national disintegration and ruin. Lieutenant-Governor Morton of Indiana declares in substance that England never spent blood and money to wiser purpose than when she laid down fifty thousand lives and one hundred millions of pounds to prevent her thirteen disaffected colonies from having their own way. No English colony since has been willing to face the tremendous issue thus offered it. Just so it is the interest, it is the sole safety of the Federal Government, to try to hold in the Cotton States by force, and, if they go out, to oblige them to pay an enormous price for the privilege. Revolution is a troublesome luxury, and ought to be made expensive. That is the way people talk at the North and at Washington. They reason thus, you see, because they believe that this is not a league, but a nation.”

“And our people believe that the States are independent and have a right to recede from the Confederation without asking its leave. With few exceptions, all agree on that; it is honest, common public opinion. The South Carolinians sincerely think that they are exercising a right, and you may depend that they will not be reasoned nor frightened out of it; and if the North tries coercion, there will be war. I don’t say this defiantly, but sadly, and merely because I want you to know the truth. War is abhorrent to my feelings,—especially a war with our own brethren: and then we are so poorly prepared for it!”

Such was the substance of several conversations. The reader may rely, I think, on the justness of my friend’s opinions, founded as they are on his honesty of intellect, his moderation, and his opportunities for studying his fellow-citizens. All told me the same story, but generally with more passion, sometimes with defiance; defiance toward the Government, I mean, and not toward me personally; for the better classes



Page 140

of Charleston are eminently courteous. South Carolina had seceded forever, defying all the hazards; she would accept nothing but independence or destruction; she did not desire any supposable compromise; she had altogether done with the Union. Yet her desire was not for war; it was simply and solely for escape. She would forget all her wrongs and insults, she would seek no revenge for the injurious past, provided she were allowed to depart without a conflict. Nearly every man with whom I talked began the conversation by asking if the North meant coercion, and closed it by deprecating hostilities and affirming the universal wish for *peaceable* secession. In case of compulsion, however, the State would accept the gage of battle; her sister communities of the South would side with her, the moment they saw her blood flow; Northern commerce would be devoured by privateers of all nations under the Southern flag; Northern manufactures would perish for lack of Southern raw material and Southern consumers; Northern banks would suspend, and Northern finances go into universal insolvency; the Southern ports would be opened forcibly by England and France, who must have cotton; the South would flourish in the struggle, and the North decay.

“But why do you venture on this doubtful future?” I asked of one gentleman. “What is South Carolina’s grievance? The Personal-Liberty Bills?”

“Yes,—they constitute a grievance. And yet not much of one. Some of us even—the men of the ‘Mercury’ school, I mean—do not complain of the Union because of those bills. They say that it is the Fugitive-Slave Law itself which is unconstitutional; that the rendition of runaways is a State affair, in which the Federal Government has no concern; that Massachusetts, and other States, were quite right in nullifying an illegal and aggressive statute. Besides, South Carolina has lost very few slaves.”

“Is it the Territorial Question which forces you to quit us?”

“Not in its practical issues. The South needs no more territory; has not negroes to colonize it. The doctrine of ‘No more Slave States’ is an insult to us, but hardly an injury. The flow of population has settled that matter. You have won all the Territories, not even excepting New Mexico, where slavery exists nominally, but is sure to die out under the hostile influences of unpropitious soil and climate. The Territorial Question has become a mere abstraction. We no longer talk of it.”

“Then your great grievance is the election of Lincoln?”

“Yes.”

“And the grievance is all the greater because he was elected according to all the forms of law?”

“Yes.”

“If he had been got into the Presidency by trickery, by manifest cheating, your grievance would have been less complete?”

“Yes.”

“Is Lincoln considered here to be a bad or dangerous man?”

“Not personally. I understand that he is a man of excellent private character, and I have nothing to say against him as a ruler, inasmuch as he has never been tried. Mr. Lincoln is simply a sign to us that we are in danger, and must provide for our own safety.”



Page 141

“You secede, then, solely because you think his election proves that the mass of the Northern people is adverse to you and your interests?”

“Yes.”

“So Mr. Wigfall of Texas hit the nail on the head, when he said substantially that the South cannot be at peace with the North until the latter concedes that slavery is right?”

“Well,—I admit it; that is precisely it.”

I desire the reader to note the loyal frankness, the unshrinking honesty of these avowals, so characteristic of the South Carolina *morale*. Whenever the native of that State does an act or holds an opinion, it is his nature to confess it and avow the motives thereof, without quibbling or hesitation. It is a persuaded, self-poised community, strikingly like its negative pole on the Slavery Question, Massachusetts. All those Charlestonians whom I talked with I found open-hearted in their secession, and patient of my open-heartedness as an advocate of the Union, although often astonished, I suspect, that any creature capable of drawing a conclusion from two premises should think so differently from themselves.

“But have you looked at the platform of the Republicans?” I proceeded. “It is not adverse to slavery in the States; it only objects to its entrance into the Territories; it is not an Abolition platform.”

“We don’t trust in the platform; we believe that it is an incomplete expression of the party creed,—that it suppresses more than it utters. The spirit which keeps the Republicans together is enmity to slavery, and that spirit will never be satisfied until the system is extinct.”

“Finally,—yes; gradually and quietly and safely,—that is possible. I suppose that the secret and generally unconscious *animus* of the party is one which will abolitionize it after a long while.”

“When will it begin to act in an abolition sense, do you think?”

“I can’t say: perhaps a hundred years from now; perhaps two hundred.”

There was a general laugh from the half-dozen persons who formed the group.

“What time do *you* fix?” I inquired.

“Two years. But for this secession of ours, there would have been bills before Congress within two years, looking to the abolition of slavery in the navy-yards, the District of Columbia, *etc.* That would be only the point of the wedge, which would soon assume

the dimensions of an attack on slavery in the States. Look how aggressive the party has been in the question of the Territories.”

“The questions are different. When Congress makes local laws for Utah, it does not follow that it will do likewise for South Carolina. You might as well infer, that, because a vessel sails from Liverpool to New York in ten days, therefore it will sail overland to St. Louis in five more.”



Page 142

Incredulous laughter answered me again. The South has labored under two delusions: first, that the Republicans are Abolitionists; second, that the North can be frightened. Back of these, rendering them fatally effective, lies that other delusion, the imagined right of peaceable secession, founded on a belief in the full and unresigned sovereignty of the States. Let me tell a story illustrative of the depth to which this belief has penetrated. Years ago, a friend of mine, talking to a Charleston boy about patriotism, asked him, "What is the name of your country?" "South Carolina!" responded the eight-year-old, promptly and proudly. What Northern boy, what Massachusetts boy even, would not have replied, "The United States of America"?

South Carolina, I am inclined to think, has long been a disunionist community, or nearly so, deceived by the idea that the Confederation is a bar rather than a help to her prosperity, and waiting only for a good chance to quit it. Up to the election of Lincoln all timid souls were against secession; now they are for it, because they think it less dangerous than submission. For instance, when I asked one gentleman what the South expected to gain by going out, he replied, "First, safety. Our slaves have heard of Lincoln,—that he is a black man, or black Republican, or black something,—that he is to become ruler of this country on the fourth of March,—that he is a friend of theirs, and will free them. We must establish our independence in order to make them believe that they are beyond his help. We have had to hang some of them in Alabama,—and we expect to be obliged to hang others, perhaps many."

This was not the only statement of the sort which I heard in Charleston. Other persons assured me of the perfect fidelity of the negroes, and declared that they would even fight against Northern invaders, if needful. Skepticism in regard to this last comfortable belief is, however, not wanting.

"If it comes to a war, you have one great advantage over us," said to me a military gentleman, lately in the service of the United States. "Your working-class is a fighting-class, and will constitute the rank and file of your armies. Our working-class is not a fighting-class. Indeed, there is some reason to fear, that, if it take up arms at all, it will be on the wrong side."

