

The Atlantic Monthly, Volume 10, No. 61, November, 1862 eBook

The Atlantic Monthly, Volume 10, No. 61, November, 1862

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Page 1

THE HISTORY OF THE APPLE-TREE.

It is remarkable how closely the history of the Apple-tree is connected with that of man. The geologist tells us that the order of the *Rosaceae*, which includes the Apple, also the true Grasses, and the *Labiatae*, or Mints, were introduced only a short time previous to the appearance of man on the globe.

It appears that apples made a part of the food of that unknown primitive people whose traces have lately been found at the bottom of the Swiss lakes, supposed to be older than the foundation of Rome, so old that they had no metallic implements. An entire black and shrivelled Crab-Apple has been recovered from their stores.

Tacitus says of the ancient Germans, that they satisfied their hunger with wild apples (*agrestia poma*) among other things.

Niebuhr observes that "the words for a house, a field, a plough, ploughing, wine, oil, milk, sheep, apples, and others relating to agriculture and the gentler way of life, agree in Latin and Greek, while the Latin words for all objects pertaining to war or the chase are utterly alien from the Greek." Thus the apple-tree may be considered a symbol of peace no less than the olive.

The apple was early so important, and generally distributed, that its name traced to its root in many languages signifies fruit in general. [Greek: *Maelon*], in Greek, means an apple, also the fruit of other trees, also a sheep and any cattle, and finally riches in general.

The apple-tree has been celebrated by the Hebrews, Greeks, Romans, and Scandinavians. Some have thought that the first human pair were tempted by its fruit. Goddesses are fabled to have contended for it, dragons were set to watch it, and heroes were employed to pluck it.

The tree is mentioned in at least three places in the Old Testament, and its fruit in two or three more. Solomon sings,—“As the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons.” And again,—“Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples.” The noblest part of man’s noblest feature is named from this fruit, “the apple of the eye.”

The apple-tree is also mentioned by Homer and Herodotus. Ulysses saw in the glorious garden of Alcinoüs “pears and pomegranates, and apple-trees bearing beautiful fruit” ([Greek: *kahi maeleai aglaokarpoi*]). And according to Homer, apples were among the fruits which Tantalus could not pluck, the wind ever blowing their boughs away from him. Theophrastus knew and described the apple-tree as a botanist.



According to the Prose Edda, “Iduna keeps in a box the apples which the gods, when they feel old age approaching, have only to taste of to become young again. It is in this manner that they will be kept in renovated youth until Ragnarok” (or the destruction of the gods).

I learn from Loudon that “the ancient Welsh bards were rewarded for excelling in song by the token of the apple-spray;” and “in the Highlands of Scotland the apple-tree is the badge of the clan Lamont.”



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The apple-tree (*Pyrus malus*) belongs chiefly to the northern temperate zone. Loudon says, that "it grows spontaneously in every part of Europe except the frigid zone, and throughout Western Asia, China, and Japan." We have also two or three varieties of the apple indigenous in North America. The cultivated apple-tree was first introduced into this country by the earliest settlers, and it is thought to do as well or better here than anywhere else. Probably some of the varieties which are now cultivated were first introduced into Britain by the Romans.

Pliny, adopting the distinction of Theophrastus, says,—“Of trees there are some which are altogether wild (*sylvestres*), some more civilized (*urbaniores*).” Theophrastus includes the apple among the last; and, indeed, it is in this sense the most civilized of all trees. It is as harmless as a dove, as beautiful as a rose, and as valuable as flocks and herds. It has been longer cultivated than any other, and so is more humanized; and who knows but, like the dog, it will at length be no longer traceable to its wild original? It migrates with man, like the dog and horse and cow: first, perchance, from Greece to Italy, thence to England, thence to America; and our Western emigrant is still marching steadily toward the setting sun with the seeds of the apple in his pocket, or perhaps a few young trees strapped to his load. At least a million apple-trees are thus set farther westward this year than any cultivated ones grew last year. Consider how the Blossom-Week, like the Sabbath, is thus annually spreading over the prairies; for when man migrates, he carries with him not only his birds, quadrupeds, insects, vegetables, and his very sward, but his orchard also.

The leaves and tender twigs are an agreeable food to many domestic animals, as the cow, horse, sheep, and goat; and the fruit is sought after by the first, as well as by the hog. Thus there appears to have existed a natural alliance between these animals and this tree from the first. “The fruit of the Crab in the forests of France” is said to be “a great resource for the wild-boar.”

Not only the Indian, but many indigenous insects, birds, and quadrupeds, welcomed the apple-tree to these shores. The tent-caterpillar saddled her eggs on the very first twig that was formed, and it has since shared her affections with the wild cherry; and the canker-worm also in a measure abandoned the elm to feed on it. As it grew apace, the blue-bird, robin, cherry-bird, king-bird, and many more, came with haste and built their nests and warbled in its boughs, and so became orchard-birds, and multiplied more than ever. It was an era in the history of their race. The downy woodpecker found such a savory morsel under its bark, that he perforated it in a ring quite round the tree, before he left it,—a thing which he had never done before, to my knowledge. It did not take the partridge long to find out how sweet its buds were, and every

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winter eve she flew, and still flies, from the wood, to pluck them, much to the farmer's sorrow. The rabbit, too, was not slow to learn the taste of its twigs and bark; and when the fruit was ripe, the squirrel half-rolled, half-carried it to his hole; and even the musquash crept up the bank from the brook at evening, and greedily devoured it, until he had worn a path in the grass there; and when it was frozen and thawed, the crow and the jay were glad to taste it occasionally. The owl crept into the first apple-tree that became hollow, and fairly hooted with delight, finding it just the place for him; so, settling down into it, he has remained there ever since.

My theme being the Wild Apple, I will merely glance at some of the seasons in the annual growth of the cultivated apple, and pass on to my special province.

The flowers of the apple are perhaps the most beautiful of any tree's, so copious and so delicious to both sight and scent. The walker is frequently tempted to turn and linger near some more than usually handsome one, whose blossoms are two-thirds expanded. How superior it is in these respects to the pear, whose blossoms are neither colored nor fragrant!

By the middle of July, green apples are so large as to remind us of coddling, and of the autumn. The sward is commonly strewn with little ones which fall still-born, as it were, —Nature thus thinning them for us. The Roman writer Palladius said,—“If apples are inclined to fall before their time, a stone placed in a split root will retain them.” Some such notion, still surviving, may account for some of the stones which we see placed to be overgrown in the forks of trees. They have a saying in Suffolk, England,—

“At Michaelmas time, or a little before,
Half an apple goes to the core.”

Early apples begin to be ripe about the first of August; but I think that none of them are so good to eat as some to smell. One is worth more to scent your handkerchief with than any perfume which they sell in the shops. The fragrance of some fruits is not to be forgotten, along with that of flowers. Some gnarly apple which I pick up in the road reminds me by its fragrance of all the wealth of Pomona,—carrying me forward to those days when they will be collected in golden and ruddy heaps in the orchards and about the cider-mills.

A week or two later, as you are going by orchards or gardens, especially in the evenings, you pass through a little region possessed by the fragrance of ripe apples, and thus enjoy them without price, and without robbing anybody.



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There is thus about all natural products a certain volatile and ethereal quality which represents their highest value, and which cannot be vulgarized, or bought and sold. No mortal has ever enjoyed the perfect flavor of any fruit, and only the god-like among men begin to taste its ambrosial qualities. For nectar and ambrosia are only those fine flavors of every earthly fruit which our coarse palates fail to perceive,—just as we occupy the heaven of the gods without knowing it. When I see a particularly mean man carrying a load of fair and fragrant early apples to market, I seem to see a contest going on between him and his horse, on the one side, and the apples on the other, and, to my mind, the apples always gain it. Pliny says that apples are the heaviest of all things, and that the oxen begin to sweat at the mere sight of a load of them. Our driver begins to lose his load the moment he tries to transport them to where they do not belong, that is, to any but the most beautiful. Though he gets out from time to time, and feels of them, and thinks they are all there, I see the stream of their evanescent and celestial qualities going to heaven from his cart, while the pulp and skin and core only are going to market. They are not apples, but pomace. Are not these still Iduna's apples, the taste of which keeps the gods forever young? and think you that they will let Loki or Thjassi carry them off to Joetunheim, while they grow wrinkled and gray? No, for Ragnarok, or the destruction of the gods, is not yet.

There is another thinning of the fruit, commonly near the end of August or in September, when the ground is strewn with windfalls; and this happens especially when high winds occur after rain. In some orchards you may see fully three-quarters of the whole crop on the ground, lying in a circular form beneath the trees, yet hard and green,—or, if it is a hill-side, rolled far down the hill. However, it is an ill wind that blows nobody any good. All the country over, people are busy picking up the windfalls, and this will make them cheap for early apple-pies.

In October, the leaves falling, the apples are more distinct on the trees. I saw one year in a neighboring town some trees fuller of fruit than I remembered to have ever seen before, small yellow apples hanging over the road. The branches were gracefully drooping with their weight, like a barberry-bush, so that the whole tree acquired a new character. Even the topmost branches, instead of standing erect, spread and drooped in all directions; and there were so many poles supporting the lower ones, that they looked like pictures of banyan-trees. As an old English manuscript says, "The mo appelen the tree bereth, the more sche boweth to the folk."

Surely the apple is the noblest of fruits. Let the most beautiful or the swiftest have it. That should be the "going" price of apples.



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Between the fifth and twentieth of October I see the barrels lie under the trees. And perhaps I talk with one who is selecting some choice barrels to fulfil an order. He turns a specked one over many times before he leaves it out. If I were to tell what is passing in my mind, I should say that every one was specked which he had handled; for he rubs off all the bloom, and those fugacious ethereal qualities leave it. Cool evenings prompt the farmers to make haste, and at length I see only the ladders here and there left leaning against the trees.

It would be well, if we accepted these gifts with more joy and gratitude, and did not think it enough simply to put a fresh load of compost about the tree. Some old English customs are suggestive at least. I find them described chiefly in Brand's "Popular Antiquities." It appears that "on Christmas eve the farmers and their men in Devonshire take a large bowl of cider, with a toast in it, and carrying it in state to the orchard, they salute the apple-trees with much ceremony, in order to make them bear well the next season." This salutation consists in "throwing some of the cider about the roots of the tree, placing bits of the toast on the branches," and then, "encircling one of the best bearing trees in the orchard, they drink the following toast three several times:—

'Here's to thee, old apple-tree,
Whence thou mayst bud, and whence thou mayst blow,
And whence thou mayst bear apples enow!
Hats-full! caps-full!
Bushel, bushel, sacks-full!
And my pockets full, too! Hurra!'"

Also what was called "apple-howling" used to be practised in various counties of England on New-Year's eve. A troop of boys visited the different orchards, and, encircling the apple-trees, repeated the following words:—

"Stand fast, root! bear well, top!
Pray God sent! us a good howling crop:
Every twig, apples big;
Every bough, apples enow!"

"They then shout in chorus, one of the boys accompanying them on a cow's horn. During this ceremony they rap the trees with their sticks." This is called "wassailing" the trees, and is thought by some to be "a relic of the heathen sacrifice to Pomona."

Herrick sings,—

"Wassaile the trees that they may beare
You many a plum and many a peare;
For more or less fruits they will bring
As you so give them wassailing."



Our poets have as yet a better right to sing of cider than of wine; but it behooves them to sing better than English Phillips did, else they will do no credit to their Muse.

THE WILD APPLE.

So much for the more civilized apple-trees (*urbaniores*, as Pliny calls them). I love better to go through the old orchards of ungrafted apple-trees, at whatever season of the year,—so irregularly planted: sometimes two trees standing close together; and the rows so devious that you would think that they not only had grown while the owner was sleeping, but had been set out by him in a somnambulic state. The rows of grafted fruit will never tempt me to wander amid them like these. But I now, alas, speak rather from memory than from any recent experience, such ravages have been made!



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Some soils, like a rocky tract called the Easterbrooks Country in my neighborhood, are so suited to the apple, that it will grow faster in them without any care, or if only the ground is broken up once a year, than it will in many places with any amount of care. The owners of this tract allow that the soil is excellent for fruit, but they say that it is so rocky that they have not patience to plough it, and that, together with the distance, is the reason why it is not cultivated. There are, or were recently, extensive orchards there standing without order. Nay, they spring up wild and bear well there in the midst of pines, birches, maples, and oaks. I am often surprised to see rising amid these trees the rounded tops of apple-trees glowing with red or yellow fruit, in harmony with the autumnal tints of the forest.

Going up the side of a cliff about the first of November, I saw a vigorous young apple-tree, which, planted by birds or cows, had shot up amid the rocks and open woods there, and had now much fruit on it, uninjured by the frosts, when all cultivated apples were gathered. It was a rank wild growth, with many green leaves on it still, and made an impression of thorniness. The fruit was hard and green, but looked as if it would be palatable in the winter. Some was dangling on the twigs, but more half-buried in the wet leaves under the tree, or rolled far down the hill amid the rocks. The owner knows nothing of it. The day was not observed when it first blossomed, nor when it first bore fruit, unless by the chickadee. There was no dancing on the green beneath it in its honor, and now there is no hand to pluck its fruit,—which is only gnawed by squirrels, as I perceive. It has done double duty,—not only borne this crop, but each twig has grown a foot into the air. And this is *such* fruit! bigger than many berries, we must admit, and carried home will be sound and palatable next spring. What care I for Iduna's apples so long as I can get these?

When I go by this shrub thus late and hardy, and see its dangling fruit, I respect the tree, and I am grateful for Nature's bounty, even though I cannot eat it. Here on this rugged and woody hill-side has grown an apple-tree, not planted by man, no relic of a former orchard, but a natural growth, like the pines and oaks. Most fruits which we prize and use depend entirely on our care. Corn and grain, potatoes, peaches, melons, *etc.*, depend altogether on our planting; but the apple emulates man's independence and enterprise. It is not simply carried, as I have said, but, like him, to some extent, it has migrated to this New World, and is even, here and there, making its way amid the aboriginal trees; just as the ox and dog and horse sometimes run wild and maintain themselves.

Even the sourest and crabbedest apple, growing in the most unfavorable position, suggests such thoughts as these, it is so noble a fruit.

THE CRAB.



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Nevertheless, *our* wild apple is wild only like myself, perchance, who belong not to the aboriginal race here, but have strayed into the woods from the cultivated stock. Wilder still, as I have said, there grows elsewhere in this country a native and aboriginal Crab-Apple, *Malus coronaria*, “whose nature has not yet been modified by cultivation.” It is found from Western New-York to Minnesota, and southward. Michaux says that its ordinary height “is fifteen or eighteen feet, but it is sometimes found twenty-five or thirty feet high,” and that the large ones “exactly resemble the common apple-tree.” “The flowers are white mingled with rose-color, and are collected in corymbs.” They are remarkable for their delicious odor. The fruit, according to him, is about an inch and a half in diameter, and is intensely acid. Yet they make fine sweetmeats, and also cider of them. He concludes, that, “if, on being cultivated, it does not yield new and palatable varieties, it will at least be celebrated for the beauty of its flowers, and for the sweetness of its perfume.”

I never saw the Crab-Apple till May, 1861. I had heard of it through Michaux, but more modern botanists, so far as I know, have not treated it as of any peculiar importance. Thus it was a half-fabulous tree to me. I contemplated a pilgrimage to the “Glades,” a portion of Pennsylvania where it was said to grow to perfection. I thought of sending to a nursery for it, but doubted if they had it, or would distinguish it from European varieties. At last I had occasion to go to Minnesota, and on entering Michigan I began to notice from the cars a tree with handsome rose-colored flowers. At first I thought it some variety of thorn; but it was not long before the truth flashed on me, that this was my long-sought Crab-Apple. It was the prevailing flowering shrub or tree to be seen from the cars at that season of the year,—about the middle of May. But the cars never stopped before one, and so I was launched on the bosom of the Mississippi without having touched one, experiencing the fate of Tantalus. On arriving at St. Anthony’s Falls, I was sorry to be told that I was too far north for the Crab-Apple. Nevertheless I succeeded in finding it about eight miles west of the Falls; touched it and smelled it, and secured a lingering corymb of flowers for my herbarium. This must have been near its northern limit.

HOW THE WILD APPLE GROWS.

But though these are indigenous, like the Indians, I doubt whether they are any hardier than those backwoodsmen among the apple-trees, which, though descended from cultivated stocks, plant themselves in distant fields and forests, where the soil is favorable to them. I know of no trees which have more difficulties to contend with, and which more sturdily resist their foes. These are the ones whose story we have to tell. It oftentimes reads thus:—

Near the beginning of May, we notice little thickets of apple-trees just springing up in the pastures where cattle have been,—as the rocky ones of our Easter-brooks Country, or the top of Nobscot Hill, in Sudbury. One or two of these perhaps survive the drought

and other accidents,—their very birthplace defending them against the encroaching grass and some other dangers, at first.



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In two years' time 't had thus
Reached the level of the rocks,
Admired the stretching world,
Nor feared the wandering flocks.

But at this tender age
Its sufferings began;
There came a browsing ox
And cut it down a span.

This time, perhaps, the ox does not notice it amid the grass; but the next year, when it has grown more stout, he recognizes it for a fellow-emigrant from the old country, the flavor of whose leaves and twigs he well knows; and though at first he pauses to welcome it, and express his surprise, and gets for answer, "The same cause that brought you here brought me," he nevertheless browses it again, reflecting, it may be, that he has some title to it.

Thus cut down annually, it does not despair; but, putting forth two short twigs for every one cut off, it spreads out low along the ground in the hollows or between the rocks, growing more stout and scrubby, until it forms, not a tree as yet, but a little pyramidal, stiff, twiggy mass, almost as solid and impenetrable as a rock. Some of the densest and most impenetrable clumps of bushes that I have ever seen, as well on account of the closeness and stubbornness of their branches as of their thorns, have been these wild-apple scrubs. They are more like the scrubby fir and black spruce on which you stand, and sometimes walk, on the tops of mountains, where cold is the demon they contend with, than anything else. No wonder they are prompted to grow thorns at last, to defend themselves against such foes. In their thorniness, however, there is no malice, only some malic acid.

The rocky pastures of the tract I have referred to—for they maintain their ground best in a rocky field—are thickly sprinkled with these little tufts, reminding you often of some rigid gray mosses or lichens, and you see thousands of little trees just springing up between them, with the seed still attached to them.

Being regularly clipped all around each year by the cows, as a hedge with shears, they are often of a perfect conical or pyramidal form, from one to four feet high, and more or less sharp, as if trimmed by the gardener's art. In the pastures on Nobscot Hill and its spurs, they make fine dark shadows when the sun is low. They are also an excellent covert from hawks for many small birds that roost and build in them. Whole flocks perch in them at night, and I have seen three robins' nests in one which was six feet in diameter.

No doubt many of these are already old trees, if you reckon from the day they were planted, but infants still when you consider their development and the long life before



them. I counted the annual rings of some which were just one foot high, and as wide as high, and found that they were about twelve years old, but quite sound and thrifty! They were so low that they were unnoticed by the walker, while many of their contemporaries from the nurseries were already bearing considerable crops. But what you gain in time is perhaps in this case, too, lost in power,—that is, in the vigor of the tree. This is their pyramidal state.

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The cows continue to browse them thus for twenty years or more, keeping them down and compelling them to spread, until at last they are so broad that they become their own fence, when some interior shoot, which their foes cannot reach, darts upward with joy: for it has not forgotten its high calling, and bears its own peculiar fruit in triumph.

Such are the tactics by which it finally defeats its bovine foes. Now, if you have watched the progress of a particular shrub, you will see that it is no longer a simple pyramid or cone, but that out of its apex there rises a sprig or two, growing more lustily perchance than an orchard-tree, since the plant now devotes the whole of its repressed energy to these upright parts. In a short time these become a small tree, an inverted pyramid resting on the apex of the other, so that the whole has now the form of a vast hour-glass. The spreading bottom, having served its purpose, finally disappears, and the generous tree permits the now harmless cows to come in and stand in its shade, and rub against and redden its trunk, which has grown in spite of them, and even to taste a part of its fruit, and so disperse the seed.

Thus the cows create their own shade and food; and the tree, its hour-glass being inverted, lives a second life, as it were.

It is an important question with some nowadays, whether you should trim young apple-trees as high as your nose or as high as your eyes. The ox trims them up as high as he can reach, and that is about the right height, I think.

In spite of wandering kine, and other adverse circumstances, that despised shrub, valued only by small birds as a covert and shelter from hawks, has its blossom-week at last, and in course of time its harvest, sincere, though small.

By the end of some October, when its leaves have fallen, I frequently see such a central sprig, whose progress I have watched, when I thought it had forgotten its destiny, as I had, bearing its first crop of small green or yellow or rosy fruit, which the cows cannot get at over the bushy and thorny hedge which surrounds it, and I make haste to taste the new and undescribed variety. We have all heard of the numerous varieties of fruit invented by Van Mons and Knight. This is the system of Van Cow, and she has invented far more and more memorable varieties than both of them.

Through what hardships it may attain to bear a sweet fruit! Though somewhat small, it may prove equal, if not superior, in flavor to that which has grown in a garden,—will perchance be all the sweeter and more palatable for the very difficulties it has had to contend with. Who knows but this chance wild fruit, planted by a cow or a bird on some remote and rocky hill-side, where it is as yet unobserved by man, may be the choicest of all its kind, and foreign potentates shall hear of it, and royal societies seek to propagate it, though the virtues of the perhaps truly crabbed owner of the soil may never be heard of,—at least, beyond the limits of his village? It was thus the Porter and the Baldwin grew.



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Every wild-apple shrub excites our expectation thus, somewhat as every wild child. It is, perhaps, a prince in disguise. What a lesson to man! So are human beings, referred to the highest standard, the celestial fruit which they suggest and aspire to bear, browsed on by fate; and only the most persistent and strongest genius defends itself and prevails, sends a tender scion upward at last, and drops its perfect fruit on the ungrateful earth. Poets and philosophers and statesmen thus spring up in the country pastures, and outlast the hosts of unoriginal men.

Such is always the pursuit of knowledge. The celestial fruits, the golden apples of the Hesperides, are ever guarded by a hundred-headed dragon which never sleeps, so that it is an Herculean labor to pluck them.

This is one, and the most remarkable way, in which the wild apple is propagated; but commonly it springs up at wide intervals in woods and swamps, and by the sides of roads, as the soil may suit it, and grows with comparative rapidity. Those which grow in dense woods are very tall and slender. I frequently pluck from these trees a perfectly mild and tamed fruit. As Palladius says, "*Et injussu consternitur ubere mali*": And the ground is strewn with the fruit of an unbidden apple-tree.

It is an old notion, that, if these wild trees do not bear a valuable fruit of their own, they are the best stocks by which to transmit to posterity the most highly prized qualities of others. However, I am not in search of stocks, but the wild fruit itself, whose fierce gust has suffered no "inteneration," It is not my

"highest plot
To plant the Bergamot."

THE FRUIT, AND ITS FLAVOR.

The time for wild apples is the last of October and the first of November. They then get to be palatable, for they ripen late, and they are still perhaps as beautiful as ever. I make a great account of these fruits, which the farmers do not think it worth the while to gather,—wild flavors of the Muse, vivacious and inspiriting. The farmer thinks that he has better in his barrels, but he is mistaken, unless he has a walker's appetite and imagination, neither of which can he have.

Such as grow quite wild, and are left out till the first of November, I presume that the owner does not mean to gather. They belong to children as wild as themselves,—to certain active boys that I know,—to the wild-eyed woman of the fields, to whom nothing comes amiss, who gleans after all the world,—and, moreover, to us walkers. We have met with them, and they are ours. These rights, long enough insisted upon, have come to be an institution in some old countries, where they have learned how to live. I hear that "the custom of gripping, which may be called apple-gleaning, is, or was formerly,



practised in Herefordshire. It consists in leaving a few apples, which are called the gripples, on every tree, after the general gathering, for the boys, who go with climbing-poles and bags to collect them.”



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As for those I speak of, I pluck them as a wild fruit, native to this quarter of the earth,—fruit of old trees that have been dying ever since I was a boy and are not yet dead, frequented only by the woodpecker and the squirrel, deserted now by the owner, who has not faith enough to look under their boughs. From the appearance of the tree-top, at a little distance, you would expect nothing but lichens to drop from it, but your faith is rewarded by finding the ground strewn with spirited fruit,—some of it, perhaps, collected at squirrel-holes, with the marks of their teeth by which they carried them,—some containing a cricket or two silently feeding within, and some, especially in damp days, a shellless snail. The very sticks and stones lodged in the tree-top might have convinced you of the savoriness of the fruit which has been so eagerly sought after in past years.

I have seen no account of these among the “Fruits and Fruit-Trees of America,” though they are more memorable to my taste than the grafted kinds; more racy and wild American flavors do they possess, when October and November, when December and January, and perhaps February and March even, have assuaged them somewhat. An old farmer in my neighborhood, who always selects the right word, says that “they have a kind of bow-arrow tang.”

Apples for grafting appear to have been selected commonly, not so much for their spirited flavor, as for their mildness, their size, and bearing qualities,—not so much for their beauty, as for their fairness and soundness. Indeed, I have no faith in the selected lists of pomological gentlemen. Their “Favorites” and “None-suches” and “Seek-no-farthens,” when I have fruited them, commonly turn out very tame and forgettable. They are eaten with comparatively little zest, and have no real *tang* nor *smack* to them.

What if some of these wildings are acrid and puckery, genuine *verjuice*, do they not still belong to the *Pomaceae*, which are uniformly innocent and kind to our race? I still begrudge them to the cider-mill. Perhaps they are not fairly ripe yet.

No wonder that these small and high-colored apples are thought to make the best cider. Loudon quotes from the “Herefordshire Report,” that “apples of a small size are always, if equal in quality, to be preferred to those of a larger size, in order that the rind and kernel may bear the greatest proportion to the pulp, which affords the weakest and most watery juice.” And he says, that, “to prove this, Dr. Symonds, of Hereford, about the year 1800, made one hogshead of cider entirely from the rinds and cores of apples, and another from the pulp only, when the first was found of extraordinary strength and flavor, while the latter was sweet and insipid.”

Evelyn says that the “Red-strake” was the favorite cider-apple in his day; and he quotes one Dr. Newburg as saying, “In Jersey ’t is a general observation, as I hear, that the more of red any apple has in its rind, the more proper it is for this use. Pale-faced apples they exclude as much as may be from their cider-vat.” This opinion still prevails.



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All apples are good in November. Those which the farmer leaves out as unsalable, and unpalatable to those who frequent the markets, are choicest fruit to the walker. But it is remarkable that the wild apple, which I praise as so spirited and racy when eaten in the fields or woods, being brought into the house, has frequently a harsh and crabbed taste. The Saunterer's Apple not even the saunterer can eat in the house. The palate rejects it there, as it does haws and acorns, and demands a tamed one; for there you miss the November air, which is the sauce it is to be eaten with. Accordingly, when Tityrus, seeing the lengthening shadows, invites Melibaeus to go home and pass the night with him, he promises him *mild* apples and soft chestnuts,—*mitia poma, castaneae molles*. I frequently pluck wild apples of so rich and spicy a flavor that I wonder all orchardists do not get a scion from that tree, and I fail not to bring home my pockets full. But perchance, when I take one out of my desk and taste it in my chamber, I find it unexpectedly crude,—sour enough to set a squirrel's teeth on edge and make a jay scream.

These apples have hung in the wind and frost and rain till they have absorbed the qualities of the weather or season, and thus are highly *seasoned*, and they *pierce* and *sting* and *permeate* us with their spirit. They must be eaten in *season*, accordingly,—that is, out-of-doors.

To appreciate the wild and sharp flavors of these October fruits, it is necessary that you be breathing the sharp October or November air. The out-door air and exercise which the walker gets give a different tone to his palate, and he craves a fruit which the sedentary would call harsh and crabbed. They must be eaten in the fields, when your system is all aglow with exercise, when the frosty weather nips your fingers, the wind rattles the bare boughs or rustles the few remaining leaves, and the jay is heard screaming around. What is sour in the house a bracing walk makes sweet. Some of these apples might be labelled, "To be eaten in the wind."

Of course no flavors are thrown away; they are intended for the taste that is up to them. Some apples have two distinct flavors, and perhaps one-half of them must be eaten in the house, the other out-doors. One Peter Whitney wrote from Northborough in 1782, for the Proceedings of the Boston Academy, describing an apple-tree in that town "producing fruit of opposite qualities, part of the same apple being frequently sour and the other sweet;" also some all sour, and others all sweet, and this diversity on all parts of the tree.

There is a wild apple on Nawshawtuct Hill in my town which has to me a peculiarly pleasant bitter tang, not perceived till it is three-quarters tasted. It remains on the tongue. As you eat it, it smells exactly like a squash-bug. It is a sort of triumph to eat and relish it.

I hear that the fruit of a kind of plum-tree in Provence is "called *Prunes sibarellles*, because it is impossible to whistle after having eaten them, from their sourness." But

perhaps they were only eaten in the house and in summer, and if tried out-of-doors in a stinging atmosphere, who knows but you could whistle an octave higher and clearer?



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In the fields only are the sour and bitter of Nature appreciated; just as the wood-chopper eats his meal in a sunny glade, in the middle of a winter day, with content, basks in a sunny ray there and dreams of summer in a degree of cold which, experienced in a chamber, would make a student miserable. They who are at work abroad are not cold, but rather it is they who sit shivering in houses. As with temperatures, so with flavors; as with cold and heat, so with sour and sweet. This natural raciness, the sour and bitter which the diseased palate refuses, are the true condiments.

Let your condiments be in the condition of your senses. To appreciate the flavor of these wild apples requires vigorous and healthy senses, *papillae* firm and erect on the tongue and palate, not easily flattened and tamed.

From my experience with wild apples, I can understand that there may be reason for a savage's preferring many kinds of food which the civilized man rejects. The former has the palate of an out-door man. It takes a savage or wild taste to appreciate a wild fruit.

What a healthy out-of-door appetite it takes to relish the apple of life, the apple of the world, then!

"Nor is it every apple I desire, Nor that which pleases every palate best; 'T is not the lasting Deuxan I require, Nor yet the red-cheeked Greening I request, Nor that which first beshrewed the name of wife, Nor that whose beauty caused the golden strife: No, no! bring me an apple from the tree of life!"

So there is one thought for the field, another for the house. I would have my thoughts, like wild apples, to be food for walkers, and will not warrant them to be palatable, if tasted in the house.

THEIR BEAUTY.

Almost all wild apples are handsome. They cannot be too gnarly and crabbed and rusty to look at. The gnarliest will have some redeeming traits even to the eye. You will discover some evening redness dashed or sprinkled on some protuberance or in some cavity. It is rare that the summer lets an apple go without streaking or spotting it on some part of its sphere. It will have some red stains, commemorating the mornings and evenings it has witnessed; some dark and rusty blotches, in memory of the clouds and foggy, mildewy days that have passed over it; and a spacious field of green reflecting the general face of Nature,—green even as the fields; or a yellow ground, which implies a milder flavor,—yellow as the harvest, or russet as the hills.

Apples, these I mean, unspeakably fair,—apples not of Discord, but of Concord! Yet not so rare but that the homeliest may have a share. Painted by the frosts, some a uniform



clear bright yellow, or red, or crimson, as if their spheres had regularly revolved, and enjoyed the influence of the sun on all sides alike,—some with the faintest pink blush imaginable,—some brindled with



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deep red streaks like a cow, or with hundreds of fine blood-red rays running regularly from the stem-dimple to the blossom-end, like meridional lines, on a straw-colored ground,—some touched with a greenish rust, like a fine lichen, here and there, with crimson blotches or eyes more or less confluent and fiery when wet,—and others gnarly, and freckled or peppered all over on the stem side with fine crimson spots on a white ground, as if accidentally sprinkled from the brush of Him who paints the autumn leaves. Others, again, are sometimes red inside, perfused with a beautiful blush, fairy food, too beautiful to eat,—apple of the Hesperides, apple of the evening sky! But like shells and pebbles on the sea-shore, they must be seen as they sparkle amid the withering leaves in some dell in the woods, in the autumnal air, or as they lie in the wet grass, and not when they have wilted and faded in the house.

THE NAMING OF THEM.

It would be a pleasant pastime to find suitable names for the hundred varieties which go to a single heap at the cider-mill. Would it not tax a man's invention,—no one to be named after a man, and all in the *lingua vernacula*? Who shall stand godfather at the christening of the wild apples? It would exhaust the Latin and Greek languages, if they were used, and make the *lingua vernacula* flag. We should have to call in the sunrise and the sunset, the rainbow and the autumn woods and the wild flowers, and the woodpecker and the purple finch and the squirrel and the jay and the butterfly, the November traveller and the truant boy, to our aid.

In 1836 there were in the garden of the London Horticultural Society more than fourteen hundred distinct sorts. But here are species which they have not in their catalogue, not to mention the varieties which our Crab might yield to cultivation.

Let us enumerate a few of these. I find myself compelled, after all, to give the Latin names of some for the benefit of those who live where English is not spoken,—for they are likely to have a world-wide reputation.

There is, first of all, the Wood-Apple (*Malus sylvatica*); the Blue-Jay Apple; the Apple which grows in Dells in the Woods, (*sylvestrivallis*,) also in Hollows in Pastures (*campestrivallis*); the Apple that grows in an old Cellar-Hole (*Malus cellaris*); the Meadow-Apple; the Partridge-Apple; the Truant's Apple, (*Cessaloris*,) which no boy will ever go by without knocking off some, however *late* it may be; the Saunterer's Apple,—you must lose yourself before you can find the way to that; the Beauty of the Air (*Decus Aeris*); December-Eating; the Frozen-Thawed, (*gelato-soluta*) good only in that state; the Concord Apple, possibly the same with the *Musketaquidensis*; the Assabet Apple; the Brindled Apple; Wine of New England; the Chickaree Apple; the Green Apple (*Malus viridis*);—this



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has many synonymes; in an imperfect state, it is the *Cholera morbifera aut dysenterifera, puerulis dilectissima*;—the Apple which Atalanta stopped to pick up; the Hedge-Apple (*Malus Sepium*); the Slug-Apple (*limacea*); the Railroad-Apple, which perhaps came from a core thrown out of the cars; the Apple whose Fruit we tasted in our Youth; our Particular Apple, not to be found in any catalogue,—*Pedestrium Solatium*; also the Apple where hangs the Forgotten Scythe; Iduna's Apples, and the Apples which Loki found in the Wood; and a great many more I have on my list, too numerous to mention,—all of them good. As Bodaeus exclaims, referring to the cultivated kinds, and adapting Virgil to his case, so I, adapting Bodaeus,—

“Not if I had a hundred tongues, a hundred mouths,
An iron voice, could I describe all the forms
And reckon up all the names of these *wild apples*.”

THE LAST GLEANING.

By the middle of November the wild apples have lost some of their brilliancy, and have chiefly fallen. A great part are decayed on the ground, and the sound ones are more palatable than before. The note of the chickadee sounds now more distinct, as you wander amid the old trees, and the autumnal dandelion is half-closed and tearful. But still, if you are a skilful gleaner, you may get many a pocket-full even of grafted fruit, long after apples are supposed to be gone out-of-doors. I know a Blue-Pearmain tree, growing within the edge of a swamp, almost as good as wild. You would not suppose that there was any fruit left there, on the first survey, but you must look according to system. Those which lie exposed are quite brown and rotten now, or perchance a few still show one blooming cheek here and there amid the wet leaves. Nevertheless, with experienced eyes, I explore amid the bare alders and the huckleberry-bushes and the withered sedge, and in the crevices of the rocks, which are full of leaves, and pry under the fallen and decaying ferns, which, with apple and alder leaves, thickly strew the ground. For I know that they lie concealed, fallen into hollows long since and covered up by the leaves of the tree itself,—a proper kind of packing. From these lurking-places, anywhere within the circumference of the tree, I draw forth the fruit, all wet and glossy, maybe nibbled by rabbits and hollowed out by crickets and perhaps with a leaf or two cemented to it, (as Curzon an old manuscript from a monastery's mouldy cellar,) but still with a rich bloom on it, and at least as ripe and well kept, if not better than those in barrels, more crisp and lively than they. If these resources fail to yield anything, I have learned to look between the bases of the suckers which spring thickly from some horizontal limb, for now and then one lodges there, or in the very midst of an alder-clump, where they are covered by leaves, safe from cows which may have smelled them out. If I am sharp-set, for I do not refuse the Blue-Pearmain, I fill my pockets on

each side; and as I retrace my steps in the frosty eve, being perhaps four or five miles from home, I eat one first from this side, and then from that, to keep my balance.



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I learn from Topsell's Gesner, whose authority appears to be Albertus, that the following is the way in which the hedgehog collects and carries home his apples. He says,—“His meat is apples, worms, or grapes: when he findeth apples or grapes on the earth, he rolleth himself upon them, until he have filled all his prickles, and then carrieth them home to his den, never bearing above one in his mouth; and if it fortune that one of them fall off by the way, he likewise shaketh off all the residue, and walloweth upon them afresh, until they be all settled upon his back again. So, forth he goeth, making a noise like a cart-wheel; and if he have any young ones in his nest, they pull off his load wherewithal he is loaded, eating thereof what they please, and laying up the residue for the time to come.”

THE “FROZEN-THAWED” APPLE.

Toward the end of November, though some of the sound ones are yet more mellow and perhaps more edible, they have generally, like the leaves, lost their beauty, and are beginning to freeze. It is finger-cold, and prudent farmers get in their barrelled apples, and bring you the apples and cider which they have engaged; for it is time to put them into the cellar. Perhaps a few on the ground show their red cheeks above the early snow, and occasionally some even preserve their color and soundness under the snow throughout the winter. But generally at the beginning of the winter they freeze hard, and soon, though undecayed, acquire the color of a baked apple.

Before the end of December, generally, they experience their first thawing. Those which a month ago were sour, crabbed, and quite unpalatable to the civilized taste, such at least as were frozen while sound, let a warmer sun come to thaw them, for they are extremely sensitive to its rays, are found to be filled with a rich sweet cider, better than any bottled cider that I know of, and with which I am better acquainted than with wine. All apples are good in this state, and your jaws are the cider-press. Others, which have more substance, are a sweet and luscious food,—in my opinion of more worth than the pine-apples which are imported from the West Indies. Those which lately even I tasted only to repent of it,—for I am semi-civilized,—which the farmer willingly left on the tree, I am now glad to find have the property of hanging on like the leaves of the young oaks. It is a way to keep cider sweet without boiling. Let the frost come to freeze them first, solid as stones, and then the rain or a warm winter day to thaw them, and they will seem to have borrowed a flavor from heaven through the medium of the air in which they hang. Or perchance you find, when you get home, that those which rattled in your pocket have thawed, and the ice is turned to cider. But after the third or fourth freezing and thawing they will not be found so good.



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What are the imported half-ripe fruits of the torrid South, to this fruit matured by the cold of the frigid North? These are those crabbed apples with which I cheated my companion, and kept a smooth face that I might tempt him to eat. Now we both greedily fill our pockets with them,—bending to drink the cup and save our lappets from the overflowing juice,—and grow more social with their wine. Was there one that hung so high and sheltered by the tangled branches that our sticks could not dislodge it?

It is a fruit never carried to market, that I am aware of,—quite distinct from the apple of the markets, as from dried apple and cider,—and it is not every winter that produces it in perfection.

* * * * *

The era of the Wild Apple will soon be past. It is a fruit which will probably become extinct in New England. You may still wander through old orchards of native fruit of great extent, which for the most part went to the cider-mill, now all gone to decay. I have heard of an orchard in a distant town, on the side of a hill, where the apples rolled down and lay four feet deep against a wall on the lower side, and this the owner cut down for fear they should be made into cider. Since the temperance reform and the general introduction of grafted fruit, no native apple-trees, such as I see everywhere in deserted pastures, and where the woods have grown up around them, are set out. I fear that he who walks over these fields a century hence will not know the pleasure of knocking off wild apples. Ah, poor man, there are many pleasures which he will not know! Notwithstanding the prevalence of the Baldwin and the Porter, I doubt if so extensive orchards are set out to-day in my town as there were a century ago, when those vast straggling cider-orchards were planted, when men both ate and drank apples, when the pomace-heap was the only nursery, and trees cost nothing but the trouble of setting them out. Men could afford then to stick a tree by every wall-side and let it take its chance. I see nobody planting trees to-day in such out-of-the-way places, along the lonely roads and lanes, and at the bottom of dells in the wood. Now that they have grafted trees, and pay a price for them, they collect them into a plat by their houses, and fence them in,—and the end of it all will be that we shall be compelled to look for our apples in a barrel.

This is the word of the Lord that came to Joel the son of Pethuel.

“Hear this, ye old men, and give ear, all ye inhabitants of the land! Hath this been in your days, or even in the days of your fathers?...

“That which the palmer-worm hath left hath the locust eaten; and that which the locust hath left hath the canker-worm eaten; and that which the canker-worm hath left hath the caterpillar eaten.

“Awake, ye drunkards, and weep! and howl, all ye drinkers of wine, because of the new wine! for it is cut off from your mouth.



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“For a nation is come up upon my land, strong, and without number, whose teeth are the teeth of a lion, and he hath the cheek-teeth of a great lion.

“He hath laid my vine waste, and barked my fig-tree; he hath made it clean bare, and cast it away; the branches thereof are made white....

“Be ye ashamed, O ye husbandmen! howl, O ye vine-dressers!...

“The vine is dried up, and the fig-tree languisheth; the pomegranate-tree, the palm-tree also, and the apple-tree, even all the trees of the field, are withered: because joy is withered away from the sons of men.”

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LIFE IN THE OPEN AIR.

BY THE AUTHOR OF “CECIL DREEME” AND “JOHN BRENT.”

KATAHDIN AND THE PENOBSCOT.

CHAPTER VII.

MOOSEHEAD.

Moosehead Lake is a little bigger than the Lago di Guarda, and therefore, according to our American standard, rather more important. It is not very grand, not very picturesque, but considerably better than no lake,—a meritorious mean; not pretty and shadowy, like a thousand lakelets all over the land, nor tame, broad, and sham-oceanic, like the tanks of Niagara. On the west, near its southern end, is a well-intended blackness and roughness called Squaw Mountain. The rest on that side is undistinguished pine woods.

Mount Kinneo is midway up the lake, on the east. It is the show-piece of the region,—the best they can do for a precipice, and really admirably done. Kinneo is a solid mass of purple flint rising seven hundred feet upright from the water. By the side of this block could some Archimedes appear, armed with a suitable “*pou sto*” and a mallet heavy enough, he might strike fire to the world. Since percussion-guns and friction cigar-lighters came in, flint has somewhat lost its value; and Kinneo is of no practical use at present. We cannot allow inutilities in this world. Where is the Archimedes? He could make a handsome thing of it by flashing us off with a spark into a new system of things.

Below this dangerous cliff on the lake-bank is the Kinneo House, where fishermen and sportsmen may dwell, and kill or catch, as skill or fortune favors. The historical success



of all catchers and killers is well balanced, since men who cannot master facts are always men of imagination, and it is as easy for them to invent as for the other class to do. Boston men haunt Kinneo. For a hero who has not skill enough or imagination enough to kill a moose stands rather in Nowhere with Boston fashion. The tameness of that pleasant little capital makes its belles ardent for tales of wild adventure. New-York women are less exacting; a few of them, indeed, like a dash of the adventurous in their lover; but most of them are business-women, fighting their way out of vulgarity into style, and romance is an interruption.

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Kinneo was an old station of Iglesias's, in those days when he was probing New England for the picturesque. When the steamer landed, he acted as cicerone, and pointed out to me the main object of interest thereabouts, the dinner-table. We dined with lumbermen and moose-hunters, scufflingly.

The moose is the lion of these regions. Near Greenville, a gigantic pair of moose-horns marks a fork in the road. Thenceforth moose-facts and moose-legends become the staple of conversation. Moose-meat, combining the flavor of beefsteak and the white of turtle, appears on the table. Moose-horns with full explanations, so that the buyer can play the part of hunter, are for sale. Tame mooselings are exhibited. Sportsmen at Kinneo can choose a *matinee* with the trout or a *soiree* with the moose.

The chief fact of a moose's person is that pair of strange excrescences, his horns. Like fronds of tree-fern, like great corals or sea-fans, these great palmated plates of bone lift themselves from his head, grand, useless, clumsy. A pair of moose-horns overlooks me as I write; they weigh twenty pounds, are nearly five feet in spread, on the right horn are nine developed and two undeveloped antlers, the plates are sixteen inches broad,—a doughty head-piece.

Every year the great, slow-witted animal must renew his head-gear. He must lose the deformity, his pride, and cultivate another. In spring, when the first anemone trembles to the vernal breeze, the moose nods welcome to the wind, and as he nods feels something rattle on his skull. He nods again, as Homer sometimes did. Lo! something drops. A horn has dropped, and he stands a bewildered unicorn. For a few days he steers wild; in this ill-balanced course his lone horn strikes every tree on this side as he dodges from that side. The unhappy creature is staggered, body and mind. In what Jericho of the forest can he hide his diminished head? He flies frantic. He runs amuck through the woods. Days pass by in gloom, and then comes despair; another horn falls, and he becomes defenceless; and not till autumn does his brow bear again its full honors.

I make no apology for giving a few lines to the great event of a moose's life. He is the hero of those evergreen-woods,—a hero too little recognized, except by stealthy assassins, meeting him by midnight for massacre. No one seems to have viewed him in his dramatic character, as a forest-monarch enacting every year the tragi-comedy of decoronation and recoronation.

The Kinneo House is head-quarters for moose-hunters. This summer the waters of Maine were diluvial, the feeding-grounds were swamped. Of this we took little note: we were in chase of something certain not to be drowned; and the higher the deluge, the easier we could float to Katahdin. After dinner we took the steamboat again for the upper end of the lake.



It was a day of days for sunny summer sailing. Purple haziness curtained the dark front of Kinneo,—a delicate haze purpled by this black promontory, but melting blue like a cloud-fall of cloudless sky upon loftier distant summits. The lake rippled pleasantly, flashing at every ripple.



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Suddenly, "Katahdin!" said Iglesias.

Yes, there was a dim point, the object of our pilgrimage.

Katahdin,—the more I saw of it, the more grateful I was to the three powers who enabled me to see it: to Nature for building it, to Iglesias for guiding me to it, to myself for going.

We sat upon the deck and let Katahdin grow,—and sitting, talked of mountains, somewhat to this effect:—

Mountains are the best things to be seen. Within the keen outline of a great peak is packed more of distance, of detail, of light and shade, of color, of all the qualities of space, than vision can get in any other way. No one who has not seen mountains knows how far the eye can reach. Level horizons are within cannon-shot. Mountain horizons not only may be a hundred miles away, but they lift up a hundred miles at length, to be seen at a look. Mountains make a background against which blue sky can be seen; between them and the eye are so many miles of visible atmosphere, domesticated, brought down to the regions of earth, not resting overhead, a vagueness and a void. Air, blue in full daylight, rose and violet at sunset, gray like powdered starlight by night, is collected and isolated by a mountain, so that the eye can comprehend it in nearer acquaintance. There is nothing so refined as the outline of a distant mountain: even a rose-leaf is stiff-edged and harsh in comparison. Nothing else has that definite indefiniteness, that melting permanence, that evanescent changelessness. Clouds in vain strive to imitate it; they are made of slighter stuff; they can be blunt or ragged, but they cannot have that solid positiveness.

Mountains, too, are very stationary,—always at their post. They are characters of dignity, not without noble changes of mood; but these changes are not bewildering, capricious shifts. A mountain can be studied like a picture; its majesty, its grace can be got by heart. Purple precipice, blue pyramid, cone or dome of snow, it is a simple image and a positive thought. It is a delicate fact, first, of beauty,—then, as you approach, a strong fact of majesty and power. But even in its cloudy, distant fairness there is a concise, emphatic reality altogether uncloudlike.

Manly men need the wilderness and the mountain. Katahdin is the best mountain in the wildest wild to be had on this side the continent. He looked at us encouragingly over the hills. I saw that he was all that Iglesias, connoisseur of mountains, had promised, and was content to wait for the day of meeting.

The steamboat dumped us and our canoe on a wharf at the lake-head about four o'clock. A wharf promised a settlement, which, however, did not exist. There was population,—one man and one great ox. Following the inland-pointing nose of the ox, we saw, penetrating the forest, a wooden railroad. Ox-locomotive, and no other, befitted

such rails. The train was one great go-cart. We packed our traps upon it, roofed them with our birch, and, without much ceremony of whistling, moved on. As we started, so did the steamboat. The link between us and the inhabited world grew more and more attenuated. Finally it snapped, and we were in the actual wilderness.

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I am sorry to chronicle that Iglesias hereupon turned to the ox and said impatiently,—

“Now, then, bullgine!”

Why a railroad, even a wooden one, here? For this: the Penobscot at this point approaches within two and a half miles of Moosehead Lake, and over this portage supplies are taken conveniently for the lumbermen of an extensive lumbering country above, along the river.

Corduroy railroad, ox-locomotive, and go-cart train up in the pine woods were a novelty and a privilege. Our cloven-hoofed engine did not whirr turbulently along, like a thing of wheels. Slow and sure must the knock-kneed chewer of cuds step from log to log. Creakingly the wain followed him, pausing and starting and pausing again with groans of inertia. A very fat ox was this, protesting every moment against his employment, where speed, his duty, and sloth, his nature, kept him bewildered by their rival injunctions. Whenever the engine-driver stopped to pick a huckleberry, the train, self-braking, stopped also, and the engine took in fuel from the tall grass that grew between the sleepers. It was the sensation of sloth at its uttermost.