My impression is, that a prevalent, though not a universal fear, existed lest the negroes should rise in partial insurrections on or about the fourth of March. A Northern man, who had lived for several years in the back-country of South Carolina, had married there, and had lately travelled through a considerable portion of the South, informed me that many of the villages were lately forming Home Guards, as a measure of defence against the slave population. The Home Guard is frequently a cavalry corps, and is always composed of men who have passed the usual term of military service; for it is deemed necessary to reserve the



Page 143

youth of the country to meet the "Northern masses," the "Federal mercenaries," on the field of possible battle. By letters from Montgomery, Alabama, I learn that unusual precautions have been common during the last winter, many persons locking up their negroes over night in the quarters, and most sleeping with arms at hand, ready for nocturnal conflict. Whoever considers the necessarily horrible nature of a servile insurrection will find in it some palliation for Southern violence toward suspected incendiaries and Southern precipitation in matters of secession, however strongly he may still maintain that lynch-law should not usurp the place of justice, nor revolution the place of regular government. If you live in a powder-magazine, you positively must feel inhospitably inclined towards a man who presents himself with a cigar in his mouth. Even if he shows you that it is but a tireless stump, it still makes you uneasy. And if you catch sight of a multitude of smokers, distant as yet, but apparently intent on approaching, you will be very apt to rush toward them, deprecate their advance, forbid it, or possibly threaten armed resistance, even at the risk of being considered aggressive.

Are all the South Carolinians disunionists? It seemed so when I was there in January, 1861, and yet it did not seem so when I was there in 1855 and '56. At that time you could find men in Charleston who held that the right of secession was but the right of revolution, of rebellion,—well enough, if successful, but inductive to hanging, if unfortunate. Now those same men nearly all argue for the right of peaceable secession, declaring that the State has a right to go out at will, and that the Federal Government has no right to coerce or punish it. These turncoats are the sympathetic, who are carried away by a rush of popular enthusiasm, and the fearful or peaceable, who dread or dislike violence. Let us see how a timid Unionist can be converted into an advocate of the right of secession. Let us suppose a boat with three men on board, which is hailed by a revenue-cutter, with a threat of firing, if she does not come to. Two of these men believe that the revenue-officer is performing a legal duty, and desire to obey him; but the third, a reckless, domineering fellow, seizes the helm, lets the sail fill, and attempts to run by, meantime declaring at the top of his voice that the cutter has no business to stop his progress. The others dare not resist him and cannot persuade him. Now, then, what position will they take as to the right of the revenue-officer to fire? Ten to one they will join their comrade whom they lately opposed; they will cry out, that the pursuer was wrong in ordering them to stop, and ought not to punish them for disobedience; in short, they will be converted by the instinct of self-preservation into advocates of the right of peaceable secession. I understand, indeed I know, that there are a few opponents of disunion remaining in South Carolina; but, although they are wealthy people and of good position, it is pretty certain that they have not an atom of political influence.



Page 144

Secession peaceable! It is what is most particularly desired at Charleston, and, I believe, throughout the Cotton States. Certainly, when I was there, the war-party, the party of the "Mercury," was not in the ascendant, unless in the sense of having been "hoist with its own petard" when it cried out for immediate hostilities. Not only Governor Pickens and his Council, but nearly all the influential citizens, were opposed to bloodshed. They demanded independence and Fort Sumter, but desired and hoped to get both by argument. They believed, or tried to believe, that at last the Administration would hearken to reason and grant to South Carolina what it seemed to them could not be denied her with justice. The battle-cry of the "Mercury," urging precipitation even at the expense of defeat, for the sake of uniting the South, was listened to without enthusiasm, except by the young and thoughtless.

"We shall never attack Fort Sumter," said one gentleman. "Don't you see why? I have a son in the trenches, my next neighbor has one, everybody in the city has one. Well, we shan't let our boys fight; we can't bear to lose them. We don't want to risk our handsome, genteel, educated young fellows against a gang of Irishmen, Germans, British deserters, and New York roughs, not worth killing, and yet instructed to kill to the best advantage. We can't endure it, and we shan't do it."

This repugnance to stake the lives of South Carolina patricians against the lives of low-born, mercenaries was a feeling that I frequently heard expressed. It was betting guineas against pennies, and on a limited stock of guineas.

Other men, anti-secessionists even, assured me that war was inevitable, that Fort Sumter would be attacked, that the volunteers were panting for the strife, that Governor Pickens was excessively unpopular because of his peaceful inclinations, and that he would soon be forced to give the signal for battle. Once or twice I was seriously invited to stay a few days longer, in order to witness the struggle and victory of South Carolina. However, it was clear that the enthusiasm and confidence of the people were no longer what they had been. Several dull and costly weeks had passed since the passage of the secession ordinance. Stump-speeches, torchlight-processions, fireworks, and other jubinations, were among bygone things. The flags were falling to pieces, and the palmettos withering, unnoticed except by strangers. Men had begun to realize that a hurrah is not sufficient to carry out a great revolution successfully; that the work which they had undertaken was weightier, and the reward of it more distant, if not more doubtful, than they had supposed. The political prophets had been forced, like the Millerites, to ask an extension for their predictions. The anticipated fleet of cotton-freighters had not arrived from Europe, and the expected twelve millions of foreign gold had not refilled the collapsed banks. The daily expenses



Page 145

were estimated at twenty thousand dollars; the treasury was in rapid progress of depletion; and as yet no results. It is not wonderful, that, under these circumstances, the most enthusiastic secessionists were not gay, and that the general physiognomy of the city was sober, not to say troubled. It must not be understood, however, that there was any visible discontent or even discouragement. "We are suffering in our affairs," said a business-man to me; "but you will hear no grumbling." "We expect to be poor, very poor, for two or three years," observed a lady; "but we are willing to bear it, for the sake of the noble and prosperous end." "Our people do not want concessions, and will never be tempted back into the Union," was the voice of every private person, as well as of the Legislature. "I hope the Republicans will offer no compromise," remarked one excellent person who has not favored the revolution. "They would be sure to see it rejected: that would humiliate them and anger them; then there would be more danger of war."

Hatred of Buchanan, mingled with contempt for him, I found almost universal. If any Northerner should ever get into trouble in South Carolina because of his supposed abolition tendencies, I advise him to bestow a liberal cursing on our Old Public Functionary, assuring him that he will thereby not only escape tar and feathers, but acquire popularity. The Carolinians called the then President double-faced and treacherous, hardly allowing him the poor credit of being a well-intentioned imbecile. Why should they not consider him false? Up to the garrisoning of Fort Sumter he favored the project of secession full as decidedly as he afterwards crossed it. Did he think that he was laying a train to blow the Republicans off their platform, and leave off his labor in a fright, when he found that the powder-bags to be exploded had been placed under the foundations of the Union? The man who could explain Mr. Buchanan would have a better title than Daniel Webster to be called The Great Expounder.

During the ten days of my sojourn, Charleston was full of surprising reports and painful expectations. If a door slammed, we stopped talking, and looked at each other; and if the sound was repeated, we went to the window and listened for Fort Sumter. Every strange noise was metamorphosed by the watchful ear into the roar of cannon or the rush of soldiery. Women trembled at the salutes which were fired in honor of the secession of other States, fearing lest the struggle had commenced and the dearly-loved son or brother in volunteer uniform was already under the storm of the columbiads. One day, a reinforcement was coming to Anderson, and the troops must attack him before it arrived; the next day, Florida had assaulted Fort Pickens, and South Carolina was bound to dash her bare bosom against Fort Sumter. The batteries were strong enough to make a breach; and then again, the best authorities had declared them not strong



Page 146

enough. A columbiad throwing a ball of one hundred and twenty pounds, sufficient to crack the strongest embrasures, was on its way from some unknown region. An Armstrong gun capable of carrying ten miles had arrived or was about to arrive. No one inquired whether Governor Pickens had suspended the law of gravitation in South Carolina, in view of the fact that ordinarily an Armstrong gun will not carry five miles,—nor whether, in such case, the guns of Fort Sumter might not also be expected to double their range. Major Anderson was a Southerner, who would surrender rather than shed the blood of fellow-Southerners. Major Anderson was an army-officer, incapable by his professional education of comprehending State rights, angry because he had been charged with cowardice in withdrawing from Fort Moultrie, and resolved to defend himself to the death.

In the mean time, the city papers were strangely deficient in local news concerning the revolution,—possibly from a fear of giving valuable military information to the enemy at Washington. Uselessly did I study them for particulars concerning the condition of the batteries, and the number of guns and troops,—finding little in them but mention of parades, soldierly festivities, offers of service by enthusiastic citizens, and other like small business. I thought of visiting the islands, but heard that strangers were closely watched there, and that a permit from authority to enter the forts was difficult to obtain. Fortune, or rather, misfortune, favored me in this matter.

After passing six days in Charleston, hearing much that was extraordinary, but seeing little, I left in the steamer Columbia for New York. The main opening to the harbor, or Ship Channel, as it is called, being choked with sunken vessels, and the Middle Channel little known, our only resource for exit was Maffitt's Channel, a narrow strip of deep water closely skirting Sullivan's Island. It was half-past six in the morning, slightly misty and very quiet. Passing Fort Sumter, then Fort Moultrie, we rounded a low breakwater, and attempted to take the channel. I have heard a half-dozen reasons why we struck; but all I venture to affirm is that we did strike. There was a bump; we hoped it was the last:—there was another; we hoped again:—there was a third; we stopped. The wheels rolled and surged, bringing the fine sand from the bottom and changing the green waters to yellow; but the Columbia remained inert under the gray morning sky, close alongside of the brown, damp beach of Sullivan's Island. There was only a faint breeze, and a mere ripple of a sea; but even those slight forces swung our stern far enough toward the land to complete our helplessness. We lay broadside to the shore, in the centre of a small crescent or cove, and, consequently, unable to use our engines without forcing either bow or stern higher up on the sloping bottom. The Columbia tried to advance, tried to back water, and then gave



Page 147

up the contest, standing upright on her flat flooring with no motion beyond an occasional faint bumping. The tugboat *Aid*, half a mile ahead of us, cast off from the vessel which it was taking out, and came to our assistance. Apparently it had been engaged during the night in watching the harbor; for on deck stood a score of volunteers in gray overcoats, while the naval-looking personage with grizzled whiskers who seemed to command was the same Lieutenant Coste who transferred the revenue-cutter *Aiken* from the service of the United States to that of South Carolina. The *Aid* took hold of us, broke a large new hawser after a brief struggle, and then went up to the city to report our condition.

The morning was lowery, with driving showers running through it from time to time, and an atmosphere penetratingly damp and cheerless. On the beach two companies of volunteers were drilling in the rain, no doubt getting an appetite for breakfast. Without uniforms, their trousers tucked into their boots, and here and there a white blanket fastened shawl-like over the shoulders, they looked, as one of our passengers observed, like a party of returned Californians. Their line was uneven, their wheeling excessively loose, their evolutions of the simplest and yet awkwardly executed. Evidently they were newly embodied, and from the country; for the Charleston companies are spruce in appearance and well drilled. Half a dozen of them, who had been on sentinel duty during the night, discharged their guns in the air,—a daily process, rendered necessary by the moist atmosphere of the harbor at this season; and then, the exercise being over, there was a general scamper for the shelter of a neighboring cottage, low-roofed and surrounded by a veranda after the fashion of Sullivan's Island. Within half an hour they reappeared in idle squads, and proceeded to kill the heavy time by staring at us as we stared at them. One individual, learned in sea-phrase, insulted our misfortune by bawling, "Ship ahoy!" A fellow in a red shirt, who looked more like a Bowery *bhoy* than like a Carolinian, hailed the captain to know if he might come aboard; whereupon he was surrounded by twenty others, who appeared to question him and confound him until he thought it best to disappear unostentatiously. I conjectured that he was a hero of Northern birth, who had concluded to run away, if he could do it safely.

When we tired of the volunteers, we looked at the harbor and its inanimate surroundings. A ship from Liverpool, a small steamer from Savannah, and a schooner or two of the coasting class passed by us toward the city during the day, showing to what small proportions the commerce of Charleston had suddenly shrunk. On shore there seemed to be no population aside from the volunteers, Sullivan's Island is a summer resort, much favored by Charlestonians in the hot season, because of its coolness and healthfulness, but apparently almost uninhabited in winter, notwithstanding



Page 148

that it boasts a village called Moultrieville. Its hundred cottages are mostly of one model, square, low-roofed, a single story in height, and surrounded by a veranda, a portion of which is in some instances inclosed by blinds so as to add to the amount of shelter. Paint has been sparingly used, when applied at all, and is seldom renewed, when weather-stained. The favorite colors, at least those which most strike the eye at a distance, are green and yellow. The yards are apt to be full of sand-drifts, which are much prized by the possessors, with whom it is an object to be secured from high tides and other more permanent aggressions of the ocean. The whole island is but a verdureless sand-drift, of which the outlines are constantly changing under the influence of winds and waters. Fort Moultrie, once close to the shore, as I am told, is now a hundred yards from it; while, half a mile off, the sea flows over the site of a row of cottages not long since washed away. Behind Fort Moultrie, where the land rises to its highest, appears a continuous foliage of the famous palmettos, a low palm, strange to the Northern eye, but not beautiful, unless to those who love it for its associations. Compared with its brothers of the East, it is short, contracted in outline, and deficient in waving grace.

The chill mist and drizzling rain frequently drove us under cover. "While enjoying my cigar in the little smoking-room on the promenade-deck, I listened to the talk of four players of euchre, two of them Georgians, one a Carolinian, and one a pro-slavery New-Yorker.

"I wish the Cap'n would invite old Greeley on board his boat in New York," said the Gothamite, "and then run him off to Charleston. I'd give ten thousand dollars towards paying expenses; that is, if they could do what they was a mind to with him."

"I reckon a little more'n ten thousand dollars'd do it," grinned Georgian First.

"They'd cut him up into little bits," pursued the New-Yorker.

"They'd worry him first like a cat does a mouse," added the Carolinian.

"I'd rather serve Beecher or—what's his name?—Cheever, that trick," observed Georgian Second. "It's the cussed parsons that's done all the mischief. Who played that bower? Yours, eh? My deal."

"I want to smash up some of these dam' Black Republicans," resumed the New-Yorker. "I want to see the North suffer some. I don't care, if New York catches it. I own about forty thousand dollars' worth of property in —— Street, and I want to see the grass growing all round it. Blasted, if I can get a hand any way!"



“I say, we should be in a tight place, if the forts went to firing now,” suggested the Carolinian. “Major Anderson would have a fair chance at us, if he wanted to do us any harm.”

“Damn Major Anderson!” answered the New-Yorker. “I’d shoot him myself, if I had a chance. I’ve heard about Bob Anderson till I’m sick of it.”



Page 149

Of this fashion of conversation you may hear any desired amount at the South, by going among the right sort of people. Let us take it for granted, without making impertinent inquiry, that nothing of the kind is ever uttered in any other country, whether in pot-house or parlor. I suppose that such remarks seem very horrid to ladies and other gentle-minded folk, who perhaps never heard the like in their lives, and imagine, when they see the stuff on paper, that it is spoken with scowling brows, through set teeth, and out of a heart of red-hot passion. The truth is, that these ferocious phrases are generally drawled forth in an *ex-officio* tone, as if the speaker were rather tired of that sort of thing, meant nothing very particular by it, and talked thus only as a matter of fashion. It will be observed that the most violent of these politicians was a New-Yorker. I am inclined to pronounce, also, that the two Georgians were by birth New-Englanders. The Carolinian was the most moderate of the company, giving his attention chiefly to the game, and throwing out his one remark concerning the worrying of Greeley with an air of simply civil assent to the general meaning of the conversation, as an exchange of anti-abolition sentiments. "If you will play that card," he seemed to say, "I follow suit as a mere matter of course."

There was a second attempt to haul us off at sunset, and a third in the morning, both unsuccessful. Each tide, though stormless, carried the Columbia a little higher up the beach; and the tugs, trying singly to move her, only broke their hawsers and wasted precious time. Fortunately, the sea continued smooth, so that the ship escaped a pounding. On Saturday, at eleven, twenty-eight hours after we struck, all hope of getting off without discharging cargo having been abandoned, we passengers were landed on Sullivan's Island, to make our way back to Charleston. Our baggage was forwarded to the ferry in carts, and we followed at leisure on foot. In company with Georgian First and a gentleman from Brooklyn, I strolled over the sand-rolls, damp and hard now with a week's rain, passed one or two of the tenantless summer-houses, and halted beside the *glacis* of Fort Moultrie. I do not wonder that Major Anderson did not consider his small force safe within this fortification. It is overlooked by neighboring sand-hills and by the houses of Moultrieville, which closely surround it on the land side, while its ditch is so narrow and its rampart so low that a ladder of twenty-five feet in length would reach from the outside of the former to the summit of the latter. A fire of sharp-shooters from the commanding points, and two columns of attack, would have crushed the feeble garrison. No military movement could be more natural than the retreat to Fort Sumter. What puzzles one, especially on the spot, and what nobody in Charleston could explain to me, is the fact that this manoeuvre could be executed unobserved by the people of Moultrieville, few as they are, and by the guard-boats which patrolled the harbor.