Iglesias and I, meanwhile, marched along and shot the game of the country, namely, one *Tetrao Canadensis*, one spruce-partridge, making in all one bird, quite too pretty to shoot with its red and black plumage. The spruce-partridge is rather rare in inhabited Maine, and is malignantly accused of being bitter in flesh, and of feeding on spruce-buds to make itself distasteful. Our bird we found sweetly berry-fed. The bitterness, if any, was that we had not a brace.

So, at last, in an hour, after shooting one bird and swallowing six million berries, for the railroad was a shaft into a mine of them, we came to the terminus. The chewer of cuds was disconnected, and plodded off to his stable. The go-cart slid down an inclined plane to the river, the Penobscot.

We paid quite freely for our brief monopoly of the railroad to the superintendent, engineer, stoker, poker, switch-tender, brakeman, baggage-master, and every other official in one. But who would grudge his tribute to the enterprise that opened this narrow vista through toward the Hyperboreans, and planted these once not crumbling sleepers and once not rickety rails, to save the passenger a portage? Here, at Bullgineville, the pluralist railroad-manager had his cabin and clearing, ox-engine house and warehouse.

To balance these symbols of advance, we found a station of the rear-guard of another army. An Indian party of two was encamped on the bank. The fusty sagamore of this pair was lying wounded; his fusty squaw tended him tenderly, minding, meanwhile, a very witch-like caldron of savory fume. No skirmish, with actual war-whoop and sheen of real scalping-knife, had put this prostrate chieftain here *hors du combat*. He had shot

himself cruelly by accident. So he informed us feebly, in a muddy, guttural *patois* of Canadian French. This aboriginal meeting was of great value; it helped to eliminate the railroad.



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CHAPTER VIII.

PENOBSCOT.

It was now five o'clock of an August evening. Our work-day was properly done. But we were to camp somewhere, "anywhere out of the world" of railroads. The Penobscot glimmered winningly. Our birch looked wistful for its own element. Why not marry shallop to stream? Why not yield to the enticement of this current, fleet and clear, and gain a few beautiful miles before nightfall? All the world was before us where to choose our bivouac. We dismounted our birch from the truck, and laid its lightness upon the stream. Then we became stevedores, stowing cargo. Sheets of birch-bark served for dunnage. Cancut, in flamboyant shirt, ballasted the after-part of the craft. For the present, I, in flamboyant shirt, paddled in the bow, while Iglesias, similarly glowing, sat *à la Turque* midships among the traps. Then, with a longing sniff at the caldron of Soggysampcook, we launched upon the Penobscot.

Upon no sweeter stream was voyager ever launched than this of our summer-evening sail. There was no worse haste in its more speed; it went fleetly lingering along its leafy dell. Its current, unrippingly smooth, but dimpled ever, and wrinkled with the whirls that mark an underflow deep and shady, bore on our bark. The banks were low and gently wooded. No Northern forest, rude and gloomy with pines, stood stiffly and unsympathizingly watching the graceful water, but cheerful groves and delicate coppices opened in vistas where level sunlight streamed, and barred the river with light, between belts of lightsome shadow. We felt no breeze, but knew of one, keeping pace with us, by a tremor in the birches as it shook them. On we drifted, mile after mile, languidly over sweet calms. One would seize his paddle, and make our canoe quiver for a few spasmodic moments. But it seemed needless and impertinent to toil, when noiselessly and without any show of energy the water was bearing us on, over rich reflections of illumined cloud and blue sky, and shadows of feathery birches, bearing us on so quietly that our passage did not shatter any fair image, but only drew it out upon the tremors of the water.

So, placid and beautiful as an interview of first love, went on our first meeting with this Northern river. But water, the feminine element, is so mobile and impressible that it must protect itself by much that seems caprice and fickleness. We might be sure that the Penobscot would not always flow so gently, nor all the way from forests to the sea conduct our bark without one shiver of panic, where rapids broke noisy and foaming over rocks that showed their grinding teeth at us.

Sunset now streamed after us down the river. The arbor-vitae along the banks marked tracery more delicate than any ever wrought by deftest craftsman in western window of an antique fane. Brighter and richer than any tints that ever poured through painted oriel flowed the glories of sunset. Dear, pensive glooms of nightfall drooped from the

zenith slowly down, narrowing twilight to a belt of dying flame. We were aware of the ever fresh surprise of starlight: the young stars were born again.



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Sweet is the charm of starlit sailing where no danger is. And in days when the Munki Mannakens were foes of the pale-face, one might dash down rapids by night in the hurry of escape. Now the danger was before, not pursuing. We must camp before we were hurried into the first “rips” of the stream, and before night made bush-ranging and camp-duties difficult.

But these beautiful thickets of birch and alder along the bank, how to get through them? We must spy out an entrance. Spots lovely and damp, circles of ferny grass beneath elms offered themselves. At last, as to patience always, appeared the place of wisest choice. A little stream, the Ragmuff, entered the Penobscot. “Why Ragmuff?” thought we, insulted. Just below its mouth two spruces were *propylaea* to a little glade, our very spot. We landed. Some hunters had once been there. A skeleton lodge and frame of poles for drying moose-hides remained.

Like skilful campaigners, we at once distributed ourselves over our work. Cancut wielded the axe; I the match-box; Iglesias the *batterie de cuisine*. Ragmuff drifted one troutling and sundry chubby chub down to nip our hooks. We re-roofed our camp with its old covering of hemlock-bark, spreading over a light tent-cover we had provided. The last glow of twilight dulled away; monitory mists hid the stars.

Iglesias, as *chef*, with his two *marmitons*, had, meanwhile, been preparing supper. It was dark when he, the colorist, saw that fire with delicate touches of its fine brushes had painted all our viands to perfection. Then, with the same fire stirred to illumination, and dashing masterly glows upon landscape and figures, the trio partook of the supper and named it sublime.

Here follows the *carte* of the Restaurant Ragmuff,—woodland fare, a banquet simple, but elegant:—

POISSON.

Truite. Meunier.

ENTREES.

Porc frit au naturel.
Cotelettes d’Elan.

ROTI.

Tetrao Canadensis

DESSERT

Hard-Tack. Fromage.



VINS.

Ragmuff blanc. Penobscot mousseux.

The. Chocolat de Bogota.

Petit verre de Cognac.

At that time I had a temporary quarrel with the frantic nineteenth century's best friend, tobacco,—and Iglesias, being totally at peace with himself and the world, never needs anodynes. Cancut, therefore, was the only cloud-blower.

We two solaced ourselves with scorning civilization from our vantage-ground. We were beyond fences, away from the clash of town-clocks, the clink of town-dollars, the hiss of town-scandals. As soon as one is fairly in camp and has begun to eat with his fingers, he is free. He and truth are at the bottom of a well,—a hollow, fire-lighted cylinder of forest. While the manly man of the woods is breathing Nature like an Amreeta draught, is it anything less than the *summum bonum*?



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“Yet some call American life dull.”

“Ay, to dullards!” ejaculated Iglesias.

Moose were said to haunt these regions. Toward midnight our would-be moose-hunter paddled about up and down, seeking them and finding not. The waters were too high. Lily-pads were drowned. There were no moose looming duskily in the shallows, to be done to death at their banquet. They were up in the pathless woods, browsing on leaves and deappetizing with bitter bark. Starlight paddling over reflected stars was enchanting, but somniferous. We gave up our vain quest and glided softly home,—already we called it home,—toward the faint embers of our fire. Then all slept, as only wood-men sleep, save when for moments Cancut’s trumpet-tones sounded alarms, and we others awoke to punch and batter the snorer into silence.

In due time, bird and cricket whistled and chirped the reveille. We sprang from our lair. We dipped in the river and let its gentle friction polish us more luxuriously than ever did any hair-gloved polisher of an Oriental bath. Our joints crackled for themselves as we beat the current. From bath like this comes no unmanly kief, no sensuous, slumberous, dreamy indifference, but a nervous, intent, keen, joyous activity. A day of deeds is before us, and we would be doing.

When we issue from the Penobscot, from our baptism into a new life, we need no valet for elaborate toilet. Attire is simple, when the woods are the tiring-room.

When we had taken off the water and put on our clothes, we simultaneously thought of breakfast. Like a circle of wolves around the bones of a banquet, the embers of our fire were watching each other over the ashes; we had but to knock their heads together and fiery fighting began. The skirmish of the brands boiled our coffee and fried our pork, and we embarked and shoved off. A thin blue smoke, floating upward, for an hour or two, marked our bivouac; soon this had gone out, and the banks and braes of Ragmuff were lonely as if never a biped had trodden them. Nature drops back to solitude as easily as man to peace;—how little this fair globe would miss mankind!

The Penobscot was all asteam with morning mist. It was blinding the sun with a matinal oblation of incense. A crew of the profane should not interfere with such act of worship. Sacrilege is perilous, whoever be the God. We were instantly punished for irreverence. The first “rips” came up-stream under cover of the mist, and took us by surprise. As we were paddling along gently, we suddenly found ourselves in the midst of a boiling rapid. Gnashing rocks, with cruel foam upon their lips, sprang out of the obscure, eager to tear us. Great jaws of ugly blackness snapped about us as if we were introduced into a coterie of crocodiles. Symplegades clanged together behind; mighty gulfs, below seducing bends of smooth water, awaited us before. We were in for it. We spun, whizzed, dashed, leaped, “cavorted;” we did whatever a birch



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running the gantlet of whirlpools and breakers may do, except the fatal finality of a somerset. That we escaped, and only escaped. We had been only reckless, not audacious; and therefore peril, not punishment, befell us. The rocks smote our frail shallop; they did not crush it. Foam and spray dashed in our faces; solid fluid below the crest did not overwhelm us. There we were, presently, in water tumultuous, but not frantic. There we were, three men floating in a birch, not floundering in a maelstrom,—on the water, not under it,—sprinkled, not drowned,—and in a wild wonder how we got into it and how we got out of it.

Cancut's paddle guided us through. Unwieldy he may have been in person, but he could wield his weapon well. And so, by luck and skill, we were not drowned in the magnificent uproar of the rapid. Success, that strange stirabout of Providence, accident, and courage, were ours. But when we came to the next cascading bit, though the mist had now lifted, we lightened the canoe by two men's avoir-dupois, that it might dance, and not blunder heavily, might seek the safe shallows, away from the dangerous bursts of mid-current, and choose passages where Cancut, with the setting-pole, could let it gently down. So Iglesias and I plunged through the labyrinthine woods, the stream along.

Not long after our little episode of buffeting, we shot out again upon smooth water, and soon, for it is never smooth but it is smoothest, upon a lake, Chesuncook.

CHAPTER IX.

CHESUNCOOK.

Chesuncook is a "bulge" of the Penobscot: so much for its topography. It is deep in the woods, except that some miles from its opening there is a lumbering-station, with house and barns. In the wilderness, man makes for man by a necessity of human instinct. We made for the log-houses. We found there an ex-barkeeper of a certain well-known New-York cockney coffee-house, promoted into a frontiersman, but mindful still of flesh-pots. Poor fellow, he was still prouder that he had once tossed the foaming cocktail than that he could now fell the forest-monarch. Mixed drinks were dearer to him than pure air. When we entered the long, low log-cabin, he was boiling doughnuts, as was to be expected. In certain regions of America every cook who is not baking pork and beans is boiling doughnuts, just as in certain other gastronomic quarters *frijoles* alternate with *tortillas*.

Doughnuts, like peaches, must be eaten with the dew upon them. Caught as they come bobbing up in the bubbling pot, I will not say that they are despicable. Woodsmen and canoemen, competent to pork and beans, can master also the alternative. The ex-



barkeeper was generous with these brown and glistening langrage-shot, and aimed volley after volley at our mouths. Nor was he content with giving us our personal fill; into every crevice of our firkin he packed a pellet of future indigestion. Besides this result of foraging, we took the hint from a visible cow that milk might be had. Of this also the ex-barkeeper served us out galore, sighing that it was not the punch of his metropolitan days. We put our milk in our tea-pot, and thus, with all the ravages of the past made good, we launched again upon Chesuncook.



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Chesuncook, according to its quality of lake, had no aid to give us with current. Paddling all a hot August mid-day over slothful water would be tame, day-laborer's work. But there was a breeze. Good! Come, kind Zephyr, fill our red blanket-sail! Cancut's blanket in the bow became a substitute for Cancut's paddle in the stern. We swept along before the wind, unsteadily, over Lake Chesuncook, at sea in a bowl,—“rolled to starboard, rolled to larboard,” in our keelless craft. Zephyr only followed us, mild as he was strong, and strong as he was mild. Had he been puffy, it would have been all over with us. But the breeze only sang about our way, and shook the water out of sunny calm. Katahdin to the North, a fair blue pyramid, lifted higher and stooped forward more imminent, yet still so many leagues away that his features were undefined, and the gray of his scalp undistinguishable from the green of his beard of forest. Every mile, however, as we slid drowsily over the hot lake, proved more and more that we were not befooled,—Iglesias by memory, and I by anticipation. Katahdin lost nothing by approach, as some of the grandees do: as it grew bigger, it grew better.

Twenty miles, or so, of Chesuncook, of sun-cooked Chesuncook, we traversed by the aid of our blanket-sail, pleasantly wafted by the unboisterous breeze. Undrowned, unducked, as safe from the perils of the broad lake as we had come out of the defiles of the rapids, we landed at the carry below the dam at the lake's outlet.

The skin of many a slaughtered varmint was nailed on its shingle, and the landing-place was carpeted with the fur. Doughnuts, ex-barkeepers, and civilization at one end of the lake, and here were muskrat-skins, trappers, and the primeval. Two hunters of moose, in default of their fern-horned, blubber-lipped game, had condescended to muskrat, and were making the lower end of Chesuncook fragrant with muskiness.

It is surprising how hospitable and comrade a creature is man. The trappers of muskrats were charmingly brotherly. They guided us across the carry; they would not hear of our being porters. “Pluck the superabundant huckleberry,” said they, “while we, suspending your firkin and your traps upon the setting-pole, tote them, as the spies of Joshua toted the grape-clusters of the Promised Land.”

Cancut, for his share, carried the canoe. He wore it upon his head and shoulders. Tough work he found it, toiling through the underwood, and poking his way like an elongated and mobile mushroom through the thick shrubbery. Ever and anon, as Iglesias and I paused, we would be aware of the canoe thrusting itself above our heads in the covert, and a voice would come from an unseen head under its shell,—“It's soul-breaking, carrying is!”

The portage was short. We emerged from the birchen grove upon the river, below a brilliant cascading rapid. The water came flashing gloriously forward, a far other element than the tame, flat stuff we had drifted slowly over all the dullish hours. Water on the go is nobler than water on the stand; recklessness may be as fatal as stagnation, but it is more heroic.



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Presently, over the edge, where the foam and spray were springing up into sunshine, our canoe suddenly appeared, and had hardly appeared, when, as if by one leap, it had passed the rapid, and was gliding in the stiller current at our feet. One of the muskrateers had relieved Cancut of his head-piece, and shot the lower rush of water. We again embarked, and, guided by the trappers in their own canoe, paddled out upon Lake Pepogenus.

LOUIS LEBEAU'S CONVERSION.

Yesterday, while I moved with the languid crowd on the Riva,
Musing with idle eyes on the wide lagoons and the islands,
And on the dim-seen seaward glimmering sails in the distance,
Where the azure haze, like a vision of Indian-Summer,
Haunted the dreamy sky of the soft Venetian December,—
While I moved unwilling in the mellow warmth of the weather,
Breathing air that was full of Old-World sadness and beauty,
Into my thought came this story of free, wild life in Ohio,
When the land was new, and yet by the Beautiful River
Dwelt the pioneers and Indian hunters and boatmen.

Pealed from the campanile, responding from island to island,
Bells of that ancient faith whose incense and solemn devotions
Rise from a hundred shrines in the broken heart of the city;
But in my reverie heard I only the passionate voices
Of the people that sang in the virgin heart of the forest.
Autumn was in the land, and the trees were golden and crimson,
And from the luminous boughs of the over-elms and the maples
Tender and beautiful fell the light in the worshippers' faces,
Softer than lights that stream through the saints on the windows of
churches,
While the balsamy breath of the hemlocks and pines by the river
Stole on the winds through the woodland aisles like the breath of a
censer.

Loud the people sang old camp-meeting anthems that quaver
Quaintly yet from lips forgetful of lips that have kissed them:
Loud they sang the songs of the Sacrifice and Atonement,
And of the end of the world, and the infinite terrors of Judgment;
Songs of ineffable sorrow, and wailing compassionate warning
For the generations that hardened their hearts to their Saviour;
Songs of exultant rapture for them that confessed Him and followed,
Bearing His burden and yoke, enduring and entering with Him
Into the rest of His saints, and the endless reward of the blessed.
Loud the people sang: but through the sound of their singing



Brake inarticulate cries and moans and sobs from the mourners,
As the glory of God, that smote the apostle of Tarsus,
Smote them and strewed them to earth like leaves in the breath of the
whirlwind.

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Hushed at last was the sound of the lamentation and singing;
But from the distant hill the throbbing drum of the pheasant
Shook with its heavy pulses the depths of the listening silence,
When from his place arose a white-haired exhorter and faltered:
“Brethren and sisters in Jesus! the Lord hath heard our petitions,
And the hearts of His servants are awed and melted within them,—
Even the hearts of the wicked are touched by His infinite mercy.
All my days in this vale of tears the Lord hath been with me,
He hath been good to me, He hath granted me trials and patience;
But this hour hath crowned my knowledge of Him and His goodness.
Truly, but that it is well this day for me to be with you,
Now might I say to the Lord,—‘I know Thee, my God, in all fulness;
Now let Thy servant depart in peace to the rest Thou hast promised!’”

Faltered and ceased. And now the wild and jubilant music
Of the singing burst from the solemn profound of the silence,
Surged in triumph and fell, and ebbled again into silence.

Then from the group of the preachers arose the greatest among them,—
He whose days were given in youth to the praise of the Saviour,—
He whose lips seemed touched like the prophet’s of old from the altar,
So that his words were flame, and burned to the hearts of his hearers,
Quickening the dead among them, reviving the cold and the doubting.
There he charged them pray, and rest not from prayer while a sinner
In the sound of their voices denied the Friend of the sinner:
“Pray till the night shall fall,—till the stars are faint in the
morning,—

Yea, till the sun himself be faint in that glory and brightness,
In that light which shall dawn in mercy for penitent sinners.”
Kneeling, he led them in prayer, and the quick and sobbing responses
Spoke how their souls were moved with the might and the grace of the
Spirit.

Then while the converts recounted how God had chastened and saved
them,—

Children whose golden locks yet shone with the lingering effulgence
Of the touches of Him who blessed little children forever,—
Old men whose yearning eyes were dimmed with the far-streaming
brightness

Seen through the opening gates in the heart of the heavenly city,—
Stealthily through the harking woods the lengthening shadows
Chased the wild things to their nests, and the twilight died into
darkness.



Now the four great pyres that were placed there to light the encampment,
High on platforms raised above the people, were kindled.
Flaming aloof, as if from the pillar by night in the Desert,
Fell their crimson light on the lifted orbs of the preachers,
On the withered brows of the old men, and Israel's mothers,
On the bloom of youth, and the earnest devotion of manhood,

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On the anguish and hope in the tearful eyes of the mourners.
Flaming aloof, it stirred the sleep of the luminous maples
With warm summer-dreams, and faint, luxurious languor.
Near the four great pyres the people closed in a circle,
In their midst the mourners, and, praying with them, the exhorters,
And on the skirts of the circle the unrepentant and scorners,—
Ever fewer and sadder, and drawn to the place of the mourners,
One after one, by the prayers and tears of the brethren and sisters,
And by the Spirit of God, that was mightily striving within them,
Till at the last alone stood Louis Lebeau, unconverted.

Louis Lebeau, the boatman, the trapper, the hunter, the fighter,
From the unlucky French of Gallipolis he descended,
Heir to Old-World want and New-World love of adventure.
Vague was the life he led, and vague and grotesque were the rumors
Wherethrough he loomed on the people, the hero of mythical hearsay,—
Quick of hand and of heart, *insouciant*, generous, Western,—
Taking the thought of the young in secret love and in envy.
Not less the elders shook their heads and held him for outcast,
Reprobate, roving, ungodly, infidel, worse than a Papist,
With his whispered fame of lawless exploits at St. Louis,
Wild affrays and loves with the half-breeds out on the Osage,
Brawls at New-Orleans, and all the towns on the rivers,
All the godless towns of the many-ruffianed rivers.
Only she that loved him the best of all, in her loving,
Knew him the best of all, and other than that of the rumors.
Daily she prayed for him, with conscious and tender effusion,
That the Lord would convert him. But when her father forbade him
Unto her thought, she denied him, and likewise held him for outcast,
Turned her eyes when they met, and would not speak, though her heart
broke.

Bitter and brief his logic that reasoned from wrong unto error:
“This is their praying and singing,” he said, “that makes you reject
me,—
You that were kind to me once. But I think my fathers’ religion,
With a light heart in the breast, and a friendly priest to absolve one,
Better than all these conversions that only bewilder and vex me,
And that have made man so hard and woman fickle and cruel.
Well, then, pray for my soul, since you would not have spoken to save



me,—

Yes,—for I go from these saints to my brethren and sisters, the sinners.”

Spake and went, while her faint lips fashioned unuttered entreaties,—

Went, and came again in a year at the time of the meeting,

Haggard and wan of face, and wasted with passion and sorrow.

Dead in his eyes was the careless smile of old, and its phantom

Haunted his lips in a sneer of restless incredulous mocking.

Day by day he came to the outer skirts of the circle,

Dwelling on her, where she knelt by the white-haired exhorter, her father,

With his hollow looks, and never moved from his silence.

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Now, where he stood alone, the last of impenitent sinners,
Weeping, old friends and comrades came to him out of the circle,
And with their tears besought him to hear what the Lord had done for
them.

Ever he shook them off, not roughly, nor smiled at their transports.
Then the preachers spake and painted the terrors of Judgment,
And of the bottomless pit, and the flames of hell everlasting.
Still and dark he stood, and neither listened nor heeded:
But when the fervent voice of the while-haired exhorter was lifted,
Fell his brows in a scowl of fierce and scornful rejection.
“Lord, let this soul be saved!” cried the fervent voice of the old man;
“For that the shepherd rejoiceth more truly for one that hath wandered,
And hath been found again, than for all the others that strayed not.”

Out of the midst of the people, a woman old and decrepit,
Tremulous through the light, and tremulous into the shadow,
Wavered toward him with slow, uncertain paces of palsy,
Laid her quivering hand on his arm and brokenly prayed him:
“Louis Lebeau, I closed in death the eyes of your mother.
On my breast she died, in prayer for her fatherless children,
That they might know the Lord, and follow Him always, and serve Him.
Oh, I conjure you, my son, by the name of your mother in glory,
Scorn not the grace of the Lord!” As when a summer-noon’s tempest
Breaks in one swift gush of rain, then ceases and gathers
Darker and gloomier yet on the lowering front of the heavens,
So brake his mood in tears, as he soothed her, and stilled her
entreaties,
And so he turned again with his clouded looks to the people.

Vibrated then from the hush the accents of mournfullest pity,—
His who was gifted in speech, and the glow of the fires illumined
All his pallid aspect with sudden and marvellous splendor:
“Louis Lebeau,” he spake, “I have known you and loved you from
childhood;
Still, when the others blamed you, I took your part, for I knew you.
Louis Lebeau, my brother, I thought to meet you in heaven,
Hand in hand with her who is gone to heaven before us,
Brothers through her dear love! I trusted to greet you and lead you
Up from the brink of the River unto the gates of the City.
Lo! my years shall be few on the earth. Oh, my brother,
If I should die before you had known the mercy of Jesus,
Yea, I think it would sadden the hope of glory within me!”



Neither yet had the will of the sinner yielded an answer;
But from his lips there broke a cry of unspeakable anguish,
Wild and fierce and shrill, as if some demon within him
Rent his soul with the ultimate pangs of fiendish possession,
And with the outstretched arms of bewildered imploring toward them,
Death-white unto the people he turned his face from the darkness.



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Out of the sedge by the creek a flight of clamorous killdees
Rose from their timorous sleep with piercing and iterant challenge,
Wheeled in the starlight and fled away into distance and silence.
White on the other hand lay the tents, and beyond them glided the river,
Where the broadhorn[A] drifted slow at the will of the current,
And where the boatman listened, and knew not how, as he listened,
Something touched through the years the old lost hopes of his
childhood,—
Only his sense was filled with low monotonous murmurs,
As of a faint-heard prayer, that was chorused with deeper responses.

[Footnote A: The old-fashioned flat-boats were so called.]