Page 150

On the eastern side of the fort two or three dozen negroes were engaged in filling canvas bags with sand, to be used in forming temporary embrasures. One lad of eighteen, a dark mulatto, presented the very remarkable peculiarity of chest-nut hair, only slightly curling. The others were nearly all of the true field-hand type, aboriginal black, with dull faces, short and thick forms, and an air of animal contentment or at least indifference. They talked little, but giggled a great deal, snatching the canvas bags from each other, and otherwise showing their disbelief in the doctrine of all work and no play. When the barrows were sufficiently filled to suit their weak ideal of a load, a procession of them set off along a plank causeway leading into the fort, observing a droll semblance of military precision and pomp, and forcing a passage through lounging unmilitary buckras with an air of, "Out of de way, Ole Dan Tucker!" We glanced at the yet unfinished ditch, half full of water, and walked on to the gateway. A grinning, skipping negro drummer was showing a new pair of shoes to the tobacco-chewing, jovial youth who stood, or rather sat, sentinel.

"How'd you get hold of *them*?" asked the latter, surveying the articles admiringly.

"Got a special order from the Cap'm fur 'um. That ee way to do it. Won't wet through, no matter how it rain. He, he! I'm all right now."

Here he showed ivory to his ears, cut a caper, and danced into the fort.

"D-a-m' nig-ger!" grinned the sentinel, approvingly, looking at us to see if we also enjoyed the incident. Thus introduced to the temporary guardian of the fort, we told him that we were from the Columbia, which he was glad to bear of, wanting to know if she was damaged, how she went ashore, whether she could get off, *etc.*, *etc.* He was a fair specimen of the average country Southerner, lounging, open to address, and fond of talk.

"I've no authority to let you in," he said, when we asked that favor; "but I'll call the corporal of the guard."

"If you please."

"Corporal of the guard!"

Appeared the corporal, who civilly heard us, and went for the lieutenant of the guard. Presently a blonde young officer, with a pleasant face, somewhat Irish in character, came out to us, raising his forefinger in military salute.

"We should like to go into the fort, if it is proper," I said. "We ask hospitality the more boldly, because we are shipwrecked people."

"It is against the regulations. However, I venture to take the responsibility," was the obliging answer.



Page 151

We passed in, and wandered unwatched for half an hour about the irregular, many-angled fortress. One-third of the interior is occupied by two brick barracks, covered with rusty stucco, and by other brick buildings, as yet incomplete, which I took to be of the nature of magazines. On the walls, gaping landward as well as seaward, are thirty or thirty-five iron cannon, all *en barbette*, but protected toward the harbor by heavy piles of sand-bags, fenced up either with barrels of sand or palmetto-logs driven firmly into the rampart. Four eight-inch columbiads, carrying sixty-four pound balls, pointed at Fort Sumter. Six other heavy pieces, Paixhans, I believe, faced the neck of the harbor. The remaining armament of lighter calibre, running, I should judge, from forty-twos down to eighteens. Only one gun lay on the ground destitute of a carriage. The place will stand a great deal of battering; for the walls are nearly bidden by the sand-covered *glacis*, which would catch and smother four point-blank shots out of five, if discharged from a distance. Against shells, however, it has no resource; and one mortar would make it a most unwholesome residence.

“What’s this?” asked a volunteer, in homespun gray uniform, who, like ourselves, had come in by courtesy.

“That’s the butt of the old flag-staff,” answered a comrade. “Cap’n Foster cut it down before he left the fort, damn him! It was a dam’ sneaking trick. I’ve a great mind to shave off a sliver and send it to Lincoln.”

The idea of getting a bit of the famous staff as a memento struck me, and I attempted to put it in practice; but the exceedingly tough pitch-pine defied my slender pocket-knife.

“Jim, cut the gentleman a piece,” said one of the volunteers, Jim drew a toothpick a foot long and did me the favor, for which I here repeat my thanks to him.

They were good-looking, healthy fellows, these two, like most of their comrades, with a certain air of frank gentility and self-respect about them, being probably the sons of well-to-do planters. It would be a great mistake to suppose that the volunteers are drawn, to any extent whatever, from the “poor white trash.” The secession movement, like all the political action of the State at all times, is independent of the crackers, asks no aid nor advice of them, and, in short, ignores them utterly.

“I was here when the Star of the West was fired on,” the Lieutenant told us. “We only had powder for two hours. Anderson could have put us out in a short time, if he had chosen.”

“How rapidly can these heavy guns be fired?”

“About ten times an hour.”

“Do you think the defences will protect the garrison against a bombardment?”

“I think the palmetto stockades will answer. I don’t know about that enormous pile of barrels, however. If a shot hits the mass on the top, I am afraid it will come down, bags and barrels together, bury the gun and perhaps the gunners.”

Page 152

“What if Sumter should open now?” I suggested.

“We should be here to help,” answered the Georgian.

“We should be here to run away,” amended my comrade from Brooklyn.

“Well, I suppose we should be of mighty little use, and might as well clear out,” was the sober second-thought of the Georgian.

Having satisfied our curiosity, we thanked the Lieutenant and left Fort Moultrie. The story of our visit to it excited much surprise, when we recounted it in the city. Members of the Legislature and other men high in influence had desired the privilege, but had not applied for it, expecting a repulse.

A walk down a winding street, bordered by scattered cottages, inclosed by brown board-fences or railings, and tracked by a horse-railroad built for the Moultrie House, led us to the ferry-wharf, where we found our baggage piled together, and our fellow-passengers wandering about in a state of bored expectation. Sullivan’s Island in winter is a good spot for an economical man, inasmuch as it presents no visible opportunities of spending money. There were houses of refreshment, as we could see by their signs; but if they did business, it was with closed doors and barred shutters. After we had paid a newsboy five cents for the “Mercury,” and five more for the “Courier,” we were at the end of our possibilities in the way of extravagance. At half-past one arrived the ferry-boat with a few passengers, mostly volunteers, and a deck-load of military stores, among which I noticed Boston biscuit and several dozen new knapsacks. Then, from the other side, came the “dam’ nigger,” that is to say, the drummer of the new shoes, beating his sheepskin at the head of about fifty men of the Washington Artillery, who were on their way back to town from Fort Moultrie. They were fine-looking young fellows, mostly above the middle size of Northerners, with spirited and often aristocratic faces, but somewhat more devil-may-care in expression than we are accustomed to see in New England. They poured down the gangway, trailed arms, ascended the promenade-deck, ordered arms, grounded arms, and broke line. The drill struck me as middling, which may be owing to the fact that the company has lately increased to about two hundred members, thus diluting the old organization with a large number of new recruits. Military service at the South is a patrician exercise, much favored by men of “good family,” more especially at this time, when it signifies real danger and glory.

Our rajpoots having entered the boat, we of lower caste were permitted to follow. At two o’clock we were steaming over the yellow waters of the harbor. The volunteers, like everybody else in Charleston, discussed Secession and Fort Sumter, considering the former as an accomplished fact, and the latter as a fact of the kind called stubborn. They talked uniform, too, and equipments, and marksmanship, and drinks, and cigars, and other military matters.



Page 153

Now and then an awkwardly folded blanket was taken from the shoulders which it disgraced, refolded, packed carefully in its covering of India-rubber, and strapped once more in its place, two or three generally assisting in the operation. Presently a firing at marks from the upper deck commenced. The favorite target was a conical floating buoy, showing red on the sunlit surface of the harbor, some four hundred yards away. With a crack and a hoarse whiz the minie-balls flew towards it, splashing up the water where they first struck and then taking two or three tremendous skips before they sank. A militiaman from New York city, who was one of my fellow-passengers, told me that he “never saw such good shooting.” It seemed to me that every sixth ball either hit the buoy full, or touched water but a few yards this side of it, while not more than one in a dozen went wild.

“It is good for a thousand yards,” said a volunteer, slapping his bright, new piece, proudly.

A favorite subject of argument appeared to be whether Fort Sumter ought to be attacked immediately or not. A lieutenant standing near me talked long and earnestly regarding this matter with a civilian friend, breaking out at last in a loud tone,—

“Why, good Heaven, Jim! do you want that place to go peaceably into the hands of Lincoln?”

“No, Fred, I do not. But I tell you, Fred, when that fort is attacked, it will be the bloodiest day,—the bloodiest day!—the bloodiest——!!”

And here, unable to express himself in words, Jim flung his arms wildly about, ground his tobacco with excitement, spit on all sides, and walked away, shaking his head, I thought, in real grief of spirit.

We passed close to Fort Pinckney, our volunteers exchanging hurrahs with the garrison. It is a round, two-storied, yellow little fortification, standing at one end of a green marsh known as Shute’s Folly Island. What it was put there for no one knows: it is too close to the city to protect it; too much out of the harbor to command that. Perhaps it might keep reinforcements for Anderson from coming down the Ashley, just as the guns on the Battery were supposed to be intended to deter them from descending the Cooper.

On the wharf of the ferry three drunken volunteers, the first that I had seen in that condition, brushed against me. The nearest one, a handsome young fellow of six feet two, half turned to stare back at me with a—

“How are ye, Cap’m? Gaw damn ye! Haw, haw, aw!”—and reeled onward, brimful of spirituous good-nature.

Four days more had I in Charleston, waiting from tide to tide for a chance to sail to New York, and listening from hour to hour for the guns of Fort Sumter. Sunday was a day of excitement, a report spreading that the Floridians had attacked Fort Pickens, and the Charlestonians feeling consequently bound in honor to fight their own dragon. Groups of earnest men talked all day and late into the evening under the portico and in the basement-rooms of the hotel, besides gathering at the corners and strolling about the Battery. “We must act.” “We cannot delay.” “We ought not to submit.” Such were the phrases that fell upon the ear oftenest and loudest.



Page 154

As I lounged, after tea, in the vestibule of the reading-room, an eccentric citizen of Arkansas varied the entertainment. A short, thin man, of the cracker type, swarthy, long-bearded, and untidy, he was dressed in well-worn civilian costume, with the exception of an old blue coat showing dim remnants of military garniture. Heeling up to a gentleman who sat near me, he glared stupidly at him from beneath a broad-brimmed hat, demanding a seat mutely, but with such eloquence of oscillation that no words were necessary. The respectable person thus addressed, not anxious to receive the stranger into his lap, rose and walked away, with that air of not, having seen anything so common to disconcerted people who wish to conceal their disturbance. Into the vacant place dropped the stranger, stretching out his feet, throwing his head back against the wall, and half closing his eyes with the drunkard's own leer of self-sufficiency. During a few moments of agonizing suspense the world waited. Then from those whiskey-scorched and tobacco-stained lips came a long, shrill "Yee-p!"

It was his exordium; it demanded the attention of the company; and though he had it not, he continued:—

"I'm an Arkansas man, *I am*. I'm a big su-gar planter, *I am*. All right! Go a'ead! I own fifty niggers, *I do*. Yee-p!"

He lifted both feet and slammed them on the floor energetically, pausing for a reply. He had addressed all men; no one responded, and he went on:—

"I'm for straightout, immedit shession, *I am*. I go for 'staining coursh of Sou' Car'lina, *I do*. I'm ready to fight for Sou' Car'lina. I'm a Na-po-le-on Bonaparte. All right! Go a'ead! Yee-p! Fellahs don't know me here. I'm an Arkansas man, *I am*. Sou' Car'lina won't kill an Arkansas man. I'm an immedit shessionist. Hurrah for Sou' Car'lina! All right! Yee-p!"

There was a lingering, caressing accent on his "*I am*," which told how dear to him was his individuality, drunk or sober. He looked at no one; his hat was drawn over his eyes; his hands were deep in his pockets; his feet did all needful gesturing. I stepped in front of him to get a fuller view of his face, and the action aroused his attention. He surveyed my gray Inverness wrapper and gave me a chuckling nod of approbation.

"How are ye, Bub? I like that blanket, *I do*."

In spite of this noble stranger's goodwill and prowess, we still found Fort Sumter a knotty question. In a country which for eighty years has not seen a shot fired in earnest, it is not wonderful that a good deal of ignorance should exist concerning military matters, and that second-class plans should be hatched for taking a first-class fortification. While I was in Charleston, the most popular proposition was to bombard continuously for two whole days and nights, thereby demoralizing the garrison by depriving it of sleep and causing it to surrender at the first



Page 155

attempt to escalate. Another plan, not in general favor, was to smoke Anderson out by means of a raft covered with burning mixtures of a chemical and bad-smelling nature. Still another, with perhaps yet fewer adherents, was to advance on all sides in such a vast number of row-boats that the fort could not sink them all, whereupon the survivors should land on the wharf and proceed to take such further measures as might be deemed expedient. The volunteers from the country always arrived full of faith and defiance. "We want to get a squint at that Fort Sumter," they would say to their city friends. "We are going to take it. If we don't plant the palmetto on it, it's because there's no such tree as the palmetto." Down the harbor they would go in the ferry-boats to Morris or Sullivan's Island. The spy-glass would be brought out, and one after another would peer through it at the object of their enmity. Some could not sight it at all, confounded the instrument, and fell back on their natural vision. Others, more lucky, or better versed in telescopic observations, got a view of the fortress, and perhaps burst out swearing at the evident massiveness of the walls and the size of the columbiads.

"Good Lord, what a gun!" exclaimed one man. "D'ye see that gun? What an almighty thing! I'll be ——, if I ever put my head in front of it!"

The difficulties of assault were admitted to be very great, considering the bad footing, the height of the ramparts, and the abundant store of muskets and grenades in the garrison. As to breaches, nobody seemed to know whether they could be made or not. The besieging batteries were neither heavy nor near, nor could they be advanced as is usual in regular sieges, nor had they any advantage over the defence except in the number of gunners, while in regard to position and calibre they were inferior. To knock down a wall nearly forty feet high and fourteen feet thick at a distance of more than half a mile seemed a tough undertaking, even when unresisted. It was discovered also that the side of the fortification towards Fort Johnstone, its only weak point, had been strengthened so as to make it bomb-proof by means of interior masonry constructed from the stones of the landing-place. Then nobody wanted to knock Fort Sumter down, inasmuch as that involved either the labor of building it up again, or the necessity of going without it as a harbor-defence. Finally, suppose it should be attacked and not taken? Really, we unlearned people in the art of war were vastly puzzled as we thought tins whole matter over, and we sometimes doubted whether our superiors were not almost equally bothered with ourselves.

This fighting was a sober, sad subject; and yet at times it took a turn toward the ludicrous. A gentleman told me that he was present when the steamer Marion was seized with the intention of using her in pursuing the Star of the West. A vehement dispute arose as to the fitness of the vessel for military service.



Page 156

“Fill her with men, and put two or three eighteen-pounders in her,” said the advocates of the measure.

“Where will you put your eighteen-pounders?” demanded the opposition.

“On the promenade-deck, to be sure.”

“Yes, and the moment you fire one, you’ll see it go through the bottom of the ship, and then you’ll have to go after it.”

During the two days previous to my second and successful attempt to quit Charleston, the city was in full expectation that the fort would shortly be attacked. News had arrived that Federal troops were on their way with reinforcements. An armed steamer had been seen off the harbor, both by night and day, making signals to Anderson. The Governor went down to Sullivan’s Island to inspect the troops and Fort Moultrie. The volunteers, aided by negroes and even negro women, worked all night on the batteries. Notwithstanding we were close upon race-week, when the city is usually crowded, the streets had a deserted air, and nearly every acquaintance I met told me he had been down to the islands to see the preparations. Yet the whole excitement, like others which had preceded, ended even short of smoke. News came that reinforcements had not been sent to Anderson; and the destruction of that most inconvenient person was once more postponed. People fell back on the old hope that the Government would be brought to listen to reason,—that it would give up to South Carolina what it could not keep from her with justice, —that it would grant, in short, the incontrovertible right of peaceable secession. For, in the midst of all these labors and terrors, this expense and annoyance, no one talked of returning into the Union, and all agreed in deprecating compromise.

Once more, this time in the *James Adger*, I set sail from Charleston. The boat lost one tide, and consequently one day, because at the last moment the captain found himself obliged to take out a South Carolina clearance. As I passed down the harbor, I counted fourteen square-rigged vessels at the wharves, and one lying at anchor, while three others had just passed the bar, outward-bound, and two were approaching from the open sea. Deterred from the Ship Channel by the sunken schooners, and from Maffitt’s Channel by the fate of the *Columbia*, we tried the Middle Channel, and glided over the bar without accident.

“Sailing to Charleston is very much like going foreign,” I said to a middle-aged sea-captain whom we numbered among our passengers. “What with heaving the lead, and doing without beacons, and lying off the coast o’ nights, it makes one think of trading to new countries.”

I had, it seems, unintentionally pulled the string which jerked him. Springing up, he paced about excitedly for a few moments, and then broke out with his story.



“Yes,—I know it,—I know as much about it as anybody, I reckon. I lay off there nine days in a nor’easter and lost my anchors; and here I am going on to New York to buy some more; and all for those cursed Black Republicans!”



Page 157

In South Carolina they see but one side of the shield,—which is quite different, as we know, from the custom of the rest of mankind.

REVIEWS AND LITERARY NOTICES.