Not with the rest was lifted her voice in the fervent responses,
But in her soul she prayed to Him that heareth in secret,
Asking for light and for strength to learn His will and to do it:
“Oh, make me clear to know, if the hope that rises within me
Be not part of a love unmeet for me here, and forbidden!
So, if it be not that, make me strong for the evil entreaty
Of the days that shall bring me question of self and reproaches,
When the unrighteous shall mock, and my brethren and sisters shall
doubt me!
Make me worthy to know Thy will, my Saviour, and do it!”
In her pain she prayed, and at last, through her mute adoration,
Rapt from all mortal presence, and in her rapture uplifted,
Glorified she rose, and stood in the midst of the people,
Looking on all with the still, unseeing eyes of devotion,
Vague, and tender, and sweet, as the eyes of the dead, when we dream
them
Living and looking on us, but they cannot speak, and we cannot:
Knowing only the peril that threatened his soul’s unrepentance,
Knowing only the fear and error and wrong that withheld him,
Thinking, “In doubt of me, his soul had perished forever!”
Touched with no feeble shame, but trusting her power to save him,
Through the circle she passed, and straight to the side of her lover,—
Took his hand in her own, and mutely implored him an instant,
Answering, giving, forgiving, confessing, beseeching him all things,—
Drew him then with her, and passed once more through the circle
Unto her place, and knelt with him there by the side of her father,
Trembling as women tremble who greatly venture and triumph,—
But in her innocent breast was the saint’s sublime exultation.

So was Louis converted; and though the lips of the scorner
Spared not in after-years the subtle taunt and derision,



(What time, meeker grown, his heart held his hand from its answer,)
Not the less lofty and pure her love and her faith that had saved him,
Not the less now discerned was her inspiration from heaven
By the people, that rose, and embracing, and weeping together,
Poured forth their jubilant songs of victory



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and of thanksgiving,

Till from the embers leaped the dying flame to behold them,
And the hills of the river were filled with reverberant echoes,—
Echoes that out of the years and the distance stole to me hither,
While I moved unwilling in the mellow warmth of the weather,—
Echoes that mingled and fainted and fell with the fluttering murmurs
In the hearts of the hushing bells, as from island to island
Swooned the sound on the wide lagoons into palpitant silence.

* * * * *

THE DEVELOPMENT AND OVERTHROW OF THE RUSSIAN SERF-SYSTEM.

Close upon the end of the fifteenth century, the Muscovite ideas of Right were subjected to the strong mind of Ivan the Great, and compressed into a code.

Therein were embodied the best processes known to his land and time: for discovering crime, torture and trial by battle; for punishing crime, the knout and death.

But hidden in this tough mass was one law of greater import than all others. Thereby were all peasants forbidden to leave the lands they were then tilling, except during the eight days before and after Saint George's day. This provision sprang from Ivan's highest views of justice and broadest views of political economy; the nobles received it with plaudits, which have found echoes even in these days;[A] the peasants received it with no murmurs which History has found any trouble in drowning.

[Footnote A: See Gerebtzoff, *Histoire de la Civilisation en Russie*.]

Just one hundred years later, there sat upon the Muscovite throne, as *nominal* Tzar, the weakling Feodor I.; but behind the throne stood, as *real* Tzar, hard, strong Boris Godounoff.

Looking forward to Feodor's death, Boris makes ready to mount the throne; and he sees—what all other "Mayors of the Palace," climbing into the places of *faineant* kings, have seen—that he must link to his fortunes the fortunes of some strong body in the nation; he breaks, however, from the general rule among usurpers,—bribing the Church,—and determines to bribe the nobility.

The greatest grief of the Muscovite nobles seemed to be that the peasants could escape from their oppression by the emigration allowed at Saint George's day.

Boris saw his opportunity: he cut off the privilege of Saint George's day; the peasant was fixed to the soil forever. No Russian law ever *directly* enslaved the peasantry,[B]



but, through this decree of Boris, the lord who owned the soil came to own the peasants upon it, just as he owned its immovable boulders and ledges.

[Footnote B: Haxthausen.]

To this the peasants submitted, but over this wrong History has not been able to drown their sighs; their proverbs and ballads make Saint George's day representative of all ill-luck and disappointment.

A few years later, Boris made another bid for oligarchic favor. He issued a rigorous fugitive-serf law, and even wrenched liberty from certain free peasants who had entered service for wages before his edicts. This completed the work, and Russia, which never had the benefits of feudalism, had now fastened upon her feudalism's worst curse,—a serf-caste bound to the glebe.



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The great waves of wrong which bore serfage into Russia seem to have moved with a kind of tidal regularity, and the distance between their crests in those earlier times appears to have been just a hundred years,—for, again, at the end of the next century, surge over the nation the ideas of Peter the Great.

The great good things done by Peter the world knows by heart. The world knows well how he tore his way out of the fetichism of his time,—how, despite ignorance and unreason, he dragged his nation after him,—how he dowered the nation with things and thoughts which transformed it from a petty Asiatic horde to a great European power.

And the praise due to this work can never be diminished. Time shall but increase it; for the world has yet to learn most of the wonderful details of his activity. We were present a few years since, when one of those lesser triumphs of his genius was first unfolded.

It was in that room at the Hermitage—adjoining the Winter Palace—set apart for the relics of Peter. Our companions were two men noted as leaders in American industry,—one famed as an inventor, the other famed as a champion of inventors' rights.

Suddenly from the inventor,[C] pulling over some old dust-covered machines in a corner, came loud cries of surprise. The cries were natural indeed. In that heap of rubbish he had found a lathe for turning irregular forms, and a screw-cutting engine once used by Peter himself: specimens of his unfinished work were still in them. They had lain there unheeded a hundred and fifty years; their principle had died with Peter and his workmen; and not many years since, they were reinvented in America, and gave their inventors fame and fortune. At the late Paris Universal Exposition crowds flocked about an American lathe for copying statuary; and that lathe was, in principle, identical with this old, forgotten machine of Peter's.

[Footnote C: The late Samuel Colt.]

Yet, though Peter fought so well, and thought so well, he made some mistakes which hang to this day over his country as bitter curses. For in all his plan and work to advance the mass of men was one supreme lack,—lack of any account of the worth and right of the individual man.

Lesser examples of this are seen in his grim jest at Westminster Hall,—“What use of so many lawyers? I have but two lawyers in Russia, and one of those I mean to hang as soon as I return;”—or when, at Berlin, having been shown a new gibbet, he ordered one of his servants to be hanged in order to test it;—or, in his reviews and parade-fights, when he ordered his men to use ball, and to take the buttons off their bayonets.

Greater examples are seen in his Battle of Narva, when he threw away an army to learn his opponent's game,—in his building of St. Petersburg, where, in draining marshes, he sacrificed a hundred thousand men the first year.

But the greatest proof of this great lack was shown in his dealings with the serf-system.

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Serfage was already recognized in Peter's time as an evil. Peter himself once stormed forth in protestations and invectives against what he stigmatized as "selling men like beasts,—separating parents from children, husbands from wives,—which takes place nowhere else in the world, and which causes many tears to flow." He declared that a law should be made against it. Yet it was by his misguided hand that serfage was compacted into its final black mass of foulness.

For Peter saw other nations spinning and weaving, and he determined that Russia should at once spin and weave; he saw other nations forging iron, and he determined that Russia should at once forge iron. He never stopped to consider that what might cost little in other lands, as a natural growth, might cost far too much in Russia, as a forced growth.

In lack, then, of quick brain and sturdy spine and strong arm of paid workmen, he forced into his manufactories the flaccid muscle of serfs. These, thus lifted from the earth, lost even the little force in the State they before had; great bodies of serfs thus became slaves; worse than that, the idea of a serf developed toward the idea of a slave.[D]

[Footnote D: Haxthausen, *Etudes sur la Situation Interieure, etc., de la Russie.*]

And Peter, misguided, dealt one blow more. Cold-blooded officials were set at taking the census. These adopted easy classifications; free peasants, serfs, and slaves were often huddled into the lists under a single denomination. So serfage became still more difficult to be distinguished from slavery.[E]

[Footnote E: Gurowski,—also Wolowski in *Revue des Deux Mondes.*]

As this base of hideous wrong was thus widened and deepened, the nobles built higher and stronger their superstructure of arrogance and pretension. Not many years after Peter's death, they so over-awed the Empress Anne that she thrust into the codes of the Empire statutes which allowed the nobles to sell serfs apart from the soil. So did serfage bloom *fully* into slavery.

But in the latter half of the eighteenth century Russia gained a ruler from whom the world came to expect much.

To mount the throne, Catharine II. had murdered her husband; to keep the throne, she had murdered two claimants whose title was better than her own. She then became, with her agents in these horrors, a second Messalina.

To set herself right in the eyes of Europe, she paid eager court to that hierarchy of skepticism which in that age made or marred European reputations. She flattered the fierce Deists by owning fealty to "*Le Roi Voltaire*;" she flattered the mild Deists by calling

in La Harpe as the tutor of her grandson; she flattered the Atheists by calling in Diderot as a tutor for herself.

Her murders and orgies were soon forgotten in the new hopes for Russian regeneration. Her dealings with Russia strengthened these hopes. The official style required that all persons presenting petitions should subscribe themselves "Your Majesty's humble serf." This formula she abolished, and boasted that she had cast out the word serf from the Russian language. Poets and philosophers echoed this boast over Europe, —and the serfs waited.



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The great Empress spurred hope by another movement. She proposed to an academy the question of serf-emancipation as a subject for their prize-essay. The essay was written and crowned. It was filled with beautiful things about liberty, practical things about moderation, flattering things about “the Great Catharine,”—and the serfs waited.

Again she aroused hope. It was given out that her most intense delight came from the sight of happy serfs and prosperous villages. Accordingly, in her journey to the Crimea, Potemkin squandered millions on millions in rearing pasteboard villages,—in dragging forth thousands of wretched peasants to fill them,—in costuming them to look thrifty,—in training them to look happy. Catharine was rejoiced,—Europe sang paeans,—the serfs waited.[F]

[Footnote F: For further growth of the sentimental fashion thus set, see *Memoirs of the Princess Daschkaw*, Vol. I. p. 383.]

She seemed to go farther: she issued a decree prohibiting the enslavement of serfs. But, unfortunately, the palace-intrigues, and the correspondence with the philosophers, and the destruction of Polish nationality left her no time to see the edict carried out. But Europe applauded,—and the serfs waited.

Two years after this came a deed which put an end to all this uncertainty. An edict was prepared, ordering the peasants of Little Russia to remain forever on the estates where the day of publication should find them. This was vile; but what followed was diabolic. Court-pets were let into the secret. These, by good promises, enticed hosts of peasants to their estates. The edict was now sprung;—in an hour the courtiers were made rich, the peasants were made serfs, and Catharine II. was made infamous forever.

So, about a century after Peter, there rolled over Russia a wave of wrong which not only drowned honor in the nobility, but drowned hope in the people.

As Russia entered the nineteenth century, the hearts of earnest men must have sunk within them. For Paul I., Catharine’s son and successor, was infinitely more despotic than Catharine, and infinitely less restrained by public opinion. He had been born with savage instincts, and educated into ferocity. Tyranny was written on his features, in his childhood. If he remained in Russia, his mother sneered and showed hatred to him; if he journeyed in Western Europe, crowds gathered about his coach to jeer at his ugliness. Most of those who have seen Gillray’s caricature of him, issued in the height of English spite at Paul’s homage to Bonaparte, have thought it hideously overdrawn; but those who have seen the portrait of Paul in the Cadet-Corps at St. Petersburg know well that Gillray did not exaggerate Paul’s ugliness, for he could not.

And Paul’s face was but a mirror of his character. Tyranny was wrought into his every fibre. He insisted on an Oriental homage. As his carriage whirled by, it was held the duty of all others in carriages to stop, descend into the mud, and bow themselves.

Himself threw his despotism into this formula,—“Know, Sir Ambassador, that in Russia there is no one noble or powerful except the man to whom I speak, and while I speak.”



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And yet, within that hideous mass glowed some sparks of reverence for right. When the nobles tried to get Paul's assent to more open arrangements for selling serfs apart from the soil, he utterly refused; and when they overtasked their human chattels, Paul made a law that no serf should be required to give more than three days in the week to the tillage of his master's domain.

But, within five years after his accession, Paul had developed into such a ravenous wild-beast that it became necessary to murder him. This duty done, there came a change in the spirit of Russian sovereignty as from March to May; but, sadly for humanity, there came, at the same time, a change in the spirit of European politics as from May to March.

For, although the new Tzar, Alexander I., was mild and liberal, the storm of French ideas and armies had generally destroyed in monarchs' minds any poor germs of philanthropy which had ever found lodgment there. Still Alexander breasted this storm,—found time to plan for his serfs, and in 1803 put his hand to the work of helping them toward freedom. His first edict was for the creation of the class of "free laborers." By this, masters and serfs were encouraged to enter into an arrangement which was to put the serf into immediate possession of himself, of a homestead, and of a few acres,—giving him time to indemnify his master by a series of payments. Alexander threw his heart into this scheme; in his kindness he supposed that the pretended willingness of the nobles meant something; but the serf-owning caste, without openly opposing, twisted up bad consequences with good, braided impossibilities into possibilities: the whole plan became a tangle, and was thrown aside.

The Tzar now sought to foster other good efforts, especially those made by some earnest nobles to free their serfs by will. But this plan, also, the serf-owning caste entangled and thwarted.

At last, the storm of war set in with such fury that all internal reforms must be lost sight of. Russia had to make ready for those campaigns in which Napoleon gained every battle. Then came that peaceful meeting on the raft at Tilsit,—worse for Russia than any warlike meeting; for thereby Napoleon seduced Alexander, for years, from plans of bettering his Empire into dreams of extending it.

Coming out of these dreams, Alexander had to deal with such realities as the burning of Moscow, the Battle of Leipsic, and the occupation of France; yet, in the midst of those fearful times,—when the grapple of the Emperors was at the fiercest,—in the very year of the burning of Moscow,—Alexander rose in calm statesmanship, and admitted Bessarabia into the Empire under a proviso which excluded serfage forever.

Hardly was the great European tragedy ended, when Alexander again turned sorrowfully toward the wronged millions of his Empire. He found that progress in civilization had but made the condition of the serfs worse. The newly ennobled

parvenus were worse than the old *boyars*; they hugged the serf-system more lovingly and the serfs more hatefully.[G]



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[Footnote G: For proofs of this see Haxthausen.]

The sight of these wrongs roused him. He seized a cross, and swore upon it that the serf-system should be abolished.

Straightway a great and good plan was prepared. Its main features were, a period of transition from serfage to personal liberty, extending through twelve or fourteen years,—the arrival of the serf at personal freedom, with ownership of his cabin and the bit of land attached to it,—the gradual reimbursement of masters by serfs,—and after this advance to *personal* liberty, an advance by easy steps to a sort of *political* liberty.

Favorable as was this plan to the serf-owners, they attacked it in various ways; but they could not kill it utterly. Esthonia, Livonia, and Courland became free.

Having failed to arrest the growth of freedom, the serf-holding caste made every effort to blast the good fruits of freedom. In Courland they were thwarted; in Esthonia and Livonia they succeeded during many years; but the eternal laws were too strong for them, and the fruitage of liberty has grown richer and better.

After these good efforts, Alexander stopped, discouraged. A few patriotic nobles stood apart from their caste, and strengthened his hands, as Lafayette and Liancourt strengthened Louis XVI.; they even drew up a plan of voluntary emancipation, formed an association for the purpose, gained many signatures; but the great weight of that besotted serf-owning caste was thrown against them, and all came to nought. Alexander was at last walled in from the great object of his ambition. Pretended theologians built, between him and emancipation, walls of Scriptural interpretation,[H]—pretended philosophers built walls of false political economy,—pretended statesmen built walls of sham common-sense.

[Footnote H: Gurowski says that they used brilliantly “Cursed be Canaan,” etc.]

If the Tzar could but have mustered courage to *cut* the knot! Alas for Russia and for him, he wasted himself in efforts to *untie* it. His heart sickened at it; he welcomed death, which alone could remove him from it.

Alexander’s successor, Nicholas I., had been known before his accession as a mere martinet, a good colonel for parade-days, wonderful in detecting soiled uniforms, terrible in administering petty punishments. It seems like the story of stupid Brutus over again. Altered circumstances made a new man of him; and few things are more strange than the change wrought in his whole bearing and look by that week of agony and energy in climbing his brother’s throne. The portraits of Nicholas the Grand Duke and Nicholas the Autocrat seem portraits of two different persons. The first face is averted, suspicious, harsh, with little meaning and less grandeur; the second is direct,

commanding, not unkind, every feature telling of will to crush opposition, every line marking sense of Russian supremacy.



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The great article of Nicholas's creed was a complete, downright faith in Despotism, and in himself as Despotism's apostle.

Hence he hated, above all things, a limited monarchy. He told De Custine that a pure monarchy or pure republic he could understand; but that anything between these he could *not* understand. Of his former rule of Poland, as constitutional monarch, he spoke with loathing.

Of this hate which Nicholas felt for liberal forms of government there yet remain monuments in the great museum of the Kremlin.

That museum holds an immense number of interesting things, and masses of jewels and plate which make all other European collections mean. The visitor wanders among clumps of diamonds, and sacks of pearls, and a nauseating wealth of rubies and sapphires and emeralds. There rise row after row of jewelled scymitars, and vases and salvers of gold, and old saddles studded with diamonds, and with stirrups of gold,—presents of frightened Asiatic satraps or fawning European allies.

There, too, are the crowns of Muscovy, of Russia, of Kazan, of Astrachan, of Siberia, of the Crimea, and, pity to say it, of Poland. And next this is an index of despotic hate,—for the Polish sceptre is broken and flung aside.

Near this stands the full-length portrait of the first Alexander; and at his feet are grouped captured flags of Hungary and Poland,—some with blood-marks still upon them.

But below all,—far beneath the feet of the Emperor,—in dust and ignominy and on the floor, is flung the very Constitution of Poland—parchment for parchment, ink for ink, good promise for good promise—which Alexander gave with so many smiles, and which Nicholas took away with so much bloodshed.

And not far from this monument of the deathless hate Nicholas bore that liberty he had stung to death stands a monument of his admiration for straightforward tyranny, even in the most dreaded enemy his house ever knew. Standing there is a statue in the purest of marble,—the only statue in those vast halls. It has the place of honor. It looks proudly over all that glory, and keeps ward over all that treasure; and that statue, in full majesty of imperial robes and bees and diadem and face, is of the first Napoleon. Admiration of his tyrannic will has at last made him peaceful sovereign of the Kremlin.

This spirit of absolutism took its most offensive form in Nicholas's attitude toward Europe. He was the very incarnation of reaction against revolution, and he became the demigod of that horde of petty despots who infest Central Europe.

Whenever, then, any tyrant's lie was to be baptized, he stood its godfather; whenever any God's truth was to be crucified, he led on those who passed by reviling and



wagging their heads. Whenever these oppressors revived some old feudal wrong, Nicholas backed them in the name of Religion; whenever their nations struggled to preserve some great right, Nicholas crushed them in the name of Law and Order. With these pauper princes his children intermarried, and he fed them with his crumbs, and clothed them with scraps of his purple. The visitor can see to-day, in every one of their dwarf palaces, some of his malachite vases, or porcelain bowls, or porphyry columns.



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But the *people* of Western Europe distrusted him as much as their rulers worshipped; and some of these same presents to their rulers have become trifle-monuments of no mean value in showing that popular idea of Russian policy. Foremost among these stand those two bronze masses of statuary in front of the Royal Palace at Berlin,—representing fiery horses restrained by strong men. Pompous inscriptions proclaim these presents from Nicholas; but the people, knowing the man and his measures, have fastened forever upon one of these curbed steeds the name of “Progress Checked,” and on the other, “Retrogression Encouraged.”

And the people were right. Whether sending presents to gladden his Prussian pupil, or sending armies to crush Hungary, or sending sneering messages to plague Louis Philippe, he remained proud in his apostolate of Absolutism.

This pride Nicholas never relaxed. A few days before his self-will brought him to his death-bed, we saw him ride through the St. Petersburg streets with no pomp and no attendants, yet in as great pride as ever Despotism gave a man. At his approach, nobles uncovered and looked docile, soldiers faced about and became statues, long-bearded peasants bowed to the ground with the air of men on whose vision a miracle flashes. For there was one who could make or mar all fortunes,—the absolute owner of street and houses and passers-by,—one who owned the patent and dispensed the right to tread that soil, to breathe that air, to be glorified in that sunlight and amid those snow-crystals. And he looked it all. Though at that moment his army was entrapped by military stratagem, and he himself was entrapped by diplomatic stratagem, that face and form were proud as ever and confident as ever.

There was, in this attitude toward Europe,—in this standing forth as the representative man of Absolutism, and breasting the nineteenth century,—something of greatness; but in his attitude toward Russia this greatness was wretchedly diminished.

For, as Alexander I. was a good man enticed out of goodness by the baits of Napoleon, Nicholas was a great man scared out of greatness by the ever-recurring phantom of the French Revolution.

In those first days of his reign, when he enforced loyalty with grape-shot and halter, Nicholas dared much and stood firm; but his character soon showed another side.

Fearless as he was before bright bayonets, he was an utter coward before bright ideas. He laughed at the flash of cannon, but he trembled at the flash of a new living thought. Whenever, then, he attempted a great thing for his nation, he was sure to be scared back from its completion by fear of revolution. And so, to-day, he who looks through Russia for Nicholas's works finds a number of great things he has done, but each is single, insulated,—not preceded logically, not followed effectively.

Take, as an example of this, his railway-building.



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His own pride and Russian interest demanded railways. He scanned the world with that keen eye of his,—saw that American energy was the best supplement to Russian capital; his will darted quickly, struck afar, and Americans came to build his road from St. Petersburg to Moscow.

Nothing can be more complete. It is an “air-line” road, and so perfect that the traveller finds few places where the rails do not meet on either side of him in the horizon. The track is double,—the rails very heavy and admirably ballasted,—station-houses and engine-houses are splendid in build, perfect in arrangement, and surrounded by neat gardens. The whole work is worthy of the Pyramid-builders. The traveller is whirled by culverts, abutments, and walls of dressed granite,—through cuttings where the earth on either side is carefully paved or turfed to the summit. Ranges of Greek columns are reared as crossings in the midst of broad marshes,—lions’ heads in bronzed iron stare out upon vast wastes where never rose even the smoke from a serf’s kennel.

All this seems good; and a ride of four hundred miles through such glories rarely fails to set the traveller at chanting the praises of the Emperor who conceived them. But when the traveller notes that complete isolation of the work from all conditions necessary to its success, his praises grow fainter. He sees that Nicholas held back from continuing the road to Odessa, though half the money spent in making the road an Imperial plaything would have built a good, solid extension to that most important seaport; he sees that Nicholas dared not untie police-regulations, and that commerce is wretchedly meagre. Contrary to what would obtain under a free system, this great public work found the country wretched and left it wretched. The traveller flies by no ranges of trim palings and tidy cottages; he sees the same dingy groups of huts here as elsewhere,—the same cultivation looking for no morrow,—the same tokens that the laborer is *not* thought worthy of his hire.

This same tendency to great single works, this same fear of great connected systems, this same timid isolation of great creations from principles essential to their growth is seen, too, in Nicholas’s church-building.

Foremost of all the edifices on which Nicholas lavished the wealth of the Empire stands the Isak Church in St. Petersburg. It is one of the largest, and certainly the richest, cathedral in Christendom. All is polished pink granite and marble and bronze. On all sides are double rows of Titanic columns,—each a single block of polished granite with bronze capital. Colossal masses of bronze statuary are grouped over each front; high above the roof and surrounding the great drums of the domes are lines of giant columns in granite bearing giant statues in bronze; and crowning all rises the vast central dome, flanked by its four smaller domes, all heavily plated with gold.



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The church within is one gorgeous mass of precious marbles and mosaics and silver and gold and jewels. On the tabernacle of the altar, in gold and malachite, on the screen of the altar, with its pilasters of *lapis-lazuli* and its range of malachite columns fifty feet high, were lavished millions on millions. Bulging from the ceilings are massy bosses of Siberian porphyry and jasper. To decorate the walls with unfading pictures, Nicholas founded an establishment for mosaic work, where sixty pictures were commanded, each demanding, after all artistic labor, the mechanical labor of two men for four years.

Yet this vast work is not so striking a monument of Nicholas's luxury as of his timidity.

For this cathedral and some others almost as grand were, in part, at least, results of the deep wish of Nicholas to wean his people from their semi-idolatrous love for dark, confined, filthy sanctuaries, like those of Moscow; but here, again, is a timid purpose and half-result; Nicholas dared set no adequate enginery working at the popular religious training or moral training. There had been such an organization,—the Russian Bible Society,—favored by the first Alexander; but Nicholas swept it away at one pen-stroke. Evidently, he feared lest Scriptural denunciations of certain sins in ancient politics might be popularly interpreted against certain sins in modern politics.

It was this same vague fear at revolutionary remembrance which thwarted Nicholas in all his battling against official corruption.

The corruption-system in Russia is old, organized, and respectable. Stories told of Russian bribes and thefts exceed belief only until one has been on the ground.

Nicholas began well. He made an Imperial progress to Odessa,—was welcomed in the morning by the Governor in full pomp and robes and flow of smooth words; and at noon the same Governor was working in the streets, with ball and chain, as a convict.

But against such a chronic moral evil no government is so weak as your so-called "*strong*" government. Nicholas set out one day for the Cronstadt arsenals, to look into the accounts there; but before he reached them, stores, storehouses, and account-books were in ashes.