1. *Descriptive Ethnology*. By R.G. LATHAM. 2 vols. London. 1859.

2. *Anthropologie der Naturvoelker*. Von Dr. T. WAIZ. 2 Baender. Leipzig. 1860.

Some writers have the remarkable faculty of making the subject which they may happen to treat forever more distasteful and wearisome to their readers. Whether the cause be in the style, or the point of view, or the method of treatment, or in all together, they seem able to force the student away in disgust from the whole field on which they labor, with vows never again to cross it.

Such an author, it seems to us, is pre-eminently R.G. Latham, in his treatment of Ethnology. Happy the man who has any such philosophic interest in Human Races, that he can ever care to hear again of the subject, after perusing Mr. Latham's various volumes on "Descriptive Ethnology." We wonder that the whole English reading public; has not consigned the science to the shelf of Encyclopedias of Useful Knowledge, or of Year-Books of Fact, or any other equally philosophic and connected works, after the treatment which this modern master of Ethnology has given to the subject.

Such disconnected masses of facts are heaped together in these works, such incredible dulness is shown in presenting them, such careful avoidance of any generalization or of any interesting particular, such a bald and conceited style, and such a cockneyish and self-opinionated view of human history, as our soul wearies even to think of. Mr. Latham disdains any link of philosophy, or any classification, among his "ten thousand facts," as being a fault of the "German School" (whatever that may be) of Ethnology. It seems to him soundly "British" to disbelieve all the best conclusions of modern scholarship, and to urge his own fanciful or shallow theories. He treats all human superstitions and mythologies as if he were standing in the Strand and judging them by the ideas of modern London. His is a Cockney's view of antiquity. He cannot imagine that a barbarous and infant people, groping in the mysteries of the moral universe, might entertain some earnest and poetic views which were not precisely in the line of thought of the Londoners of the nineteenth century, and yet which might be worth investigating. To his mind, there is no grand march of humanity, slow, but certain, towards higher ideals, through the various lines of race,—but rather innumerable ripples on the surface of history, which come and pass away without connection and without purpose.

The reader wades slowly through his books, and leaves them with a feeling of intense disgust. Such a vast gathering of facts merely to produce this melancholy confusion of



details! You feel that his eminence in the science must be from the circumstance that no one else is dull enough and patient enough to gather such a museum of facts in regard to human beings. The mind is utterly confused as to divisions of human races, and is ready to conclude that there must be almost as many varieties of man as there are tribes or dialects, and that Ethnology has not yet reached the position of a science.



Page 158

The reader must pardon the bitterness of our feelings; but we are just smarting from a prolonged perusal of all Mr. Latham's works, especially the two volumes whose title is given above; and that we may have sympathy, if only in a faint degree, from our friends, we quote a few passages, taken at random, though we cannot possibly thus convey an adequate conception of the infinite dulness of the work.

The following is his elegant introduction:—

"I follow the Horatian rule, and plunge, at once, *in medias res*. I am on the Indus, but not on the Indian portion of it. I am on the Himalayas, but not on their southern side. I am on the northwestern ranges, with Tartary on the north, Bokhara on the west, and Hindostan on the south. I am in a neighborhood where three great religions meet: Mahometanism, Buddhism. Brahminism. I *must* begin somewhere; and here is my beginning."— Vol. i. p. 1.

The following is his analysis of the beautiful Finnish Kalevala:—

"Wainamoinen is much of a smith, and more of a harper. Illmarinen is most of a smith. Lemminkainen is much of a harper, and little of a smith. The hand of the daughter of the mistress of Pohjola is what, each and all, the three sons of Kalevala strive to win,—a hand which the mother of the owner will give to any one who can make for her and for Pohjola *Sampo*, Wainamoinen will not; but he knows of one who will,—Illmarinen. Illmarinen makes it, and gains the mother's consent thereby. But the daughter requires another service. He must hunt down the elk of Tunela. We now see the way in which the actions of the heroes are, at one and the same time, separate and connected. Wainamoinen tries; Illmarinen tries (and eventually wins); Lemminkainen tries. There are alternations of friendship and enmity. *Sampo* is made and presented. It is then wanted back again.

"'Give us,' says Wainamoinen, 'if not the whole, half.'

"'Sampo,' says Louki, the mistress of Pohjola,' cannot be divided.'

"'Then let us steal it,' says one of the three.

"'Agreed,' say the other two.

"So the rape of *Sampo* takes place. It is taken from Pohjola, whilst the owners are sung to sleep by the harp of Lemminkainen; sung to sleep, but not for so long a time as to allow the robbers to escape. They are sailing Kalevalaward, when Louki comes after them on the wings of the wind, and raises a storm. *Sampo* is broken, and thrown into the sea. Bad days now come. There is no sun, no moon. Illmarinen makes them of silver and gold. He had previously made his second wife (for he lost his first) out of the same metals. However, *Sampo* is washed up, and made whole. Good days come.



The sun and moon shine as before, and the sons of Kalevala possess Sampo.”—Vol. i., pp. 433, 434.

This, again, is Mr. Latham’s profound and interesting view of *Buddhism*:—

“Buddhism is one thing. Practices out of which Buddhism may be developed are another. It has been already suggested that the ideas conveyed by the terms *Sramanoe* and *Gymnosophistoe* are just as Brahminic as Buddhist, and, *vice versa*, just as Buddhist as Brahminic.



Page 159

“The earliest dates of specific Buddhism are of the same age as the earliest dates of specific Brahminism.

“Clemens of Alexandria mentions Buddhist pyramids, the Buddhist habit of depositing certain bones in them, the Buddhist practice of foretelling events, the Buddhist practice of continence, the Buddhist Semnai or holy virgins. This, however, may he but so much asceticism. He mentions this and more. He supplies the name Bouta; Bouta being honored as a god.

“From Cyril of Jerusalem we learn that Samnaism was, more or less, Manichaeism,—Manichaeism being, more or less, Samanist. Terebinthus, the preceptor of Manes, took the name Baudas. In Epiphanius, Terebinthus is the pupil of Scythianus.

“Suidas makes Terebinthus a pupil of Baudda, who pretended to be the son of a virgin. And here we may stop to remark, that the Mongol Tshingiz-Khan is said to be virgin-born; that, word for word, Scythianus is Sak; that Sakya Muni (compare it with Manes) is a name of Buddha.

“Be this as it may, there was, before A.D. 300,—

“1. Action and reaction between Buddhism and Christianity.

“2. Buddhist buildings.

“3. The same cultus in both Bactria and India.

“Whether this constitute Buddhism is another question.”—Vol. ii. p. 317.

And more of an equally attractive and comprehensible character.

We assure the reader that these extracts are but feeble exponents of the peculiar power of Mr. Latham’s works,—a power of unmitigated dulness. What his views are on the great questions of the science—the origin of races, the migrations, the crossings of varieties, and the like—no mortal can remember, who has penetrated the labyrinth of his researches.

An author of a very different kind is Professor Waiz, whose work on Anthropology has just reached this country: a writer as philosophic as Mr. Latham is disconnected; as pleasing and natural in style as the other is affected; as simply open to the true and good in all customs or superstitions of barbarous peoples as the Englishman is contemptuous of everything not modern and European. Waiz seems to us the most

careful and truly scientific author in the field of Ethnology whom we have had since Prichard, and with the wider scope which belongs to the intellectual German.

The bane of this science, as every one knows, has been its theorizing, and its want of careful inductive reasoning from facts. The classifications in it have been endless, varying almost with the fancies of each new student; while every prominent follower of it has had some pet hypothesis, to which he desired to suit his facts. Whether the *a priori* theory were of modern miraculous origin or of gradual development, of unity or of diversity of parentage, of permanent and absolute divisions of races or of a community of blood, it has equally forced the author to twist his facts.



Page 160

Perhaps the basest of all uses to which theory has been put in this science was in a well-known American work, where facts and fancies in Ethnology were industriously woven together to form another withe about the limbs of the wretched African slave.

Waiz has reasoned slowly and carefully from facts, considering in his view all possible hypotheses,—even, for instance, the development-theory of Darwin,—and has formed his own conclusion on scientific data, or has wisely avowed that no conclusion is possible.

The classification to which he is forced is that which all profound investigators are approaching,—that of language interpreted by history. He is compelled to believe that no physiological evidences of race can be considered as at all equal to the evidences from language. At the same time, he is ready to admit that even this classification is imperfect, as from the nature of the case it must be; for the source of the confusion lies in the very unity of mankind. He rejects *in toto* Professor Agassiz's "realm-theory," as inconsistent with facts. The hybrid-question, as put by Messrs. Gliddon and Nott, meets with a searching and careful investigation, with the conclusion that nothing in facts yet ascertained proves any want of vitality or power of propagation in mulattoes or in crosses of any human races.