So, at last, Nicholas folded his arms and wrestled no more. For, apart from the trouble, there came ever in his dealings with thieves that old timid thought of his, that, if he examined too closely their thief-tenure, they might examine too closely his despot-tenure.

We have shown this vague fear in Nicholas's mind, thus at length and in different workings, because thereby alone can be grasped the master-key to his dealings with the serf-system.



Toward his toiling millions Nicholas always showed sympathy. Let news of a single wrong to a serf get through the hedges about the Russian majesty, and woe to the guilty master! Many of these wrongs came to Nicholas's notice; and he came to hate the system, and tried to undermine it.

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Opposition met him, of course,—not so much the ponderous laziness of Peter's time as an opposition polite and elastic, which never ranted and never stood up,—for then Nicholas would have throttled it and stamped upon it. But it did its best to entangle his reason and thwart his action.

He was told that the serfs were well fed, well housed, well clothed, well provided with religion,—were contented, and had no wish to leave their owners.

Now Nicholas was not strong at spinning sham reason nor subtle at weaving false conscience; but, to his mind, the very fact that the system had so degraded a man that he could laugh and dance and sing, while other men took his wages and wife and homestead, was the crowning argument *against* the system.

Then the political economists beset him, proving that without forced labor Russia must sink into sloth and poverty.[1]

[Footnote 1: For choice specimens of these reasonings, see Von Erman, *Archiv fuer Wissenschaftliche Kunde von Russland.*]

Yet all this could not shut out from Nicholas's sight the great black *fact* in the case. He saw, and winced as he saw, that, while other European nations, even under despots, were comparatively active and energetic, his own people were sluggish and stagnant,—that, although great thoughts and great acts were towering in the West, there were in Russia, after all his galvanizing, no great authors, or scholars, or builders, or inventors, but only those two main products of Russian civilization,—dissolute lords and abject serfs.

But what to do? Nicholas tried to help his Empire by setting right any individual wrongs whose reports broke their way to him.

Nearly twenty years went by in this timid dropping of grains of salt into a putrid sea.

But at last, in 1842, Nicholas issued his ukase creating the class of “contracting peasants.” Masters and serfs were empowered to enter into contracts,—the serf receiving freedom, the master receiving payment in instalments.

It was a moderate innovation, *very moderate*,—nothing more than the first failure of the first Alexander. Yet, even here, that old timidity of Nicholas nearly spoiled what little good was hidden in the ukase. Notice after notice was given to the serf-owners that they were not to be molested, that no emancipation was contemplated, and that the ukase “contained nothing new.”

The result was as feeble as the policy. A few serfs were emancipated, and Nicholas halted. The revolutions of 1848 increased his fear of innovation; and, finally, the war in the Crimea took from him the power of innovation.



The great man died. We saw his cold, dead face, in the midst of crowns and crosses, —very pale then, very powerless then. One might stare at him then, as at a serf's corpse; for he who had scared Europe during thirty years lay before us that day as a poor lump of chilled brain and withered muscle.



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And we stood by, when, amid chanting, and flare of torches, and roll of cannon, his sons wrapped him in his shroud of gold-thread, and lowered him into the tomb of his fathers.

But there was shown in those days far greater tribute than the prayers of bishops or the reverence of ambassadors. Massed about the Winter Palace, and the Fortress of Peter and Paul, stood thousands on thousands who, in far-distant serf-huts, had put on their best, had toiled wearily to the capital, to give their last mute thanks to one who for years had stood between their welfare and their owners' greed. Sad that he had not done more. Yet they knew that he had *wished* their freedom,—that he had loathed their wrongs: for *that* came up the tribute of millions.

The new Emperor, Alexander II., had never been hoped for as one who could light the nation from his brain: the only hope was that he might warm the nation, somewhat, from his heart. He was said to be of a weak, silken fibre. The strength of the family was said to be concentrated in his younger brother Constantine.

But soon came a day when the young Tzar revealed to Europe not merely kindness, but strength.

While his father's corpse was yet lying within his palace, he received the diplomatic body. As the Emperor entered the audience-room, he seemed feeble indeed for such a crisis. That fearful legacy of war seemed to weigh upon his heart; marks of plenteous tears were upon his face; Nesselrode, though old and bent and shrunk in stature, seemed stronger than his young master.

But, as he began his speech, it was seen that a strong man had mounted the throne.

With earnestness he declared that he sorrowed over the existing war,—but that, if the Holy Alliance had been broken, it was not through the fault of Russia. With bitterness he turned toward the Austrian Minister, Esterhazy, and hinted at Russian services in 1848 and Austrian ingratitude. Calmly, then, not as one who spoke a part, but as one who announced a determination, he declared,—“I am anxious for peace; but if the terms at the approaching congress are incompatible with the honor of my nation, I will put myself at the head of my faithful Russia and die sooner than yield.”[J]

[Footnote J: This sketch is given from notes taken at the audience.]

Strong as Alexander showed himself by these words, he showed himself stronger by acts. A policy properly mingling firmness and conciliation brought peace to Europe, and showed him equal to his father; a policy mingling love of liberty with love of order brought the dawn of prosperity to Russia, and showed him the superior of his father.

The reforms now begun were not stinted, as of old, but free and hearty. In rapid succession were swept away restrictions on telegraphic communication,—on printing,



—on the use of the Imperial Library,—on strangers entering the country,—on Russians leaving the country. A policy in public works was adopted which made Nicholas's greatest efforts seem petty: a vast net-work of railways was commenced. A policy in commercial dealings with Western Europe was adopted, in which Alexander, though not apparently so imposing as Nicholas, was really far greater: he dared advance toward freedom of trade.



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But soon rose again that great problem of old,—that problem ever rising to meet a new Autocrat, and, at each appearance, more dire than before,—the serf-question.

The serfs in private hands now numbered more than twenty millions; above them stood more than a hundred thousand owners.

The princely strength of the largest owners was best represented by a few men possessing over a hundred thousand serfs each, and, above all, by Count Scheremetieff, who boasted three hundred thousand. The luxury of the large owners was best represented by about four thousand men possessing more than a thousand serfs each. The pinching propensities of the small owners were best represented by nearly fifty thousand men possessing less than twenty serfs each.[K]

[Footnote K: Gerebtzoff, *Histoire de la Civilisation en Russie*,—Wolowski, in *Revue des Deux Mondes*,—and Tegoborski, *Commentaries on the Productive Forces of Russia*, Vol. I. p. 221.]

The serfs might be divided into two great classes. The first comprised those working under the old, or *corvee*, system,—giving, generally, three days in the week to the tillage of the owner's domain; the second comprised those working under the new, or *obrok*, system,—receiving a payment fixed by the owner and assessed by the community to which the serfs belonged.

The character of the serfs has been moulded by the serf-system.

They have a simple shrewdness, which, under a better system, had made them enterprising; but this quality has degenerated into cunning and cheaterly,—the weapons which the hopelessly oppressed always use.

They have a reverence for things sacred, which, under a better system, might have given the nation a strengthening religion; but they now stand among the most religious peoples on earth, and among the least moral. To the besmudged picture of Our Lady of Kazan they are ever ready to burn wax and oil; to Truth and Justice they constantly omit the tribute of mere common honesty. They keep the Church fasts like saints; they keep the Church feasts like satyrs.

They have a curiosity, which, under a better system, had made them inventive; but their plough in common use is behind the plough described by Virgil.

They have a love of gain, which, under a better system, had made them hard-working; but it takes ten serfs to do languidly and poorly what two free men in America do quickly and well.

They are naturally a kind people; but let one example show how serfage can transmute kindness.



It is a rule well known in Russia, that, when an accident occurs, interference is to be left to the police. Hence you shall see a man lying in a fit, and the bystanders giving no aid, but waiting for the authorities.

Some years since, as all the world remembers, a theatre took fire in St. Petersburg, and crowds of people were burned or stifled. The whole story is not so well known. That theatre was but a great temporary wooden shed,—such as is run up every year at the holidays, in the public squares. When the fire burst forth, crowds of peasants hurried to the spot; but though they heard the shrieks of the dying,—separated from them only by a thin planking,—only one man, in all that multitude, dared cut through and rescue some of the sufferers.



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The serfs, when standing for great ideas, will die rather than yield. The first Napoleon learned this at Eylau,—the third Napoleon learned it at Sevastopol; yet in daily life they are slavish beyond belief. On a certain day in the year 1855, the most embarrassed man in all the Russias was, doubtless, our excellent American Minister. The serf-coachman employed at wages was called up to receive his discharge for drunkenness. Coming into the presence of a sound-hearted American democrat, who had never dreamed of one mortal kneeling to another, Ivan throws himself on his knees, presses his forehead to the Minister's feet, fawns like a tamed beast, and refuses to move until the Minister relieves himself from this nightmare of servility by a full pardon.

The whole working of the system has been fearful.

Time after time, we have entered the serf field and serf hut,—have seen the simple round of serf toils and sports,—have heard the simple chronicles of serf joys and sorrows. But whether his livery were filthy sheepskin or gold-laced caftan,—whether he lay on carpets at the door of his master, or in filth on the floor of his cabin,—whether he gave us cold, stupid stories of his wrongs, or flippant details of his joys,—whether he blessed his master or cursed him,—we have wondered at the power which a serf-system has to degrade and imbrute the image of God.

But astonishment was increased a thousand fold at study of the reflex influence for evil upon the serf-owners themselves,—upon the whole free community,—upon the very soil of the whole country.

On all those broad plains of Russia, on the daily life of that serf-owning aristocracy, on the whole class which is neither of serfs nor serf-owners, the curse of God is written in letters so big and so black that all mankind may read them.

Farms are untilled, enterprise deadened, invention crippled, education neglected; life is of little value; labor is the badge of servility,—laziness the very badge and passport of gentility.

Despite the most specious half-measures,—despite all efforts to galvanize it, to coax life into it, to sting life into it, the nation has remained stagnant. Not one traveller who does not know that the evils brought on that land by the despotism of the Autocrat are as nothing compared to that dark net-work of curses spread over it by a serf-owning aristocracy.

Into the conflict with this evil Alexander II. entered manfully.

Having been two years upon the throne, having made a plan, having stirred some thought through certain authorized journals, he inspires the nobility in three of the northwestern provinces to memorialize him in regard to emancipation.



Straightway an answer is sent, conveying the outlines of the Emperor's plan. The period of transition from serfage to freedom is set at twelve years; at the end of that time the serf is to be fully free, and possessor of his cabin, with an adjoining piece of land. The provincial nobles are convoked to fill out these outlines with details as to the working out by the serfs of a fair indemnity to their masters.



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The whole world is stirred; but that province in which the Tzar hoped most eagerly for a movement to meet him—the province where beats the old Muscovite heart, Moscow—is stirred least of all. Every earnest throb seems stifled there by that strong aristocracy.

Yet Moscow moves at last. Some nobles who have not yet arrived at the callous period, some Professors in the University who have not yet arrived at the heavy period, breathe life into the mass, drag on the timid, fight off the malignant.

The movement has soon a force which the retrograde party at Moscow dare not openly resist. So they send answers to St. Petersburg apparently favorable; but wrapped in their phrases are hints of difficulties, reservations, impossibilities.

All this studied suggestion of difficulties profits the reactionists nothing. They are immediately informed that the Imperial mind is made up,—that the business of the Muscovite nobility is now to arrange that the serf be freed in twelve years, and put in possession of homestead and inclosure.

The next movement of the retrograde party is to *misunderstand* everything. The plainest things are found to need a world of debate,—the simplest things become entangled,—the noble assemblies play solemnly a ludicrous game at cross-purposes.

Straightway comes a notice from the Emperor, which, stripped of official verbiage, says that they *must* understand. This sets all in motion again. Imperial notices are sent to province after province, explanatory documents are issued, good men and strong are set to talk and work.

The nobility of Moscow now make another move. To scare back the advancing forces of emancipation, they elect as provincial leaders three nobles bearing the greatest names of old Russia, and haters of the new ideas.

To defeat these comes a miracle.

There stands forth a successor of Saint Gregory and Saint Bavon,—one who accepts that deep mediaeval thought, that, when God advances great ideas, the Church must marshal them, or go under,—Philarete, Metropolitan of Moscow. The Church, as represented in him, is no longer scholastic,—it is become apostolic. He upholds emancipation,—condemns its foes; his earnest eloquence carries all.

The work having progressed unevenly,—nobles in different governments differing in plan and aim,—an assembly of delegates is brought together at St Petersburg to combine and perfect a resultant plan under the eye of the Emperor.

The Grand Council of the Empire, too, is set at the work. It is a most unpromising body,—yet the Emperor's will stirs it.



The opposition now make the most brilliant stroke of their campaign. Just as James II. of England prated toleration and planned the enslavement of all thought, so now the bigoted plotters against emancipation begin to prate of Constitutional Liberty.

Had they been fighting Nicholas, this would doubtless have accomplished its purpose. He would have become furious, and in his fury would have wrecked reform. But Alexander bears right on. It is even hinted that visions of a constitutional monarchy please him.



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But then come tests of Alexander's strength far more trying. Masses of peasants, hearing vague news of emancipation,—learning, doubtless, from their masters' own spiteful lips that the Emperor is endeavoring to tear away property in serfs,—take the masters at their word, and determine to help the Emperor. They rise in insurrection.

To the bigoted serf-owners this is a godsend. They parade it in all lights; therewith they throw life into all the old commonplaces on the French Revolution; timid men of good intentions begin to waver. The Tzar will surely now be scared back.

Not so. Alexander now hurls his greatest weapon, and stuns reaction in a moment. He frees all the serfs on the Imperial estates without reserve. Now it is seen that he is in earnest; the opponents are disheartened; once more the plan moves and drags them on.

But there came other things to dishearten the Emperor; and not least of these was the attitude of those who moulded popular thought in England.

Be it said here to the credit of France, that from her came constant encouragement in the great work. Wolowski, Mazade, and other true-hearted men sent forth from leading reviews and journals words of sympathy, words of help, words of cheer.

Not so England. Just as, in the French Revolution of 1789, while yet that Revolution was noble and good, while yet Lafayette and Bailly held it, leaders in English thought who had quickened the opinions which had caused the Revolution sent malignant prophecies and prompted foul blows,—just as, in this our own struggle, leaders in English thought who have helped create the opinion which has brought on this struggle now deal treacherously with us,—so, in this battle of Alexander against a foul wrong, they seized this time of all times to show all the wrongs and absurdities of which Russia ever had been or ever might be guilty,—criticized, carped, sent plentifully haughty advice, depressing sympathy, malignant prophecy.

Review-articles, based on no real knowledge of Russia, announced desire for serf-emancipation,—and then, in the modern English way, with plentiful pyrotechnics of antithesis and paradox, threw a gloomy light into the skilfully pictured depths of Imperial despotism, official corruption, and national bankruptcy.

They revived Old-World objections, which, to one acquainted with the most every-day workings of serfage, were ridiculous.

It was said, that, if the serfs lost the protection of their owners, they might fall a prey to rapacious officials. As well might it have been argued that a mother should never loose her son from her apron-strings.



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It was said that “serfism excludes pauperism,”—that, if the serf owes work to his owner in the prime of life, the owner owes support to his serf in the decline of life. No lie could be more absurd to one who had seen Russian life. We were first greeted, on entering Russia, by a beggar who knelt in the mud; at Kovno eighteen beggars besieged the coach,—and Kovno was hardly worse than scores of other towns; within a day’s ride of St. Petersburg a woman begged piteously for means to keep soul and body together, and finished the refutation of that sonorous English theory,—for she had been discharged from her master’s service in the metropolis as too feeble, and had been sent back to his domain, afar in the country, on foot and without money.

It was said that freed peasants would not work. But, despite volleys of predictions that they *would* not work if freed, despite volleys of assertions that they *could* not work if freed, the peasants, when set free, and not crushed by regulations, have sprung to their work with an earnestness, and continued it with a vigor, at which the philosophers of the old system stand aghast. The freed peasants of Wologda compare favorably with any in Europe.

And when the old tirades had grown stale, English writers drew copiously from a new source,—from “*La Verite sur la Russie*,”—pleasingly indifferent to the fact that the author’s praise in a previous work had notoriously been a thing of bargain and sale, and that there was in full process of development a train of facts which led the Parisian courts to find him guilty of demanding in one case a “blackmail” of fifty thousand roubles.[L]

[Footnote L: *Proces en Diffamation du Prince Simon Worontzoff contre le Prince Pierre Dolgornokow*. Leipzig, 1862]

All this argument outside the Empire helped the foes of emancipation inside the Empire.

But the Emperor met the whole body of his opponents with an argument overwhelming. On the 5th of March, 1861, he issued his manifesto making the serfs FREE. He had struggled long to make some satisfactory previous arrangement; his motto now became, Emancipation first, Arrangement afterward. Thus was the *result* of the great struggle decided; but, to this day, the after-arrangement remains undecided. The Tzar offers gradual indemnity; the nobles seem to prefer fire and blood. Alexander stands firm; the last declaration brought across the water was that he would persist in reforms.

But, whatever the after-process, THE SERFS ARE FREE.

The career before Russia is hopeful indeed; emancipation of her serfs has set her fully in that career. The vast mass of her inhabitants are of a noble breed, combining the sound mind of the Indo-Germanic races with the tough muscle of the northern plateaus of Asia. In no other country on earth is there such unity in language, in degree of

cultivation, and in basis of ideas. Absolutely the same dialect is spoken by lord and peasant, in capital and in province.



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And, to an American thinker, more hopeful still for Russia is the patriarchal democratic system,—spreading a primary political education through the whole mass. Leaders of their hamlets and communities are voted for; bodies of peasants settle the partition of land and assessments in public meetings; discussions are held; votes are taken; and though Tzar's right and nobles' right are considered far above people's right, yet this rude democratic schooling is sure to keep bright in the people some sparks of manliness and some glow of free thought.

In view, too, of many words and acts of the present Emperor, it is not too much to hope, that, ere many years, Russia will become a constitutional monarchy.

So shall Russia be made a power before which all other European powers shall be pigmies.

Before the close of the year in which we now stand, there is to be celebrated at Nijnii-Novogorod the thousandth anniversary of the founding of Russia. Then is to rise above the domes and spires of that famed old capital a monument to the heroes of Russian civilization.

Let the sculptor group about its base Rurik and his followers, who in rude might hewed out strongholds for the coming nation. Let goodly place be given to Minime and Pojarski, who drove forth barbarian invaders,—goodly place also to Platov and Kutusov, who drove forth civilized invaders. Let there be high-placed niches for Ivan the Great, who developed order,—for Peter the Great, who developed physical strength,—for Derjavine and Karamsin, who developed moral and mental strength. Let Philarete of Moscow stand forth as he stood confronting with Christ's gospel the traffickers in flesh and blood. In loving care let there be wrought the face and form of Alexander the First,—the Kindly.

But, crowning all, let there lord it a noble statue to the greatest of Russian benefactors in all these thousand years,—to the Warrior who restored peace,—to the Monarch who had faith in God's will to make order, and in man's will to keep order,—to the Christian Patriot who made forty millions of serfs forty millions of *men*,—to Alexander the Second,—ALEXANDER THE EARNEST.

* * * * *

MR. AXTELL.

PART IV.

I said that the afternoon sunlight poured its rain into the church-yard. It was four of the clock when Aaron left me.



The dream that I had received impression of still dwelt in active remembrance, and a little fringe from the greater glory mine eyes had seen went trailing in flows of light along the edge of earth, as if saying unto it, "Arise and behold what I am!"

One child habiting earth dared to lift eyes into the awful arch of air, wherein are laid the foundation-stones of the crystalline wall, and, beholding drops of Infinite Love, garnered one, and, walking forth with it in her heart, went into the church-yard,—a regret arising that the graves that held the columns fallen from the family-corridor had found so little of place within affection's realm. The regret, growing into resolution, hastened her steps, that went unto the place devoted to the dead Percivals. It was in a corner,—the corner wherein grew the pine-tree of the hills.



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“A peaceful spot of earth,” I thought, as I went into the hedged inclosure, and shut myself in with the gleaming marble, and the low-hanging evergreens that waved their green arms to ward ill away from those they had grown up among. “It is long since the ground has been broken here,” I thought,—“so long!” And I looked upon a monumental stone to find there recorded the latest date of death. It was eighteen hundred and forty-four,—my mother’s,—and I looked about and sought her grave. The grass seemed crispy and dry. I sat down by this grave. I leaned over it, and looked into the tangled net-work of dead fibres held fast by some link of the past to living roots underneath. I plucked some of them, and in idlest of fancies looked closely to see if deeds or thoughts of a summer gone had been left upon them. “No! I’ve had enough of fancies for one day; I’ll have no more to-night,” I thought; and I wished for something to do. I longed for action whereon to imprint my new impress of resolution. It came in a guise I had not calculated upon.

“It’s very wrong of you to sit upon that damp ground, Miss Percival.”

The words evidently were addressed to me, sitting hidden in among the evergreens. I looked up and answered,—

“It is not damp, Mr. Axtell.”

He was leaning upon the iron railing outside of the hedge.

“Will you come away from that cold, damp place?” he went on.

“I’m not ready to leave yet,” I said, and never moved. I asked,—

“How is your sister since morning?”

I thought him offended. He made no reply,—only walked away and went into the church close by.

“One can never know the next mood that one of these Axtells will take,” I said to myself, in the stillness that followed his going. “He might have answered me, at least.” Then I reproached Anna Percival for cherishing uncharity towards tried humanity. There’s a way appointed for escape, I know, and I sought it, burying my face in my hands, and leaning over the stillness of my mother’s heart. I heard steps drawing near. Looking up, I saw Mr. Axtell entering the inclosure. He had brought one of the church pew-cushions.

“Will you rise?” he asked.

He did not bring the cushion to where I was; he carried it around and spread it in a vacant spot between two graves, the place left beside my mother for my precious father’s white hairs to be laid in. Having deposited it there, he looked at me, evidently expecting that I would avail myself of his kindness. I wanted to refuse. I felt perfectly



comfortable where I was. I should have done so, had not my intention been intercepted by a shaft of expression that crossed my vein of humor unexpectedly. It was only a look from out of his eyes. They were absolutely colorless,—not white, not black, but a strange mingling of all hues made them everything to my view,—and yet so full of coloring that no one ray came shining out and said, “I’m blue, or black, or gray;” but something said, if not the mandate of color, “Obey!”



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I did.

“Sacrilege!” I said. “It is a place for worship.”

“Whose grave is this?” Mr. Axtell asked, as he bent down and laid his hand upon the sod. It was upon the one next beyond my mother’s; between the two it was that he had placed the cushion.

“The head-stone is just there. You can read, can you not?” I asked, with a spice of malice, because for the second time this barbaric gentleman had commanded me to obey.

He lifted himself up, leaned against the towering family-monument, and slowly said,—

“Miss Percival, it is very hard for an Axtell to forgive.”

I thought of the face in the Upper Country, and asked,—

“Why?”

“Because the Creator has almost deprived them of forgiving power. Don’t tempt one of them to sin by giving occasion for the exercise of that wherein they mourn at being deficient.”

I pulled dead grassy fibres again, and said nothing.

The second time he bent to the mound of earth, and said,—

“Please tell me now, Miss Anna, whose grave this is;” and there were tears in his eyes that made them for the moment grandly brown.

“Truly, Mr. Axtell, I do not know. I’ve been so busy with the living that I’ve not thought much of this place. It long since all these died, you know;” and I looked about upon the little village closed in by the iron railing. “I do not know that I can tell you one, save my mother’s, here. I remember her; the others I cannot.”

I arose to walk around to the headstone and see.

“No,” he said. “Will you listen to me a little while?”

“If you’ll sing for me.”

“Sing for you?”—and there was a world of reproach in his meaning. “Is this a place for songs? or am I a man to sing?”



"Why not, Mr. Axtell? Aaron told me that you could sing, if you would; he has heard you."

"I will sing for you," he said, "if, after I am done, you choose to hear the song I sing."

I thought again of Miss Lettie, and put the question, once unheeded, concerning her.

"She is better. Your sister is a charming nurse."

A long quiet ensued; in it came the memory of Dr. Eaton's interest in the young girl's face.

"Is Mr. Axtell an artist?" I asked, after the silence.

"Mr. Axtell is a church-sexton," was the response.

"Cannot he be both sexton and artist?"

"How can he?"

"You have a strange way of telling me that I ought not to question you," I said, vexed at his non-committal words and manner.

He changed the subject widely, when next he spoke.

"Have you the letter that you picked up last night?" he asked.

"Yes, Mr. Axtell."

"Give it to me, please."

"Did Miss Lettie commission you to ask?"

"She did not."

"Then I cannot give it to you."

"Cannot give me my sister's letter?"



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"It was to *me* that it was intrusted."

"And you are afraid to trust me with it?"

"I am afraid to break the trust reposed in myself."

Again the black roll of silent thunder gloomed on his brow; as once his sister's eyes had been, his now were coruscant.

"Do you refuse to give it to me?" he demanded.

"I do," I said, "now, and until Miss Lettie says, 'Give.'"

"You've learned the contents, I presume," he said, with untold sarcasm. "Woman's curiosity digs deeply, when once aroused."

"You've been taught of woman in a sad school, I fear. I'll forgive the faults of your education, Mr. Axtell. Have you any more remarks to me? I'm waiting."

"Do you know the contents of the letter that made Lettie so anxious?"

"You accused me before questioning formerly, or I should have given you truth. I have no knowledge of what is in the letter."

He had resumed his former position, leaning against the monument, where I had mine. He changed it now, drawing nearer for an instant, then went to the side of the grave that he had asked me concerning, kneeled there, laid two hands above it, and said,—

"Letty was right, Miss Anna. God has made you well,—made you after the similitude of her who sleeps underneath this sod. Will you forgive my rudeness?"

And he looked down as I had done, ere he came, into the tangled, matted fibres, then out into the great all-where of air, as if some mysterious presence encompassed him.

Very lowly I said,—

"Forgiveness is of God;" and I remembered the vision that came in my dream. The little voice that steals into hearts crowded with emotions, and tells tiny nerves of wish which way to fly, went whispering through the niches of my mind, "Tell the dream."

Mr. Axtell went back to his monumental resting-place. I said,—

"I have had a wonderful dream to-day;" and I began to tell the opening thereof.

The first sentence was not told when I stopped, suddenly. I could not go on. He asked me, "Why?" I only re-uttered what I felt, that I could not tell it.



“Oh! I have had a dream,” he said,—“one that for eighteen years has been hung above my days and woven into my nights,—a great, hopeless woof of doom. I have tried to broider it with gold, I have tried to hang silver-bells upon the drooping corners thereof. I have tried to fold it about me and wear it, as other men wear sorrows, for the sun of heaven and the warmth of society to draw the wrinkled creases out. I have striven to fold it up, and lay it by in the arbor-vitae chest of memory, with myrrh and camphor, but it will not be exorcised. No, no! it hangs firm as granite, stiff as the axis of the sun, unapproachable as the aurora of the North. Miss Percival, could you wear such a vestment in the march of life?”

“Your dream is too mystical; will you tell me what it has done for you? As yet, I only know what you have not done with it.”



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“What it has done for me?”—and he went slowly on, thinking half aloud, as if the idea were occurring for the first time.

“It touched me one soft summer day, before the earth became mildewed and famine-stricken. I was a proud, wilful Axtell boy; all the family traits were written with a white-hot pen on me. My will, my great high will, went ringing chimes of what I would do through the house where I was born, where my mother has just died, and I swung this right arm forth into the air of existence, and said, ‘I will do what I will; men shall say I am a master in the land.’

“My father sent me away from home for education. I walked with intrepid mind through the course where others halted, weary, overladen, unfit for burden.

“To gain the valedictory oration was one goal that I had said I would attain to. I did. That was nineteen years ago. I came home in the soft, hot, August-time. It was the close of the month. The moon was at its highest flood of light. I was at the highest tide of will-might. That night, if any one had told me I could not do that which I had a wish to accomplish, I would have made my desire triumphant, or death would have been my only conqueror. Oh! it is dreadful to have such a nature handed down from the dark past, and thrust into one’s life, to be battled with, to be hewn down at last, unless the lightning of God’s wrath cleaves into the spirit and wakes up the volcano, which forever after emits only fire and sulphur. There’s yet one way more, after the lightning-stroke comes,—something unutterable, something that canopies the soul with doom, and forever the spirit tries to raise its wings and fly away, but every uplifting strikes fire, until, singed, scorched, burnt, wings grow useless, and droop down, never more to be uplifted.”

Mr. Axtell drooped his arms, as if typical of the wings he had described. Borne away by the excitement of his words, he stood straight up against the far-away sky, with the verdure of Norway-evergreens soothingly waving their green around him. There was a magnificence of mien in the man, that made my spirit say—

“The Deity made that man for great deeds.”

He glanced down at the grave once more, and resumed:—

“I came home that August night. The prairie of Time rolled out limitless before my imagination. I built pyramids of fame; I laid the foundation of Babel once more, in my heart,—for I said, ‘My name shall touch the stars,—my name! Abraham Axtell!’ It is only written in earth, ground to powder, to-day.”

“An atom of earth’s powder may be a star to eyes vast enough to see the fulness that dwells therein, until to angelic vision our planet stands out a universe of starry suns,



each particle of dust luminous with eternities of limitless space between,” I said, as he, pausing, stooped, and stirred the crisp grass, to outline his name there.

“All things are possible,” he murmured, “but the rending of my mantle of doom.”



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He looked from the tracing of his name to the west.

“The sun is going down once more,” he said, and bowed his head, as one does, waiting for pastoral benediction. His eyes were fixed now, as I had seen his sister’s held, but his lips poured out words.

“The moonlight sheened the earth, hot and heavy and still, that night. My father, mother, and Lettie were in the home where you have seen sorrow come. Up from the sea came the low, hollow boom of surges rising over the crust of land.

“‘To the sea, to the sea, let us go!’ I cried; ‘it is the very night to tread the hall of moonbeams that leads to palace of pearls!’

“My mother was weary; she would have stayed at home, but I was her pearl of price; she forgot herself. You know the stream that comes down from the mountain and empties into the ocean. It was in that stream that my boat floated, and a long walk away. Lettie left us. Just after we started, I missed her, and asked where she had gone.

“‘You’ll see soon,’ replied my mother; and even as I looked back, I saw Lettie following, with a shadow other than her own falling on the midsummer grass. She did not hasten; she did not seek to come up with us. My mother was walking beside me.

“Thus we came to the river, at the place where it wanders out into the ocean. I saw my boat, my River-Ribbon, floating its cable-length, but never more, and undulating to the throbs of tide that pulsated along the blue vein of water, heralding the motion of the heart outside. We stopped there. The moon was set in the firmament high and fast, as when it was made to rule the night. The hall of light, lit up along the twinkling way of waters, looked shining and beckoning in its wavy ways of grace, a very home for the restless spirit. I wanted to thread its labyrinth of sparkles; I wanted to cool my wings of desire in its phosphorescent dew. I said,—

“‘I am going out upon the sea.’

“My mother seemed troubled.

“‘Abraham, the boat is unsafe; the water comes through. See! it is half full now’; and she pointed to where it lay in the stream, lined with a mimic portraiture of the endless corridor of moonlight that went playing across the bit of water it held.

“‘This is childish, this is folly,’ I thought, ‘to be stayed on such a *spirit* mission by a few cups of water in a boat! What shall I ever accomplish in life, if I yield thus?—and without waiting to more than half hear, certainly not to obey, my father’s stern ‘Stay on shore, Abraham,’ I went down the bank, stepped into a bit of a bark, and pushed it into the stream, where my boat was now rocking on the strengthened flow of ocean’s rise.



“I came to the boat, bailed out the water with a tin cup that lay floating inside, and calling back to land, 'Go home without me; do not wait,' I took the oars, and in my River-Ribbon, set free from its anchorage, I commenced rowing against the tide. I looked back to the bank I was fast leaving. I saw figures standing there.



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“They’ll go home soon,’ I said, and I turned my eyes steadfastly toward the sheeny track, all crimped and curled with fibrous net-work, and rowed on.

“It was a glorious night,—a night when one toss of a mermaid’s hair, made visible above the waters, as she flew along the track I was pursuing, would have been worth a life of rowing against this incoming tide.

“You have never tried to row, Miss Anna. You don’t know how hard it is to push a boat out of a river when the sea sends up full veins to course the strong arms she reaches up into the land.”

For one moment, as he addressed me, his eyes lost their rapt look; they went back to it, and he to his story.

“I saw the fin of a shark dancing in the waves. Sharks were nothing for me. I did not look down into my boat. No, men never do; they look *beyond where they are*. They’re a sorry race, Miss Anna.

“The shark went down after some bit of prey more delicious than I. My will would have been hard for him to manage. I forgot the shark. I forgot the figures standing, waiting on the shore that I had left, ere Lettie and the shadow that walked with her, whatever it was, had come to it. I forgot everything but the phosphorescent dew that would cool my spirit, athirst for what I knew not, ravenous for refreshment, searching for manna where it never grew. The plaudits of yesterday were ringing in my ears, the wavelets danced to their music, my oars kept time to the vanity measure of my beating mind. Still I was not content. I wanted something more. A faded flower, an althea-bud, was still pendent from my coat. I had taken it out from the mass of flowers with which I had been honored. I noticed it now. The moon dewed it over with its yellowness. ‘An offering to the sea-nymphs!’ I said, and I cast it forth into the wide field. It did not go down, as I had fancied it would. No, it went on, whither the movement of the ceaseless dance of motion carried it. I leaned upon my oars and watched it until it went out of the illuminated track. I was now in the bay, outside the river. I looked once more shoreward. I had threaded the curve of the stream, and could not see around the point. No living human thing was in sight. I was alone with Nature in the night, when she looks down glories, and spreads out fields where we long to walk, and our footsteps are fast in clay. I was not far from shore; it lay dark behind me; it was only before that I could see. As I paused in my rowing to watch the althea-bud set afloat, I heard a tiny splash in the waters.

“A school of fish flashing up a moment,’ I thought, and did not further heed it.”

The man looked as if he were now out at sea. He turned his head the least bit: the effect against the sky was fine. He had an attitude of watching and listening.

“I saw an object before me moving on the waters. I looked down. The water was rising in my own boat. I could not heed it just now.



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“In a moment,’ I thought, ‘I would stop to bail it out.’

“It was a boat that I saw. It moved on so swiftly,—the chime of the oars, tiny oars they were, was so sweetly, softly musical, the very dripping drops fell so like globules of silver, that I forgot my mission. I held my oars and waited. At last—how long it seemed!—I saw the boat come into the bridge of light. I saw fair, golden hair let loose to the sea-breezes that began to blow. I saw two hands striving with the oars. I saw the owner of the hair and of the hands, a young girl, sitting in that boat, coming right across the way where I ought to be going. “Does she mean to stay me?’ I said, and even then my will rose up.

“I bent to the oars; but whilst I had watched her, my boat had been rapidly filling. I was forced to stay. My feet were already in the waves. Right across my pathway she came, close up to my filling boat.

“Her eyes were in the shadow, the moon being behind, but her voice rang out these words:—

“Mr. Axtell, you’re committing a great sin. You’re putting your own life in peril. You’re killing your mother. I have come to stay you. Will you come on shore?’

“I only looked at her. When I found voice, it was to ask,—

“Who are you?’

“Who I am doesn’t matter now. Drowning men mustn’t ask questions’; and, putting one oar within my boat, now more than half filled, she drew her own to its side, and said,—
“Come in.’

“Conquered by a woman,’ I thought. ‘Never!’—and I began to search for the cup, that I might give back to the sea its intruding contents.

“I had left it in the other boat.

“Conquered by thine own sin,’ said the young girl, still holding fast to my boat.

“Not so easily, fairy, or whoe’er thou art,’ I said; for I saw that her boat was well furnished with both bailing-bowl and sponge, and I reached out for them, saying, ‘I’m going on the track, farther out.’

“She divined my intent, and quick as was my thought were her two hands; she cast both bowl and sponge into the sea.



“‘Mr. Axtell,’ she said; ‘there’s a power in the world greater than your own. The sooner you yield, the less you’ll feel the thorns. Your mother, on the shore, is suffering agonies for you. Will you come into this boat, now?’

“The boats had floated around a little, and had changed places. I looked into her eyes; there was nothing there that said, ‘I’m trying to conquer you.’ There was something in them that I had never seen made visible on earth before,—something radiant, with a might of right, that made me yield. She saw that I was coming. I lifted my feet out of the inches of water that had nearly filled it, put my oars across her tiny boat, and, leaving my own River-Ribbon to its fate, I entered that wherein my preserver had come out. I took the oars from her passive hands; she went to the front of the boat



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and left me master of the small ship. I turned its prow homeward. My preserver sat motionless, her eyes in the moon, for aught of notice she took of me. I was going toward the river; she bade me keep to the bay-shore, at the right. I obeyed. No more words were spoken until we were almost to land. I saw a little bulb afloat. The boat went near. I put out my oar and drew it in. It was the althea-bud that I had offered to the sea-nymphs.

“The mermaids refuse my offering,’ I said; ‘will you accept it?’—and I handed it, dripping with salt-water, to the fairy who sat so silently before me.

“She took it, pointed to a little sheltered cove between two outstanding ledges of rock, and said,—

“This is boatie’s home,—see if you can guide her safely in.’

“The keel grated on the gravelly beach, the boat struck home. The young girl did not wait for me, she landed first, and, handing me a tiny key, said,—

“Draw my boat up out of reach of the tide, make it fast, please,’—and she sped away into the dreamy darkness of the land, whose shadows the moon did not yet reach, leaving me alone on the shore.

“I obeyed her orders implicitly, and then followed. It was not far from this sheltered cove that I met those with whom I had come. My mother was sitting upon one of the sea-shore rocks, passive, but stony. The young girl had just been speaking to her, she must have been saying that ‘I was come back,’ but my mother had not heeded. It was only in sight that her reason came, but, oh! such a deluge of gladness came to her when she saw me!

“‘I was dying,’ she said; ‘you’ve come back to save me, Abraham.’

“My father did not speak then, he lifted my mother from off the stone, and together we three walked home. Lettie lingered, the shadow with her. Was that the young girl? I could not quite discern.”

Mr. Axtell stopped in his narration, walked out of the village of Dead Percivals, and to his mother’s new-made grave. He came back soon.

“Miss Percival,” he said, “two days ago you said, ‘it was the strangest thing that ever you saw man do, to dig his mother’s grave.’ It was a work begun long ago; the first stroke was that August night; it is nearly nineteen years ago. What do you think of it now?”



“As I thought then, Mr. Axtell.”

He stood near me now. He went on.

“That young girl saved my life that night, Miss Percival. Ere we reached home, a violent, sudden thunder-storm came down, with wind and rain, and terrible strokes of lightning. We took shelter in another house than home. Lettie and my preserver followed.”

Another long pause came, a gathering together of the forces of his nature, typical of the still hotness of the August night of which he spoke, and after the ominous rest he emitted ponderous words. They came like crackles of rattling electricity. I could taste it.

“Miss Percival, look at me one moment.”



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I obeyed.

“Do I look like a murderer?”

“I don’t know.”

“Don’t turn your eyes away; do you know what certain words in this world mean?”

“Signal one, and I will answer.”

He looked so leonic that I felt the least bit in the world like running away, but decided to stay, as he was just within my pathway of escape.

“Do you know what it is, what it means, when a human soul calls out from its highest heights to another mortal, ‘Thou art mine’?”

I do not think he expected an answer, but I answered a round, full, truthful, “No.”

“Then let it be the theme of thanksgiving,” he said. “That fair young girl is here now. I feel her sacred presence. She does not save me from my imperious will.

“Do you know, Miss Percival,” he suddenly resumed, “do you know that you are here with Abraham Axtell, a man who has destroyed two lives: one slowly, surely, through years of suffering; the other, oh! the other—by a flash from God’s wrath, and for eighteen years my soul has cried out to her, ‘Thou art mine,’ and yet there is no response on earth, there can be none? Would you know the name of my preserver that night, come,”—and, bending down, he offered his hand to assist me in rising.

I had no faith in this man’s murderousness, whatever he might have done. He led me around to the head-stone of the grave which he had asked my knowledge of. Before I could see, he passed his hand across my eyes: how cold it was!

“When you see the name recorded here,” he said, “you will know who saved me that August night, whom my terrible will destroyed, drinking her young life up in one fell cup.”

His hand was withdrawn for one moment; my sight was blinded with the cold pressure on my eyes; then I read,—

MARY,
DAUGHTER OF
JULIUS AND MARY PERCIVAL,

DIED AUGUST 30th, 1843, AGED 17 YEARS.

“My sister,” I said



“Your sister, whom I killed.”

“Ere I was old enough to know her.”

“Have you one drop of mercy for him who destroyed your sister?” he asked,—and his haughty will was suffused in pleading.

I thought of the third figure in the celestial picture, as it gazed upon the outstretched hand, and I said,—

“God hath not made me your judge; why should I refuse mercy?”

A flash of intuition came. The young girl, whose portrait was in the house of the Axtells, whose face had been next my mother’s, who asked me to do something for her on the earth,—could they all be manifestations of Mary?

“Who painted the portrait in your house?” I asked.

“My will,” he said; “I am no artist.”

“Is it like Mary?”

“Yes.”

“Then I have this day seen her.”

He looked up, great tears falling from his eyes, and asked,—

“Where?”

I took him to the gallery of the clouds, and showed him my vision, and repeated the words spoken to me up there, the words for him only,—the others were full of mystery still. He held seemingly no part therein.



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“Will a murderer’s prayer add one ray of joy to the angel who has come out on the sea to save me,—me, twice saved, oh! why?”—and Mr. Axtell laid his hand upon my head in blessing.

“Twice saved,” I said, “that the third salvation may be Christ’s.”

Solemnly came the “Amen” from his lips, tremulous as the bridge of light he had once passed over.

“Good-bye, Mr. Axtell; I shall fulfil Mary’s wish for you, if you will let me;” and I offered him my hand for this second parting: the first had been when he went out alone to his mother’s burial.

He looked at it, as he then had done, uncomprehending, and said only,—

“Will I let you?”

He gathered up the cushion, and carried it to the church. I closed the gate that shut in this silent city, and went to the parsonage.

* * * * *

The sun had gone down,—the night was coming on. I found Aaron pacing the verandah with impatient steps. He asked where I had been. I told him.

“It is very well that you are going so soon,” he said,—“you are getting decidedly ghostly. Will you take a walk with me?”

I was thankful for the occasion. As might have been expected, Aaron chose the way that led to the solemn old house. I was amused.

“Where are you going?” I questioned.

“To inquire after our early-morning patient,” he said.

“And not to see Mrs. Aaron Wilton?”

Aaron looked the least mite retributive, as he said,—

“Anna, there are mysteries in life.”

“As, why Aaron was chosen before Moses,” I could not help suggesting. Sophie had had an opportunity of being Mrs. Moses, instead of Mrs. Aaron.

“Sophie’s wise; you are not, Anna, I fear.”



“Your fear may be the beginning of my wisdom, Aaron: I hope so.”

With the exception of a return to the subject on which Aaron had questioned me at breakfast, and on which he elicited no further information from me, nothing of interest occurred until we were within the place that held Sophie’s pearly self.

She had been a shower of sunshine, letting fall gold and silver drops through all the house. I saw them, heard their sweet glade-like music rippling everywhere, the moment that I went in.

Mr. Axtell was pacing the hall in the evening twilight, and the little of lamp-lustre that was shed into it.

He looked passively calm, heroically enduring, as we went past him. From his eyes came scintillations of a joy whose root is not in our planet.

He simply said,—

“Mrs. Wilton is with my sister; she will be glad to see you.”

We went on. Sophie had made a very nest of repose in the sick-room. Miss Axtell looked so comfortable, so untired of life, so changed from the first glimpse I had had of her, when I thought her face might be such as would be found under Dead-Sea waves. There was no more of the anxious unrest. She spoke to Mr. Wilton, thanking him for the “good gift,” she named Sophie, that he had lent to her.



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Miss Lettie called me to her. She wished to say something to me only. I bent my head to listen.

“I am ill,” she said,—“better just now, but I feel that it will be weeks before I shall leave this place; it is good for me to be here, but this troubles me,—I don’t like to think that I must take care of it; will you guard it sacredly for me?—and the letter of last night, add it to the others.”

She gave me a small package, carefully closed, and I saw that it was sealed.

From her manner, I fancied it was to be known to me alone, and, concealing it, I said,—

“I will keep it securely for you.”

Sophie came playfully up, and said,—

“Now, Anna, I’m empress here; no secret negotiations to overthrow my power.”

“I’m just going to say good-bye to Miss Axtell,” I said, “for I am going home to-morrow;” and I told her of the letter from father, that I had received.

Sophie got up a charming storm of regret and wrath, neither at my father for sending for me, nor at myself for going, but for the mysterious third personality that created the need for my departure.

Miss Lettie seemed to regret my coming absence still more than Sophie.

“I wanted you so much,” she said; “if I had only had you long ago, life would have been changed,” she whispered again, as Sophie turned to listen to some pretty nonsense that the grave minister poured into her ears through those windings of softly purplish hair.

“Will you make me one promise, only one?” said Miss Axtell.

I hesitated,—for promises are my religious fear, I do not like to make promises. They are like mile-stones to a thunder-storm. They note distances when the spirit is anxious only to cycle time and space.

She looked so earnest, so persuasive, that I yielded, and said that “consistency should be my only requirement.”

“It is not so immensely inconsistent, my Anemone; it is only that I want you to come back again. Two weeks will satisfy your father. Will you come to me on the twenty-fifth of March?”

“What for?” with my awkward persistency in questioning, I asked.



“Why, because I want to see you,—I wish you to write a letter for me,—and more than all, I want an advocate.”

I, smiling at the triplet of occasions, promised to come, if consistent.

Sophie was going home. She came up to drop a few last cheery words, to fall into the coming hours of night.

“You see how you’ve spoiled me by kindness, Mrs. Wilton,” Miss Lettie said. “I presume still further: I would like to see old Chloe; it is a long, long time since I’ve seen her. Would you let her come?” Sophie said that “it would renew Chloe’s youth; she certainly would send her.”

Good-byes were spoken, and we went down. Mr. Axtell was still treading the hall below. He thanked Sophie for her kindness to Miss Lettie, shook hands genially with Aaron, looked at me, and we were gone.



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I carried Miss Lettie's message to Chloe. She lifted up those great African orbs of hers as she might have done to the Mountains of the Moon in her native land.

"Now the heavens be praised!" said the honest soul,—“what for can that icy lady want to see old Chloe?”

I had carried the message under cover of one from my own heart. I knew that Chloe had lived with my mother until she died. I knew that she must know something regarding Mary, my sister, to whom, in all my life, I had scarcely given one thought, who died ere I was wise enough to know her. And so I began by asking,—

“Am I like my sister who died, Chloe?”

She brought back her eyes from gazing upon the lunar mountains.

“I don't know's you are 'xactly; but somehow you *did* look like her, up-stairs to-day, when you had them white things tied on your head.”

“Were you here when she died?” I asked.

“Oh, yes!”—old Chloe closed her eyes,—“it is one of the blessed things Chloe's Lord will let her 'member, up there;” and Chloe wiped her eyes, *in memoriam*.

“I don't remember her,” I said.

“No, how should you? you were wee little then.”

“What made her die, Chloe?”

“I reckon 't was because the angels wanted her more 'n me, Miss Anna.”

“Was she sick, Chloe?”

“How queer you questions, Miss Anna! Of course she was sick; she drooped in the August heat; they didn't think she was very sick; the master gave her some medicine one night, and left her sleeping, quiet as a lamb, and before morning came she went to heaven.”

“Who was the master, Chloe?”

“Why, you *is* getting stupid-like, child! Honey darling, don't you know that Master Percival, your father, was my master ever so many years?”—and she began notating them upon her fingers.



I interrupted the mathematical calculation by telling Chloe that three people were waiting for their tea.

“Two of ’em is my dear childers,” said Chloe,—who never would accept Aaron, even with all his goodness, into her heart; and she moved about with accelerated velocity in her daily orbit.

What could Mr. Axtell have meant by saying that he had killed Mary, who, Chloe had assured me, died peaceably in her father’s house? After disturbing the equilibrium of thought-realm, and nearly giving my mind a new axis of revolution, I decided to think no more of it. I could not, would not, believe that Abraham Axtell had gone up any Moriah of sacrifice, and been permitted to let fall the knife upon his victim. His life must have been a dream, an illusion; he only wanted awakening to existence. And the memory of my Sabbath-morning’s vision dwelt with me, and the voice that speaketh, filling the soul “as a sea-shell is with murmuring,” said, “Your finger will awaken him.” And I looked down at my two passive hands, and asked, “Which one of them?” And the murmuring voice startled me with the answer, “Two are required,—one of reconciliation, the other of forgiveness.” Whereupon I lifted up the ten that Nature gave, and said, “Take them all, if need be.”——



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“Tea is ready,” said Aaron, peeping in, his face alive with satisfied muscles, playing too merry a tune of joy, I thought, for a grave minister.

“Sophie’s a magician,” I thought for the thousandth time, as, for the millionth, Aaron looked at her sitting so demurely regal at his spread table.

“What would these two good people say,” I asked myself, in thinking, “if they knew all that I have learned in my visit, not yet a week long?”—and I ran up and down in the scale of semibreves and minims that I had heard, with the one long, sweet trill transfusing life on earth into heavenly existence, and I felt very wingy, very much as if I could take up the tower, standing high and square out there, and carry it, “like Loretto’s chapel, through the air to the green land,” where my spirit would go singing evermore. I could not tell what my joy was like: not unto anything that I had seen upon the earth; under the earth I had not yet been; only once above it, and they were calmly celestial there. I was turbulently joyous, and so I winged a little while around Sophie and Aaron, hummed a good-night in Chloe’s ears, and found that the canny soul was luxuriating in the idea that the icy lady was to be thawed into the acceptance of sundry confections which she was basketing to carry with her when I went out.