The unity of origin and the vast antiquity of mankind are the two important conclusions drawn.

His second volume is entirely devoted to the negro races, and is the most valuable treatise yet written on that topic.

The whole work is mainly directed towards *Naturvoelker*, or "Peoples in a State of Nature," and therefore cannot be recommended for translation, as a general text-book on the science of Ethnology,—a book which is now exceedingly needed in all our higher schools and colleges; but as a general treatise, with many new and important facts, scientifically treated, it can be most highly commended to the general scholar.

Il Politecnico. Repertorio Mensile di Studi applicati alia Prosperita e Coltura Sociale. Milano, 1860. New York: Charles B. Norton, Agent for Libraries, 596, Broadway.

Among the best first-fruits of Italian liberty are the free publication and circulation of books; and it is a striking indication of the new order of things in Lombardy, that the publishers at Milan of the monthly journal, "Il Politecnico," should at once have established an American agency in New York, and that in successive numbers of their periodical during the present year they should have furnished lists of some of the principal American publications which they are prepared to obtain for Italian readers. It will be a fortunate circumstance for the people of both countries, should a ready means be established for the interchange of their contemporaneous works in literature and science.



Page 161

The "Politecnico" is not altogether a new journal. Seven volumes of it had been published, and had acquired for it a high reputation and a considerable circulation, when political events put a stop to its issue. The Austrian system of government after 1849 repressed all free expression of thought in Lombardy; and no encouragement was afforded for the publication of any work not under the control of the administration. With the beginning of the present year the "Politecnico" was reestablished, mainly through the influence and under the direction of Dr. Carlo Cattaneo, who had been the chief promoter of the preceding original series. The numbers of the new series give evidence of talent and independence in its conductors and contributors, and contain articles of intrinsic value, beside that which they possess as indications of the present intellectual condition and tendencies of Italy. The journal is wholly devoted to serious studies, its object being the cultivation of the moral and physical sciences with the arts depending on them, and their practical application to promote the national prosperity. That it will carry out its design with ability is guaranteed by the character of Cattaneo.

Carlo Cattaneo is a man of unquestioned power of intellect, of strong character, and resolute energy. Already distinguished, not only as a political economist, but as a forcible reasoner in applied politics, he took a leading part in the struggle of 1848 in Milan, and, inspired by ill-will towards Charles Albert and the Piedmontese, was one of the promoters of the disastrous Lombard policy which defeated the hopes of the opponents of Austria at that day. Though an Italian liberal, and unquestionably honest in his patriotic intentions, he was virtually an ally of Radetzky. When the Austrians retook Milan, he was compelled to fly, and took refuge in Lugano, where he compiled three large volumes on the affairs of Italy, from the accession of Pius IX. to the fall of Venice, in which he exhibited his political views, endeavoring to show that the misfortunes of Lombardy were due to the ambitious and false policy of the unhappy Charles Albert. His distrust of the Piedmontese has not diminished with the recent changes in the affairs of Italy; and although Lombardy is now united to Piedmont, and the hope of freedom seems to lie in a hearty and generous union of men of all parties in support of the new government, Cattaneo, when in March last he was elected a member of the National Parliament, refused to take his seat, that he might not be obliged to swear allegiance to the King and the Constitution. His political desire seems to be to see Italy not brought under one rule, but composed of a union of states, each preserving its special autonomy. He is a federalist, and does not share in the unitarian view which prevails with almost all the other prominent Italian statesmen, and which at this moment appears to be the only system that can create a strong, united, independent Italy. It was to him, perhaps, more than to any other single man, that the difficulties which lately arose in the settling of the mode of annexation of Sicily and Naples to the Sardinian kingdom were due; and the small party in Parliament which recently refused to join in the vote of confidence in the ministry of Cavour was led by Ferrari, the disciple of the Milanese Doctor.



Page 162

But however impracticable Cattaneo may be, and however mistaken and extravagant his political views, he is a man of such vigor of mind, that a journal conducted by him becomes, from the fact of his connection with it, one of the important organs of Italian thought. We trust that the "Politecnico" will find subscribers among those in our country who desire to keep up their knowledge of Italian affairs at a time of such extraordinary interest as the present.

Elsie Venner. A Romance of Destiny. By OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES. 2 vols. Boston: Ticknor & Fields. 1861.

English literature numbers among its more or less distinguished authors a goodly number of physicians. Sir Thomas Browne was, perhaps, the last of the great writers of English prose whose mind and style were impregnated with imagination. He wrote poetry without meaning it, as many of his brother doctors have meant to write poetry without doing it, in the classic style of

"Inoculation, heavenly maid, descend!"

Garth's "Dispensary" was long ago as fairly buried as any of his patients; and Armstrong's "Health" enjoys the dreary immortality of being preserved in the collections, like one of those queer things they show you in a glass jar at the anatomical museums. Arbuthnot, a truly genial humorist, has hardly had justice done him. People laugh over his fun in the "Memoirs of Scriblerus," and are commonly satisfied to think it Pope's. Smollett insured his literary life in "Humphrey Clinker"; and we suppose his Continuation of Hume is still one of the pills which ingenuous youth is expected to gulp before it is strong enough to resist. Goldsmith's fame has steadily gained; and so has that of Keats, whom we may also fairly reckon in our list, though he remained harmless, having never taken a degree. On the whole, the proportion of doctors who have positively succeeded in our literature is a large one, and we have now another very marked and beautiful case in Dr. Holmes. Since Arbuthnot, the profession has produced no such wit; since Goldsmith, no author so successful.

Five years ago it would have been only Dr. Holmes's intimate friends that would have considered the remarkable success he has achieved not only possible, but probable. They knew, that, if the fitting opportunity should only come, he would soon show how much stuff he had in him,—sterner stuff, too, than the world had supposed,—stuff not merely to show off the iris of a brilliant reputation, but to block out into the foundations of an enduring fame. It seems an odd thing to say that Dr. Holmes had suffered by having given proof of too much wit; but it is undoubtedly true. People in general have a great respect for those who scare them or make them cry, but are apt to weigh lightly one who amuses them. They like to be tickled, but they would hardly take the advice of their tickler on any question they thought serious. We have our doubts whether the majority of those who



Page 163

make up what is called “the world” are fond of wit. It rather puts them out, as Nature did Fuseli: They look on its crinkling play as men do at lightning; and while they grant it is very fine, are teased with an uncomfortable wonder as to where it is going to strike next. They would rather, on the whole, it were farther off. They like well-established jokes, the fine old smoked-herring sort, such as the clown offers them in the circus, warranted never to spoil, if only kept dry enough. Your fresh wit demands a little thought, perhaps, or at least a kind of negative wit, in the recipient. It is an active, meddling—quality, forever putting things in unexpected and somewhat startling relations to each other; and such new relations are as unwelcome to the ordinary mind as poor relations to a *nouveau riche*. Who wants to be all the time painfully conceiving of the antipodes walking like flies on the ceiling? Yet wit is related to some of the profoundest qualities of the intellect. It is the reasoning faculty acting *per saltum*, the sense of analogy brought to a focus; it is generalization in a flash, logic by the electric telegraph, the sense of likeness in unlikeness, that lies at the root of all discoveries; it is the prose imagination, common-sense at fourth proof. All this is no reason why the world should like it, however; and we fancy that the Question, *Ridentem dicere verum quid vetat?* was plaintively put in the primitive tongue by one of the world’s gray fathers to another without producing the slightest conviction. Of course, there must be some reason for this suspicion of wit, as there is for most of the world’s deep-rooted prejudices. There is a kind of surface-wit that is commonly the sign of a light and shallow nature. It becomes habitual *persiflage*, incapable of taking a deliberate and serious view of anything, or of conceiving the solemnities that environ life. This has made men distrustful of all laughers; and they are apt to confound in one sweeping condemnation with this that humor whose base is seriousness, and which is generally the rebound of the mind from over-sad contemplation. They do not see that the same qualities that make Shakspeare the greatest of tragic poets make him also the deepest of humorists.