“Call me early,” I said; “you know I leave at seven o’clock.”

“I shall be up ever so early, Miss Anna; never fear for Chloe’s sleeping late to-morrow in the morning; you get ever so much,—’nuff for Chloe and you too; good-night, honey!”—and Chloe went on her mission, whilst Aloes and Honey went up-stairs, past Aaron’s study, and into a room where the mysterious art of packing must be practised for a little.

I thought of the “breadths of silver and skirts of gold” that I had seen the Day pack away; and, inspired with the thought, fell to folding less amberous raiment, until, my duty done, I pressed the cover down, and locked my treasures in, for the journey of the morrow. Then I took out my sacred gift to guard, and, laying it before me, looked at it. It was of dimensions scarcely larger than the moon,—that is, extremely variant and uncertain: to one, a planet, larger than Jupiter, moons and all; to another, scarcely more than a bridal ring. So my packet was of uncertain size: *undoubtedly* the tower was packed away in it, Herbert too,—and I couldn’t help agreeing with my thought, and confessing that this was a better form for conveyance than that I so lately had planned; so I put it safely away, with myself, until the day should come. The day-star had arisen in my heart. Would it ever go down? Not whilst He who holdeth the earth in the hollow of His hand hath me there too. Reaching out, once more, for the strong protective fibres that had so blessed me, I wandered forth with it into the land whose mural heights are onychites and mocha-stones of mossy mystery.

How long I might have lingered there I know not,—so delicious was the fragrance and so fair the flowers,—had not Chloe’s voice broken the mocha-stones, scattering the mosses like autumn-leaves.



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“Honey, I thought I’d waken ye,—the day is just cracking,” said Chloe, at the door, and she asked me to open it one moment.

When I had done so, there she stood, just as I had seen her when I bade her good-night,—save that her basket was void of contents.

“Master Abraham didn’t know you was going home,” Chloe said, “or he’d have told you good-bye; and I guesses he sent what he didn’t tell, for he asked me to give you this.”

When Chloe was gone, I opened the small package. It was a pretty casket, made of the margarite of the sea. Within it lay a faded, fallen, fragmentary thing. At first, I knew not what it could be. It was the althea-bud that grew in the summer-time of eighteen years ago, that had been Mary’s,—and my heart beat fast as I looked upon the silent voicefulness that spake up to me, and said, “To you, who have restored him to himself, he offers the same tribute;” and I lifted up the iridescent, flashing cradle of margarite, and reverently touched the ashes of althea it held with my lips. Afterwards they were salt,—whether with the saltness of the sea the bud had been baptized in, or of the tears that I let fall, I knew not.

I folded up my good-bye from Mr. Axtell in the same precious package that was his sister’s, and, side by side, the two journeyed on with me.

* * * * *

It was seven of the clock on Monday morning when she who said the naughty words, and the grave minister, came out to say farewell to me. The day’s great round was nearly done ere I met my father’s flowery welcome.

“My Myrtle-Vine, I knew you’d come,” said Dr. Percival; and his long gray hair floated out to reach me in, and his eyes, wherein all love burned iridescent, drew me toward his heart.

My father put his arms around me, and said the sweetest words of welcome that ever are spoken.

“How I’ve missed you, Anna!” as he drew me toward his large arm-chair, and folded me, his latest child, to his heart.

As thus we were sitting in the silence of the heart that needs no language, little Jeffy, my ebony-beauty boy, darted his black head in, and reposing it for one instant against the scarcely lighter-hued mahogany of the door, jingled out, in shells of sound,—

“He’s mighty fur’ous. It’s real fun. I guess you’d better come right up, Dr. Percival;” and the ebon head darted off, without one word for me.



Why was it that this little omission of Jeffy's, the African boy, should create a vacancy? Oh! it is because Nature made me so exacting. I wanted everybody to welcome me.

I lifted my head from my father's shoulder, and asked, in some dismay,—

“What is it, father?”

“I've gotten myself in trouble, Anna. I've let chaos into my house. I wanted you to help me.”

“What is it? what has happened?” I hastened to inquire.

“Only a hospital patient that I was foolish enough to bring away. I heartily wish that he was back again,” said my father; and he put me from him to go, in obedience to the summons.



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I was about to follow him, but he waved me back as I went into the hall, and he went on. I heard the ring of a low, frenzied laugh, as I began unwrapping from my journey. My casket of treasures I had committed to bands for keeping. Now I laid it down, and, folding up my protective robes, I had just gone to try my father's easy-chair, alone, when Jeffy's ebon head struck in again.

"I didn't see ye afore, Miss Anna. I'so mighty glad you've come;" and Jeffy atoned for his former omission by his present joy.

"How is he?" I questioned Jeffy, as if I knew all the antecedents of the case perfectly.

"Oh, he's jolly to-night. I think Master Percival might have let me stay to see the fun;" and Jeffy's eyes rolled to and fro in their orbits, as if anxious to strike against some wandering comet.

"Is tea over?" I asked.

"No, miss. Master said he'd wait for you. I'll go and tell that you're here;" and Jeffy took himself off, eager for action.

He was not long gone.

"It's all ready, waiting a bit for master. He can't come down just this minute," said Jeffy. "Look a here, Miss Anna,—isn't it vastly funny master's bringing a crazy man here? They say down in the kitchen, that as how it wouldn't 'a' been, if you'd been home. It's real good, though. It's the splendidest thing that's happened. Wait till you see him perform. Ask him to sing. It's frolicky to hear him."

The boy went on, and I did not stop him. I was as anxious for information as he to impart it. When he paused for breath, in the width of detail that he furnished, I asked,

—
"When was this stranger brought here?"

"Three days ago, Miss Anna, I hope he'll stay forever and ever;" and Jeffy darted off at a mellifluous sound that dropped down from above.

"There! he has thrown the poker at the mirror again, I do believe," said another voice in the hall, and I recognized the housekeeper.

Staid Mrs. Ordilinier came in to greet me, with the uniform greeting of her lifetime. I verily believe that she has but one way of receiving. Electricity and bread-and-butter would meet the same recognitory reception.



“Did you hear that noise, Miss Anna?” she said, as another sound came, that was vastly like the shivering of glass.

“What was it, Mrs. Ordilinier?”

I gave her the question to gain information. I sought it,—but she, not disposed to gratify me at the moment, slowly ascended to ascertain the state of mirrors above. She met my father’s silver hairs coming down. He did not say one word to her. He met me in the hall, took me back to the room, and, reseating me in my olden place, put his hand upon my head, and said,—

“This must help me, Anna.”

“It will, papa; what is it?”

“I’ve a crazy man up-stairs. He can’t do very much harm, for he is badly injured.”

“How?” I asked.



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“Railroad accident. Four days ago, locomotive and two passenger-cars off the track, down forty feet upon the rocks and stones, and all there was of a river,” my father replied, with evident regret that the company had been so unfortunate, as well as his individual self.

“Who is it?” was my next question.

“Don’t know, darling; haven’t the least idea. He has the softest brown, curling hair of his own, with a wig over it. Can’t find out his name, or anything about him. I like him, though, Anna. He’s like somebody! used to know. I brought him here from the hospital, several days ago, but he hasn’t given me much peace since, and the people down below think I’m as crazy as he; but I cannot help it; I will not turn him out now.”

“Of course you wouldn’t, father. We’ll manage him superbly. I’ll chain him for you.”

My father rose up, comforted by my words, and said “it was time for tea.” We went down. I was the Sophie of Aaron’s home, at my father’s table.

“Papa,” I said, as if introducing the most ordinary topic of conversation, “what was the occasion of sister Mary’s death? She was only seventeen. How young to die!”

My father sighed, and said,—

“Yes, it was young. She had fever, Anna. One of those long, low fevers that mislead one. I did not think she would die.”

“Was Mary engaged to be married, father?”

Dr. Percival looked up at his daughter Anna with the look that says, “You’re growing old,” although she was twenty-three, and never had gone so far in life as his eldest daughter at seventeen.

“She was, Anna.”

“To whom, father?”

“Perhaps you’ve seen him, Anna. I hear that he is come home. His name is Axtell,—Abraham Axtell.”

I told my father of the first words,—where we had found him, tolling the bell,—and of his mother’s death, and his sister’s illness.

“Incomprehensible people!” was my father’s sole ejaculation, as he went to look after the deranged patient.



I occupied myself for an hour in picking up the reins of government that I had thrown down when I went to Redleaf. Looking into “our room,” and not finding father there, I went on, up to my own room. A warm, welcoming fire burned within the grate. I thought, “How good father is to think for me!” and with the thought there entered in another. It came in the sudden consciousness that the room was prepared for some one else than me. I glanced about it, and saw the strange, wild man, with eyes all aglow, looking at me from out the depths of my wonted place of rest. No one else was in the room. I turned around to leave, but, dropping my precious box of margarite, I stooped to pick it up.

“It is a good harbor to sail into. I’m content,” said the voice from the corner, before I could escape.

I met father coming in.

“Why, how is this?” he said to me.

“You didn’t tell me you had given up my room,” I said.



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“Didn’t I? Well, I forgot. We couldn’t take him higher.”

“Is he so much hurt?” I asked.

“Three broken bones,” my father replied. “It will be weeks, it may be months, before he will be well;” and he sighed hopelessly at the good deed, which, being done, pressed so heavily. “Don’t look so sadly about it, Myrtle-Vine,” he added; “take my room, if you like.”

“That was not my thought,” I said. “I do not mind the change of room.”

The visit to Redleaf, which I had made to dawn in my horizon, was eclipsed by three broken bones, that suddenly undermined the arch of consistency.

Soothingly came the words that were spoken unto me. My father was all-willing to relinquish his cherished room,—his for sixteen years, and opening into that mysterious other room,—to give it up to me, his Myrtle-Vine; and a momentary pang that any interest in existence should be, except as circling around him, flew across the future, “the science whereof is to man but what the shadow of the wind might be,”—and I looked up into his eyes, and, twining his long white hair around my fingers, for a moment felt that forever and forever he should be the supreme object of earthly devotion. In my wish to evince the sentiment in action, I requested permission to assist in the care of the hospital patient.

“Oh, no, Anna! he is too wild now. When the excitement of the fever is gone, then will be your time.”

Another of those many-toned, circling peals of laughter came from my room. My father went in. I went past the place that mortal eyes were not permitted to fathom, and, for the first time in my life, was curious to know its contents, and why I had never seen the interior thereof, I had grown up with the mystery, until I had accepted it, unquestioning, as a thing not for my view, and therefore out of recognition. It was as far away from me as the open sea of the North, and might contain the mortal remains of all the navigators of Hope that ever had wandered into the sea of Time for him who so holily guarded it.

“One far-away Indian-summery day, four years ago,” “while yet the day was young,” Dr. Percival, my father, had led an azure-eyed maiden in through the mysterious entrance, and shown unto her the veiled temple, its altar and its shrine, and she had come thence with the dew of feeling in her eyes and a purple haze around her brow, which she has worn there until it has tangled its pansy-web into an abiding-place, unto such time as the light is shut out forever, or the waves from the silver sea curl their mist up thither. I had much marvel then concerning the hidden mysteries; but Sophie so soon thereafter spake the naughty “I will,” that the silent room forgot to speak to me. I have never heard sound thence since that morning-time.

“Why does not my father take me in? Am I not his child, even as Sophie?”

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I asked these questions of Anna Percival, the while she stood at an upper window, and looked out over New York's surging lines of life. The roar of rolling wheels came muffled by distance and the shore of dwelling-places over which I looked. I counted the church-spires that threaded the vault of night a little of the upward way. How angels, that have lived forever in heaven, and souls just free from material things, must reach down to touch these towering masts, that tell which way the sails of spirit bend! These city churches, dedicated with solemn service unto the worship of the great I AM, the Lord God of Adam, the Jehovah Jireh of Israelites, the Holy Redeemer of Christians,—may the Lord of heaven and earth bless them *every one*! I looked forth upon them with tears. There never comes a time, in the busiest hurry of human ways, that I do not sprinkle a drop of love upon the steps as I pass,—that I do not wind a tendril of holy feeling up to height of tower or summit of spire for the great winds to waft onward and upward. God pity the heart that does not involuntary reverence to God's templed places, made sacred a thousand fold by every penitential tear, by every throb of devotion, by every aspiration after the divine existence, from which let down a little while, we wander, for what we know not! God doth not tell, save that it is to “love first Him, Sole and Individual,” and then the fragments, the crumbs of Divinity that dwell in Man.

I had not lighted the gas. The street-lamps sent up their rays, making the room semi-lucent. I took out my tower-key. What matter, if I held the cold iron thereof to my lips awhile? there was no frost in the March air then. I sent my restless fingers in and out of the wards, prisoning them often therein. As thus I stood, with cheek pressed against the windowpane, looking out upon the city, set into a rim of darkness, from out of which it flashed its million rays, papa came up.

“I didn't say good-night,” he said, coming in, and to the window where I was. “But how is this, Anna? what has happened to my child?”—and he pointed to shining drops that glistened on the window-glass.

They must have come from my eyes; I could not deny their authorship, and so I confessed to tears of gladness at seeing him once more.

He looked fondly down at me through the dim light. I asked him after the tenant of my premises. He shook his head as one does in great doubt, said “life was uncertain,” and repeated several other axioms, that were quite apart from his original style, and excessively annoying to me.

“Papa,” I said, “why not tell me truly? will this man recover?”

“‘Man proposes, God disposes,’ my child,” he said.

“I don't dispute the general truth,” I replied,—“but, particularly, is this man's life in danger?”



He began to quote somebody's psalm or hymn about "fitful fevers and fleeting shadows."

My father has a fine, rich, variant power of sound with which to charm such as have ears to hear, and Anna Percival has been so endowed. Therefore she listened and waited to the end. When it came, she looked up into her father's face and said,—



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“Papa, I am not a child, to be coaxed into forgetfulness; why will you not trust me? I am older than Sophie was when you took her in where I have not been; why will you not make me your friend?”—and some sudden collision of watery powers among the window-drops, whether from accretion or otherwise, sent a glistening rivulet down to the barrier of the sash.

Papa folded his arms, and looked at me. I could not bear to be thus shut out. I said so.

“Could you bear to be shut in?” he thought, and asked it.

“I think I could. I could bear anything that you gave me; I could keep anything that you intrusted to my keeping.”

Papa looked at me as one does at a cherished vine the outermost edges of which are just frost-touched; then he folded me to his heart. I felt the throbbings thereof, and mine began to regret that I had intruded into the vestibule of his sacred temple; but a certain something went whispering within me, “You can feed the sacred fire,” and I whispered to the whispering voice, and to my father’s ear,—

“You’ll take me in, won’t you?”

“Come,” was the only spoken word.

The room was not cheery; he felt it, and said,—

“You see what the effect is when my Myrtle-Vine is off my walls;” and he tossed aside books and papers that had evidently been astray for days, and lay now in his way.

Papa took a key (he wears it too, it seems: that is even more than I do with my tower’s) from a tiny chain of gold about his neck, and unlocked the door connecting this silent room with his own. He went in, leaving me outside. He lighted a candle and left it burning there. He came, took my hand, and, with the leading whereby we guide a child, conducted me in thither. Then he went out and left me standing, bewildered, there.

I had anticipated something wonderful. What was here? It was a silent room. The carpet had a river-pattern meandering over its dark-blue ground: it must have been years since a broom went over it. Strange medley of furniture was here. I looked upon the walls. Pictures that must have come from another race and generation hung there. There were many of them. One side of the room held one only. It was a portrait. I remembered the original in life. “My mother,” I exclaimed. In the room’s centre, surrounded by various articles, was the very boat that I knew Mary Percival had guided out to sea to save Abraham Axtell. Two tiny oars lay across it. The paint was faded; the seams were open; it would hold water no longer. A sense of worship filled me. I looked up at the portrait. My mother smiled: or was it my fancy? Fancy undoubtedly; but fancies give comfort sometimes. I looked again at the boat. On its stern, in small,



golden letters, was the name, "Blessing of the Bay," the very name given to the first boat built after the Mayflower's keel touched America's shore. "The name was a good omen," I thought. An armchair stood before the portrait. A shawl was spread over it. I lifted up the fringe to see what the shawl covered. Papa had come in.



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“Don’t do that, Anna,” he said.

“Is it any harm, papa?”

“Your mother died sitting in that chair; her hands spread the shawl over it; it was the last work they did, Anna; it has never since been taken off.”

I dropped the fringe; my touch seemed sacrilegious.

Near the chair was a small cabinet; it looked like an altar, or would have done so, had my father been a devotee to any religion requiring visible sacrifice. He opened it.

“Come hither, Anna,”—and I went.

Long, luxuriant bands of softly purplish hair lay within, upon the place of sacrifice.

“Sophie’s is like this,” I said.

“And Sophie wears one like unto this,” said my father; and he took up a circlet of shining gold that lay among the tresses. “Sophie’s marriage-ring was hallowed unto her. I gave it the morning she went out from me.” He uttered these words with slow reverence of voice.

Why did self come up?

“You gave Sophie *our* mother’s marriage-ring,” I said, “and I”—

“Shall wear this,” said my father. “I laid it here, with hers;” and he gently lifted the sacred hair, and, freeing the ring, put it upon my finger.

“This is not my marriage-day,” I said. “Papa, I don’t want it. Besides, gentlemen don’t wear marriage-rings: how came you to?”

“Perhaps I have not worn this one; but will you wear it to please me?”

“Why will it please you? It is not symbolical, is it?”

“It makes you doubly mine,” he said; and he led me back to outside life, with this strange sort of marriage-ring circling with its planet weight around my finger.

Did my father mean to keep me forever? And with the question came an answer that left sweet contentment in its pathway; it accorded with the intent of my heart.

“Father, have you made me your friend?” I asked, in the room that was terribly tossed, as I restored to place chairs that seemed to have been in a deplorably long dance, and to have forgotten their home at its close.



“You wear my ring, you have come into my orbit,” he answered.

“That being true, I am as much interested in the flying comet in there as you are,—for if it strikes you, it hurts me;” and I waited his answer.

After a moment of pause, it came.

“My poor patient is very ill; his life will burn out, if the fever is not stayed;” and as the frenzied laugh reached us, Dr. Percival forgot my presence; he passed his hand slowly across his brow, as if to retouch memory, and then taking down a volume, he began to read. I waited long. At last he closed the book suddenly, said to himself, “I’ll try it,” and in half a moment my father’s white hairs were separated from me by the impassable barrier of the sick-room.



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I waited; he did not come. The chairs were not the only articles that had lost the commodity of order in my absence. I went to the table upon which were kept the papers, *etc.*, that lingered there a little while, and then were thought no longer of. Idly I turned them over. What a chaos on a small scale! all the elements of literature were represented. I listened for coming footsteps; none came. "I may as well arrange this table," I thought, "as wait for the morrow;" and I made a beginning by sweeping the chaos at once upon the carpet. Then slowly I began picking them up, one by one, and appointing them stations. My task was nearly done, when, in turning over some magazines, I came upon a pile of papers that had been laid between the leaves of one, and ere I was aware of their presence, they slid down and scattered. I remember having felt a little surprise that my father should have left them there, but I hastened to gather them together. The last one of the number, I noticed, was torn; it had a foreign look. "Father has some new correspondent," I thought, as I looked at the number of mail-marks upon it. "He doesn't think much of it, though, or it would have received better treatment;" and I took a second look at it. A something in the feel of the paper seemed familiar. "It is good for nothing," I said aloud, and I tossed it toward the grate, put the pile of papers where I had found them, surveyed my work with satisfaction, and stood thinking whether or not I should wait to see my father again—it was more than an hour since he went up—to say good-night to me. "I will wait a half-hour; if he doesn't come then, I'll go," I said to the housekeeper, who came to see that all was right for the night, and to remind me that Redleaf had not proved very advantageous to my complexion, and to recommend early hours as a restorative.

In accordance with my promise, I drew a chair forward, placed my feet upon the fender, and began to study the dying embers that were slowly falling through the grate-bars. One, larger than usual, burned its way down. It lighted up, for an instant, the bit of paper, that had not fallen into the coals. Strange fancy it was that led me to imagine that I saw a capital A, followed immediately by that unknown quantity represented by x. I made an effort to gain it, scorched my face, and burned my fingers; for I touched the grate, in rescuing that which I had cast into the place of burning.

"This bit of paper, found in New York, had once been integral with that I had found within the church-yard tower in Redleaf," some inner voice assured me. "Yes, it is a part of it," I said, for I distinctly remembered the fragment whose possession I had so rejoiced over. Some one had written a letter to Miss Axtell; the envelope was torn,—one part there, another here. The letter itself I had found in the gloom of the passage-way; for it Miss Axtell had gone out to search, ill, and in the night; what must its contents have been, to have been



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worthy of such effort?—and for the time I quite forgot to connect this man, ill in my father's house, with the Herbert whose far-out-at-sea voice I had heard winding up at me through the very death-darkness of the tower. Suddenly the consciousness scintillated in my soul, and wonderful it was; but the picture of my dream came in with it, and I said again, "I am ready for the work which is given me to do," and I waited for its coming till I grew very weary, holding this fragment of envelope fast, as a ship clings to its anchor in mild seas. I ventured to knock at the entrance of my own room. All was silent within. I tried the second time. There came no answer. I dared not venture on the conquering third.

* * * * *

AT SYRACUSE.

All day my mule with patient tread
Had moved along the plain,
Now o'er the lava's ashen bed,
Now through the sprouting grain,
Across the torrent's rocky lair,
Beneath the aloe-hedge,
Where yellow broom makes sweet the air,
And waves the purple sedge.

Lone were the hills, save where supine
The dozing goatherd lay,
Or, at a rude and broken shrine,
The peasant knelt to pray;
Or where athwart the distant blue
Thin saffron clouds ascend,
As Carbonari, hid from view,
Their smouldering embers tend.

Luxuriant vale or sterile reach,
A mountain temple-crowned
Or inland curve of glistening beach,
The changeful scene surround;
While scarlet poppies burning near,
And citrons' emerald gleam,
Make barren intervals appear
Dim lapses of a dream.



How meekly o'er the meadows gay
The azure flax-blooms spread!
What fragrance on the breeze of May
The almond-blossoms shed!
Wide-branching fig-trees deck the fields
Or round the quarries cling,
And cactus-stalks, with thorny shields,
In wild contortions spring.

Here groves of cork dusk shadows throw,
There vine-leaves lightsome sway,
While chestnut-plumes serenely glow
Above the olives gray;
Tall pines upon the sloping meads
Their sylvan domes uprear,
And rankly the papyrus-reeds
Low cluster in the mere.

And Syracuse with pensive mien,
In solitary pride,
Like an untamed, but throneless queen,
Crouched by the lucent tide;
With honeyed thyme still Hybla teemed,
Its scent each zephyr bore,
And Arethusa's fountain gleamed
Pellucid as of yore.

Methought, upstarting from his bath,
Old Archimedes cried,
"Eureka!" in my silent path,
Whose echoes long replied;
That Pythias, in the sunset-glow,
Rushed by to Damon's arms,
While from the Tyrant's Cave below
Moaned impotent alarms.

And where upon a sculptured stone
The ruined arch beside,
A hoary, bronzed, and wrinkled crone
The twirling distaff plied,—
Love with exalted Reason fraught
In Plato's accents came,
And Truth by Paul sublimely taught
Relumed her virgin flame.



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The ancient sepulchres that rose
Along the voiceless street
Time's myriad vistas seemed to close
And bid life's waves retreat,—
As if intrusive footsteps stole
Beyond their mortal sphere,
And felt the awed and eager soul
Immortal comrades near.

The moss-grown ramparts loom in sight
Like warders of the deep,
Where, flushed with evening's amber light,
The havened waters sleep;
Unfurrowed by a Roman keel
Or Carthaginian oar,
The speared and burnished galleys now
Their slumber break no more.

But when the distant convent-bell,
Ere Day's last smiles depart,
With mellow cadence pleading fell
Upon my brooding heart,—
And Memory's phantoms thick and fast
Their fond illusions bred,
From peerless spirits of the past,
And wrecks of ages fled,—

Joy broke the spell; an emblem blest
That lonely harbor cheered:
As if to greet her pilgrim guest,
My country's flag appeared!
Its radiant folds auroral streamed
Amid that haunted air,
And every star prophetic beamed
With Freedom's triumph there!

* * * * *

METHODS OF STUDY IN NATURAL HISTORY.