Dr. Holmes was already an author of more than a quarter of a century’s standing, and was looked on by most people as an *amusing* writer merely. He protested playfully and pointedly against this, once or twice; but, as he could not help being witty, whether he would or no, his audience laughed and took the protest as part of the joke. He felt that he was worth a great deal more than he was vulgarly rated at, and perhaps chafed a little; but his opportunity had not come. With the first number of the “Atlantic” it came at last, and wonderfully he profited by it. The public were first delighted, and then astonished. So much wit, wisdom, pathos, and universal Catharine-wheeling



Page 164

of fun and fancy was unexampled. "Why, good gracious," cried Madam Grundy, "we've got a *genius* among us fit last! I always knew what it would come to!" "Got a fiddlestick!" says Mr. G.; "it's only rockets." And there was no little watching and waiting for the sticks to come down. We are afraid that many a respectable skeptic has a crick in his neck by this time; for we are of opinion that these are a new kind of rocket, that go without sticks, and *stay up* against all laws of gravity.

We expected a great deal from Dr. Holmes; we thought he had in him the makings of the best magazinist in the country; but we honestly confess we were astonished. We remembered the proverb, "'Tis the pace that kills," and could scarce believe that such a two-forty gait could be kept up through a twelvemonth. Such wind and bottom were unprecedented. But this was Eclipse himself; and he came in as fresh as a May morning, ready at a month's end for another year's run. And it was not merely the perennial vivacity, the fun shading down to seriousness, and the seriousness up to fun, in perpetual and charming vicissitude;—here was the man of culture, of scientific training, the man who had thought as well as felt, and who had fixed purposes and sacred convictions. No, the Eclipse-comparison is too trifling. This was a stout ship under press of canvas; and however the phosphorescent star-foam of wit and fancy, crowding up under her bows or gliding away in subdued flashes of sentiment in her wake, may draw the eye, yet she has an errand of duty; she carries a precious freight, she steers by the stars, and all her seemingly wanton zigzags bring her nearer to port.

When children have made up their minds to like some friend of the family, they commonly besiege him for a story. The same demand is made by the public of authors, and accordingly it was made of Dr. Holmes. The odds were heavy against him; but here again he triumphed. Like a good Bostonian, he took for his heroine a *schoolma'am*, the Puritan Pallas Athene of the American Athens, and made her so lovely that everybody was looking about for a schoolmistress to despair after. Generally, the best work in imaginative literature is done before forty; but Dr. Holmes should seem not to have found out what a Mariposa grant Nature had made him till after fifty.

There is no need of our analyzing "Elsie Venner," for all our readers know it as well as we do. But we cannot help saying that Dr. Holmes has struck a new vein of New-England romance. The story is really a romance, and the character of the heroine has in it an element of mystery; yet the materials are gathered from every-day New-England life, and that weird borderland between science and speculation where psychology and physiology exercise mixed jurisdiction, and which rims New England as it does all other lands. The character of Elsie is exceptional, but not purely ideal, like Cristabel and Lamia. In Doctor Kittredge



Page 165

and his "hired man," and in the Principal of the "Apollinean Institoot," Dr. Holmes has shown his ability to draw those typical characters that represent the higher and lower grades of average human nature; and in calling his work a Romance he quietly justifies himself for mingling other elements in the composition of Elsie and her cousin. Apart from the merit of the book as a story, it is full of wit, and of sound thought sometimes hiding behind a mask of humor. Admirably conceived are the two clergymen, gradually changing sides almost without knowing it, and having that persuasion of consistency which men always feel, because they must always bring their creed into some sort of agreement with their dispositions.

There is something melancholy in the fact, that, the moment Dr. Holmes showed that he felt a deep interest in the great questions which concern this world and the next, and proved not only that he believed in something, but thought his belief worth standing up for, the cry of *Infidel* should have been raised against him by people who believe in nothing but an authorized version of Truth, they themselves being the censors. For our own part, we do not like the smell of Smithfield, whether it be Catholic or Protestant that is burning there; though, fortunately, one can afford to smile at the Inquisition, so long as its Acts of Faith are confined to the corners of sectarian newspapers. But Dr. Holmes can well afford to possess his soul in patience. The Unitarian John Milton has won and kept quite a respectable place in literature, though he was once forced to say, bitterly, that "new Presbyter was only old Priest writ large." One can say nowadays, *E pur si muove*, with more comfort than Galileo could; the world does move forward, and we see no great chance for any ingenious fellow-citizen to make his fortune by a "Yankee Heretic-Baker," as there might have been two centuries ago.

Dr. Holmes has proved his title to be a wit in the earlier and higher sense of the word, when it meant a man of genius, a player upon thoughts rather than words. The variety, freshness, and strength which he has lent to our pages during the last three years seem to demand of us that we should add our expression of admiration to that which his countrymen have been so eager and unanimous in rendering.

RECENT AMERICAN PUBLICATIONS

RECEIVED BY THE EDITORS OF THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY.

History of the United Netherlands: from the Death of William the Silent to the Synod of Dort. With a Full View of the English-Dutch Struggle against Spain, and of the Origin and Destruction of the Spanish Armada. By John Lothrop Motley, LL.D. New York. Harper & Brothers. 2 vols. 8vo. pp. 532, 563. \$4.00.

History of Latin Christianity, including that of the Popes to the Pontificate of Nicolas V.
By Henry Hart Milman. Vol. V. New York. Sheldon & Co. 16mo. pp. 530. \$1.50.



Page 166

Chambers's Encyclopaedia: A Dictionary of Universal Knowledge for the People. Parts XXIII. and XXIV. New York. D. Appleton & Co. 8vo. paper, pp. 63. 15 cts.

The Historical Magazine, and Notes and Queries concerning the Antiquities, History, and Biography of America. For February, 1860. New York. Charles B. Richardson & Co. 4to. paper, pp. 31. 17 cts.

Notes on Screw-Propulsion; Its Rise and Progress. By W.M. Walker. New York. D. Van Nostrand. 8vo. pp. 51. 75 cts.

The Great Preparation; or Redemption Draweth Nigh. By Rev. John Cumming, D.D. Second Series. New York. Rudd & Carleton. 12mo. pp. 323. \$1.00.

A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language, for the Use of Schools. By Simon Keil, A.M. New York. Phinney, Blakeman, & Mason. 12mo. pp. 354. 75 cts.

Fast-Day Sermons; or the Pulpit on the State of the Country. New York. Rudd & Carleton. 12mo. pp. 336. \$1 00.

Bible View of Slavery. A Discourse by the Rev. M.J. Raphael, Rabbi Preacher. New York. Rudd & Carleton. 16mo. paper, pp. 41. 15 cts.

Prayer for Rulers; or Duty of Christian Patriots. A Discourse by Rev. William Adams, D.D. New York. Rudd & Carleton. 18mo. paper, pp. 41. 15 cts.

A Popular Treatise on Steam, and its Application to the Useful Arts, especially to Navigation; intended as an Instructor for Young Seamen, Mechanics' Apprentices, *etc.* By J.H. Ward. New York. D. Van Nostrand. 8vo. pp. 120. \$1.00.

The Children's Bible Picture-Book. Illustrated. New York. Harper & Brothers. 16mo. pp. 320. 75 cts.

Mercedes of Castile; or, The Voyage to Cathay, by J. Fenimore Cooper. Illustrated by Drawings by F.O.C. Darley. New York. W.A. Townsend & Co. 12mo. pp. 530. \$1.50.

Abridgment of the Debates of Congress, from 1789 to 1856. By the Author of the "Thirty Years' View." Vol. XV. New York. D. Appleton & Co. 8vo. pp. 676. \$2.50.

Flirtation, and What Comes of It. A Comedy, in Five Acts. By Frank B. Goodrich. New York. Rudd & Carleton. 18mo. paper, pp. 92. 25 cts.

Pampinea, and other Poems. By Thomas Bailey Aldrich. New York. Rudd & Carleton. 12mo. pp. 73. 75 cts.



The Wits and Beaux of Society. By Grace and Philip Wharton. Illustrated. New York. Harper & Brothers. 12mo. pp. 480. \$1.50.

Oliver Goldsmith: A Biography. By Washington Irving. Illustrated. New York. George P. Putnam. 12mo. pp. 382. \$1.50.

A Text-Book of the History of Doctrines. By Dr. K.R. Hagenbach. Vol. I. New York. Sheldon & Co. 12mo. pp. 478. \$2.50.

On the Fluctuations of Level in the North American Lakes. By Charles Whittlesey. Washington. Published by the Smithsonian Institution. New York. D. Appleton & Co. 4to. pp. 26. 25 Cts.

Euripides ex Recensione Frederici A. Paley. Accessit Verborum et Nominum Index. Vols. II. and III. New York. Harper & Brothers. 24mo. pp. 290, 295. 40 cts.