All important changes in the social and political condition of man, whether brought about by violent convulsions or effected gradually, are at once recognized as eras in the history of humanity. But on the broad high-road of civilization along which men are ever marching, they pass by unnoticed the landmarks of intellectual progress, unless they



chance to have some direct bearing on what is called the practical side of life. Such an era marked the early part of our own century; and though at the time a thousand events seemed more full-freighted for the world than the discovery of some old bones at the quarry of Montmartre, and though many a man seemed greater in the estimation of the hour than the professor at the Jardin des Plantes who strove to reconstruct these fragments, yet the story that they told lighted up all the past, and showed its true connection with the present. Cuvier, as one sees him in a retrospective glance at the wonderful period in which he lived, and which brought to the surface all its greatest elements,—one among a throng of exceptional men, generals, soldiers, statesmen, as well as men of commanding intellect in literary and scientific pursuits,—seems always standing at the meeting-point between the past and present. His gaze is ever fixed upon the path along which Creation has moved, and, as he travels back, recovering step by step the road that has been lost to man in apparently impenetrable darkness and mystery, the light brightens and broadens before him, and seems to tempt him on into the dim regions where the great mystery of Creation lies hidden.

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Before the year 1800, men had never suspected that their home had been tenanted in past times by a set of beings totally different from those that inhabit it now; still farther was it from their thought to imagine that creation after creation had followed each other in successive ages, every one stamped with a character peculiarly its own. It was Cuvier who, aroused to new labors by the hint he received from the bones unearthed at Montmartre, to which all his vast knowledge of living animals gave him no clue, established by means of most laborious investigations the astounding conclusion, that, prior to the existence of the animals and plants now living, this globe had been the theatre of another set of beings, every trace of whom had vanished from the face of the earth. To his alert and active intellect and powerful imagination a word spoken out of the past was pregnant with meaning; and when he had once convinced himself that he had found a single animal that had no counterpart among living beings, it gave him the key to many mysteries.

It may be doubted whether men's eyes are ever opened to truths which, though new to them, are old to God, till the time has come when they can apprehend their meaning and turn them to good account. It certainly seems, that, when such a revelation has once been made, light pours in upon it from every side; and this is especially true of the case in point. The existence of a past creation once suggested, confirmation was found in a thousand facts overlooked before. The solid crust of the earth gave up its dead, and from the snows of Siberia, from the soil of Italy, from caves of Central Europe, from mines, from the rent sides of mountains and from their highest peaks, from the coral beds of ancient oceans, the varied animals that had possessed the earth ages before man was created spoke to us of the past.

No sooner were these facts established, than the relation between the extinct world and the world of to-day became the subject of extensive researches and comparisons; innumerable theories were started to account for the differences, and to determine the periods and manner of the change. It is not my intention to enter now at any length upon the subject of geological succession, though I hope to return to it hereafter in a series of papers upon that and kindred topics; but I allude to it here, before presenting some views upon the maintenance of organic types as they exist in our own period, for the following reason. Since it has been shown that from the beginning of Creation till the present time the physical history of the world has been divided into a succession of distinct periods, each one accompanied by its characteristic animals and plants, so that our own epoch is only the closing one in the long procession of the ages, naturalists have been constantly striving to find the connecting link between them all, and to prove that each such creation has been a normal and natural growth out of the preceding one.

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With this aim they have tried to adapt the phenomena of reproduction among animals to the problem of creation, and to make the beginning of life in the individual solve that great mystery of the beginning of life in the world. In other words, they have endeavored to show that the fact of successive generations is analogous to that of successive creations, and that the processes by which animals, once created, are maintained unchanged during the period to which they belong will account also for their primitive existence.

I wish, at the outset, to forestall any such misapplication of the facts I am about to state, and to impress upon my readers the difference between these two subjects of inquiry, —since it by no means follows, that, because individuals are endowed with the power of reproducing and perpetuating their kind, they are in any sense self-originating. Still less probable does this appear, when we consider, that, since man has existed upon the earth, no appreciable change has taken place in the animal or vegetable world; and so far as our knowledge goes, this would seem to be equally true of all the periods preceding ours, each one maintaining unbroken to its close the organic character impressed upon it at the beginning.

The question I propose to consider here is simply the mode by which organic types are preserved as they exist at present. Every one has a summary answer to this question in the statement, that all these short-lived individuals reproduce themselves, and thus maintain their kinds. But the modes of reproduction are so varied, the changes some animals undergo during their growth so extraordinary, the phenomena accompanying these changes so startling, that, in the pursuit of the subject, a new and independent science—that of Embryology—has grown up, of the utmost importance in the present state of our knowledge.

The prevalent ideas respecting the reproduction of animals are made up from the daily observation of those immediately about us in the barn-yard and the farm. But the phenomena here are comparatively simple, and easily traced. The moment we extend our observations beyond our cattle and fowls, and enter upon a wider field of investigation, we are met by the most startling facts. Not the least baffling of these are the disproportionate numbers of males and females in certain kinds of animals, their unequal development, as well as the extraordinary difference between the sexes among certain species, so that they seem as distinct from each other as if they belonged to separate groups of the Animal Kingdom. We have close at hand one of the most striking instances of disproportionate numbers in the household of the Bee, with its one fertile female charged with the perpetuation of the whole community, while her innumerable sterile sisterhood, amid a few hundred drones, work for its support in other ways. Another most interesting chapter connected with the maintenance of animals is found in the various ways and different degrees

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of care with which they provide for their progeny: some having fulfilled their whole duty toward their offspring when they have given them birth; others seeking hiding-places for the eggs they have laid, and watching with a certain care over their development; others feeding their young till they can provide for themselves, and building nests, or burrowing holes in the ground, or constructing earth mounds for their shelter.

But, whatever be the difference in the outward appearance or the habits of animals, one thing is common to them all without exception: at some period of their lives they produce eggs, which, being fertilized, give rise to beings of the same kind as the parent. This mode of generation is universal, and is based upon that harmonious antagonism between the sexes, that contrast between the male and the female element, that at once divides and unites the whole Animal Kingdom. And although this exchange of influence is not kept up by an equality of numeric relations,—since not only are the sexes very unequally divided in some kinds of animals, but the male and female elements are even combined in certain types, so that the individuals are uniformly hermaphrodites,—yet I firmly believe that this numerical distribution, however unequal it may seem to us, is not without its ordained accuracy and balance. He who has assigned its place to every leaf in the thickest forest, according to an arithmetical law which prescribes to each its allotted share of room on the branch where it grows, will not have distributed animal life with less care.

But although reproduction by eggs is common to all animals, it is only one among several modes of multiplication. We have seen that certain animals, besides the ordinary process of generation, also increase their number naturally and constantly by self-division, so that out of one individual many individuals may arise by a natural breaking up of the whole body into distinct surviving parts. This process of normal self-division may take place at all periods of life: it may form an early phase of metamorphosis, as in the Hydroid of our common Aurelia, described in the last article; or it may even take place before the young is formed in the egg. In such a case, the egg itself divides into a number of portions: two, four, eight, or even twelve and sixteen individuals being normally developed from every egg, in consequence of this singular process of segmentation of the yolk,—which takes place, indeed, in all eggs, but in those which produce but one individual is only a stage in the natural growth of the yolk during its transformation into a young embryo. As the facts here alluded to are not very familiar even to professional naturalists, I may be permitted to describe them more in detail.



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No one who has often walked across a sand-beach in summer can have failed to remark what the children call "sand saucers." The name is not a bad one, with the exception that the saucer lacks a bottom; but the form of these circular bands of sand is certainly very like a saucer with the bottom knocked out. Hold one of them against the light and you will see that it is composed of countless transparent spheres, each of the size of a small pin's head. These are the eggs of our common *Natica* or Sea-Snail. Any one who remembers the outline of this shell will easily understand the process by which its eggs are left lying on the beach in the form I have described. They are laid in the shape of a broad, short ribbon, pressed between the mantle and the shell, and, passing out, cover the outside of the shell, over which they are rolled up, with a kind of glutinous envelope,—for the eggs are held together by a soft glutinous substance. Thus surrounded, the shell, by its natural movements along the beach, soon collects the sand upon it, the particles of which in contact with the glutinous substance of the eggs quickly forms a cement that binds the whole together in a kind of paste. When consolidated, it drops off from the shell, having taken the mould of its form, as it were, and retaining the curve which distinguishes the outline of the *Natica*. Although these saucers look perfectly round, it will be found that the edges are not soldered together, but are simply lapped one over the other. Every one of the thousand little spheres crowded into such a circle of sand contains an egg. If we follow the development of these eggs, we shall presently find that each one divides into two halves, these again dividing to make four portions, then the four breaking up into eight, and so on, till we may have the yolks divided into no less than sixteen distinct parts. Thus far this process of segmentation is similar to that of the egg in other animals; but, as we shall see hereafter, it seems usually to result only in a change in the quality of its substance, for the portions coalesce again to form one mass, from which a new individual is finally sketched out, at first as a simple embryo, and gradually undergoing all the changes peculiar to its kind, till a new-born animal escapes from the egg. But in the case of the *Natica* this regular segmentation changes its character, and at a certain period, in a more or less advanced stage of the segmentation, according to the species, each portion of the yolk assumes an individuality of its own, and, instead of uniting again with the rest, begins to subdivide for itself. In our *Natica heros*, for instance, the common large gray Sea-Snail of our coast, this change takes place when the yolk has subdivided into eight parts. At that time each portion begins a life of its own, not reuniting with its seven twin portions; so that in the end, instead of a single embryo growing out of this yolk, we have eight embryos arising from a single yolk, each one of which undergoes



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a series of developments similar in all respects to that by which a single embryo is formed from each egg in other animals. We have other Naticas in which the normal number is twelve, others again in which no less than sixteen individuals arise from one yolk. But this process of segmentation, though in these animals it leads to such a multiplication of individuals, is exactly the same as that discovered by K.E. von Baer in the egg of the Frog, and described and figured by Professor Bischof in the egg of the Rabbit, the Dog, the Guinea-Pig, and the Deer, while other embryologists have traced the same process in Birds, Reptiles, and Fishes, as well as in a variety of Articulates, Mollusks, and Radiates.

Multiplication by division occurs also normally in adult animals that have completed their growth. This is especially frequent among Worms; and strange to say, there are species in this Class which never lay eggs before they have already multiplied themselves by self-division.

Another mode of increase is that by budding, as in the Corals and many other Radiates. The most common instance of budding we do not, however, generally associate with this mode of multiplication in the Animal Kingdom, because we are so little accustomed to compare and generalize upon phenomena that we do not see to be directly connected with one another. I allude here to the budding of trees, which year after year enlarge by the addition of new individuals arising from buds. I trust that the usual acceptance of the word *individual*, used in science simply to designate singleness of existence, will not obscure a correct appreciation of the true relation of buds to their parents and to the beings arising from them. These buds have the same organic significance, whether they drop from the parent stock to become distinct individuals in the common acceptance of the term, or remain connected with the parent stock, as in Corals and in trees, thus forming growing communities of combined individuals. Nor will it matter much in connection with the subject under discussion, whether these buds start from the surface of an animal or sprout in its interior, to be cast off in due time. Neither is the inequality of buds, varying more or less among themselves, any sound reason for overlooking their essential identity of structure. We have seen instances of this among Acalephs, and it is still more apparent among trees which produce simultaneously leaf and flower-buds, and even separate male and female flower-buds, as is the case with our Hazels, Oaks, *etc.*

It is not, however, my purpose here to describe the various modes of reproduction and multiplication among animals and plants, nor to discuss the merits of the different opinions respecting their numeric increase, according to which some persons hold that all types originated from a few primitive individuals, while others believe that the very numbers now in existence are part of the primitive plan, and essential to the



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harmonious relations existing between the animal and vegetable world. I would only attempt to show that in the plan of Creation the maintenance of types has been secured through a variety of means, but under such limitations, that, within a narrow range of individual differences, all representatives of one kind of animals agree with one another, whether derived from eggs, or produced by natural division, or by budding; and that the constancy of these normal processes of reproduction, as well as the uniformity of their results, precludes the idea that the specific differences among animals have been produced by the very means that secure their permanence of type. The statement itself implies a contradiction, for it tells us that the same influences prevent and produce change in the condition of the Animal Kingdom. Facts are all against it; there is not a fact known to science by which any single being, in the natural process of reproduction and multiplication, has diverged from the course natural to its kind, or in which a single kind has been transformed into any other. But this once established, and setting aside the idea that Embryology is to explain to us the origin as well as the maintenance of life, it yet has most important lessons for us, and the field it covers is constantly enlarging as the study is pursued. The first and most important result of the science of Embryology was one for which the scientific world was wholly unprepared. Down to our own century, nothing could have been farther from the conception of anatomists and physiologists than the fact now generally admitted, that all animals, without exception, arise from eggs. Though Linnaeus had already expressed this great truth in the sentence so often quoted,—“*Omne vivum ex ovo*,”—yet he was not himself aware of the significance of his own statement, for the existence of the Mammalian egg was not then dreamed of. Since then the discoveries of von Baer and others have shown not only that the egg is common to all living beings without exception, from the lowest Radiate to the highest Vertebrate, but that its structure is at first identical in all, composed of the same primitive elements and undergoing exactly the same process of growth up to the time when it assumes the special character peculiar to its kind. This is unquestionably one of the most comprehensive generalizations of modern times.

In common parlance, we understand by an egg something of the nature of a hen's egg, a mass of yolk surrounded with white and inclosed in a shell. But to the naturalist, the envelopes of the egg, which vary greatly in different animals, are mere accessories, while the true egg, or, as it is called, the ovarian egg, with which the life of every living being begins, is a minute sphere, uniform in appearance throughout the Animal Kingdom, though its intimate structure is hardly to be reached even with the highest powers of the microscope. Some account of the earlier stages of growth in the egg may not be uninteresting to my readers. I will take the egg of the Turtle as an illustration, since that has been the subject of my own especial study; but, as I do not intend to carry my remarks beyond the period during which the history of all vertebrate eggs is the same, they may be considered of more general application.



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It is well known that all organic structures, whether animal or vegetable, are composed of cells. These cells consist of an outside bag inclosing an inner sac, and within that sac there is a dot. The outer bag is filled with semi-transparent fluid, the inner one with a perfectly transparent fluid, while the dot is dark and distinct. In the language of our science, the outer envelope is called the Ectoblast, the inner sac the Mesoblast, and the dot the Entoblast. Although they are peculiarly modified to suit the different organs, these cells never lose this peculiar structure; it may be traced even in the long drawn-out cells of the flesh, which are like mere threads, but yet have their outer and inner sac and their dot,—at least while forming.

In the Turtle the ovary is made up of such cells, spherical at first, but becoming hexagonal under pressure, when they are more closely packed together. Between these ovarian cells the egg originates, and is at first a mere granule, so minute, that, when placed under a very high magnifying power, it is but just visible. This is the incipient egg, and at this stage it differs from the surrounding cells only in being somewhat darker, like a drop of oil, and opaque, instead of transparent and clear like the surrounding cells. Under the microscope it is found to be composed of two substances only: namely, oil and albumen. It increases gradually, and when it has reached a size at which it requires to be magnified one thousand times in order to be distinctly visible, the outside assumes the aspect of a membrane thicker than the interior and forming a coating around it. This is owing not to an addition from outside, but to a change in the consistency of the substance at the surface, which becomes more closely united, more compact, than the loose mass in the centre. Presently we perceive a bright, luminous, transparent spot on the upper side of the egg, near the wall or outer membrane. This is produced by a concentration of the albumen, which now separates from the oil and collects at the upper side of the egg, forming this light spot, called by naturalists the Purkinjean vesicle, after its discoverer, Purkinje. When this albuminous spot becomes somewhat larger, there arises a little dot in the centre,—the germinal dot, as it is called. And now we have a perfect cell-structure, differing from an ordinary cell only in having the inner sac, inclosing the dot, on the side, instead of in the centre. The outer membrane corresponds to the Ectoblast, or outer cell sac, the Purkinjean vesicle to the Mesoblast, or inner cell sac, while the dot in the centre answers to the Entoblast. When the Purkinjean vesicle has completed its growth, it bursts and disappears; but the mass contained in it remains in the same region, and retains the same character, though no longer inclosed as before.



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At a later stage of the investigation, we see why the Purkinjean vesicle, or inner sac of the egg, is placed on the side, instead of being at the centre, as in the cell. It arises on that side along which the axis of the little Turtle is to lie,—the opposite side being that corresponding to the lower part of the body. Thus the lighter, more delicate part of the substance of the egg is collected where the upper cavity of the animal, inclosing the nervous system and brain, is to be, while the heavy oily part remains beneath, where the lower cavity, inclosing all the organs of mere material animal existence, is afterwards developed. In other words, when the egg is a mere mass of oil and albumen, not indicating as yet in any way the character of the future animal, and discernible only by the microscope, the distinction is indicated between the brains and the senses, between the organs of instinct and sensation and those of mere animal functions. At that stage of its existence, however, when the egg consists of an outer sac, an inner sac, and a dot, its resemblance to a cell is unmistakable; and, in fact, an egg, when forming, is nothing but a single cell. This comparison is important, because there are both animals and plants which, during their whole existence, consist of a single organic cell, while others are made up of countless millions of such cells. Between these two extremes we have all degrees, from the innumerable cells that build up the body of the highest Vertebrate to the single-celled Worm, and from the myriad cells of the Oak to the single-celled Alga.

But while we recognize the identity of cell-structure and egg-structure at this point in the history of the egg, we must not forget the great distinction between them,—namely, that, while the cells remain component parts of the whole body, the egg separates itself and assumes a distinct individual existence. Even now, while still microscopically small, its individuality begins; other substances collect around it, are absorbed into it, nourish it, serve it. Every being is a centre about which many other things cluster and converge, and which has the power to assimilate to itself the necessary elements of its life. Every egg is already such a centre, differing from the cells that surround it by no material elements, but by the principle of life in which its individuality consists, which is to make it a new being, instead of a fellow-cell with those that build up the body of the parent animal and remain component parts of it. This intangible something is the subtile element that eludes our closest analysis; it is the germ of the immaterial principle according to which the new being is to develop. The physical germ we see; the spiritual germ we cannot see, though we may trace its action on the material elements through which it is expressed.



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The first change in the yolk, after the formation of the Purkinjean vesicle, is the appearance of minute dots near the wall at the side opposite the vesicle. These increase in number and size, but remain always on that half of the yolk, leaving the other half of the globe clear. One can hardly conceive the beauty of the egg as seen through the microscope at this period of its growth, when the whole yolk is divided, with the dark granules on one side, while the other side, where the transparent halo of the vesicle is seen, is brilliant with light. With the growth of the egg these granules enlarge, become more distinct, and under the microscope some of them appear to be hollow. They are not round in form, but rather irregular, and under the effect of light they are exceedingly brilliant. Presently, instead of being scattered equally over the space they occupy, they form clusters,—constellations, as it were,—and between these clusters are clear spaces, produced by the separation of the albumen from the oil.

At this period of its growth there is a wonderful resemblance between the appearance of the egg, as seen under the microscope, and the firmament with the celestial bodies. The little clusters or constellations are unequally divided: here and there they are two and two like double stars, or sometimes in threes or fives, or in sevens, recalling the Pleiades, and the clear albuminous tracks between are like the empty spaces separating the stars.

This is no fanciful simile: it is simply true that such is the actual appearance of the yolk at this time; and the idea cannot but suggest itself to the mind, that the thoughts which have been at work in the universe are collected and repeated here within this little egg, which offers us a miniature diagram of the firmament. This is one of the first changes of the yolk, ending by forming regular clusters with a sort of net-work of albumen between, and then this phase of the growth is complete.

Now the clusters of the yolk separate, and next the albumen in its turn concentrates into clusters, and the dark bodies, which have been till now the striking points, give way to the lighter spheres of albumen between which the clusters are scattered. Presently the whole becomes redissolved: these stages of the growth being completed, this little system of worlds is melted, as it were: but while it undergoes this process, the albuminous spheres, after being dissolved, arrange themselves in concentric rings, alternating with rings of granules, around the Purkinjean vesicle. At this time we are again reminded of Saturn and its rings, which seems to have its counterpart here. These rings disappear, and now once more out of the yolk mass loom up little dots as minute as before; but they are round instead of angular, and those nearest the Purkinjean vesicle are smaller and clearer, containing less of oil than the larger and darker ones on the opposite side. From this time the yolk begins to take its color, the oily cells assuming a yellow tint, while the albuminous cells near the vesicle become whiter.

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Up to this period the processes in the different cells seem to have been controlled by the different character of the substance of each; but now it would seem that the changes become more independent of physical or material influences, for each kind of cell undergoes the same process. They all assume the ordinary cell character, with outer and inner sac,—the inner sac forming on the side, like the Purkinjean vesicle itself; but it does not retain this position, for, as soon as its wall is formed and it becomes a distinct body, it floats away from the side and takes its place in the centre. Next there arise within it a number of little bodies crystalline in form, and which actually are wax or oil crystals. They increase with great rapidity, the inner sac or mesoblast becoming sometimes so crowded with them, that its shape is affected by the protrusion of their angles. This process goes on till all the cells are so filled by the mesoblast, with its myriad brood of cells, that the outer sac or ectoblast becomes a mere halo around it. Then every mesoblast contracts; the contraction deepens, till it is divided across in both directions, separating thus into four parts, then into eight, then into sixteen, and so on, till every cell is crowded with hundreds of minute mesoblasts, each containing the indication of a central dot or entoblast. At this period every yolk cell is itself like a whole yolk; for each cell is as full of lesser cells as the yolk-bag itself.

When the mesoblast has become thus infinitely subdivided into hundreds of minute spheres, the ectoblast bursts, and the new generations of cells thus set free collect in that part of the egg where the embryonic disk is to arise. This process of segmentation continues to go on downward till the whole yolk is taken in. These myriad cells are in fact the component parts of the little Turtle that is to be. They will undergo certain modifications, to become flesh-cells, blood-cells, brain-cells, and so on, adapting themselves to the different organs they are to build up; but they have as much their definite and appointed share in the formation of the body now as at any later stage of its existence.

We are so accustomed to see life maintained through a variety of complicated organs that we are apt to think this the only way in which it can be manifested; and considering how closely life and the organs through which it is expressed are united, it is natural that we should believe them inseparably connected. But embryological investigations have shown us that in the commencement none of these organs are formed, and yet that the principle of life is active, and that even after they exist, they cannot act, inclosed as they are. In the little Chicken, for instance, before it is hatched, the lungs cannot breathe, for they are surrounded by fluid, the senses are inactive, for they receive no impressions from without, and all those functions establishing its relations with

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the external world lie dormant, for as yet they are not needed. But they are there, though, as we have seen in the Turtle's egg, they were not there at the beginning. How, then, are they formed? We may answer, that the first function of every organ is to make itself. The building material is, as it were, provided by the process which divides the yolk into innumerable cells, and by the gradual assimilation and modification of this material the organs arise. Before the lungs breathe, they make themselves; before the stomach digests, it makes itself; before the organs of the senses act, they make themselves; before the brain thinks, it makes itself; in a word, before the whole system works, it makes itself; its first office is self-structure.

At the period described above, however, when the new generations of cells are just set free and have taken their place in the region where the new being is to develop, nothing is to be seen of the animal whose life is beginning there, except the filmy disk lying on the surface of the yolk. Next come the layers of white or albumen around the egg, and last the shell which is formed from the lime in the albumen. There is always more or less of lime in albumen, and the hardening of the last layer of white into shell is owing only to the greater proportion of lime in its substance. In the layer next to the shell there is enough of lime to consolidate it slightly, and it forms a membrane; but the white, the membrane, and the shell have all the same quality, except that the proportion of lime is more or less in the different layers.

But, as I have said, the various envelopes of eggs, the presence or absence of a shell, and the absolute size of the egg, are accessory features, belonging not to the egg as egg, but to the special kind of being from which the egg has arisen and into which it is to develop. What is common to all eggs and essential to them all is that which corresponds to the yolk in the bird's egg. But their later mode of development, the degree of perfection acquired by the egg and germ before being laid, the term required for the germ to come to maturity, as well as the frequency and regularity of the broods, are all features varying with the different kinds of animals. There are those that lay eggs once a year at a particular season and then die; so that their existence may be compared to that of annual plants, undergoing their natural growth in a season, to exist during the remainder of the year only in the form of an egg or seed. The majority of Insects belong to this category, as do also our large Jelly-Fishes; many others have a slow growth, extending over several years, during which they reach their maturity, and for a longer or shorter time produce broods at fixed intervals; while others, again, reach their mature state very rapidly, and produce a number of successive generations in a comparatively short time, it may be in a single season.



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I do not intend to enter upon the chapter of special differences of development among animals, for in this article I have aimed only to show that the egg lives, that it is itself the young animal, and that the vital principle is active in it from the earliest period of its existence. But I would say to all young students of Embryology that their next aim should be to study those intermediate phases in the life of a young animal, when, having already acquired independent existence, it has not yet reached the condition of the adult. Here lies an inexhaustible mine of valuable information unappropriated, from which, as my limited experience has already taught me, may be gathered the evidence for the solution of the most perplexing problems of our science. Here we shall find the true tests by which to determine the various kinds and different degrees of affinity which animals now living bear not only to one another, but also to those that have preceded them in past times. Here we shall find, not a material connection by which blind laws of matter have evolved the whole creation out of a single germ, but the clue to that intellectual conception which spans the whole series of the geological ages and is perfectly consistent in all its parts. In this sense the present will indeed explain the past, and the young naturalist is happy who enters upon his life of investigation now, when the problems that were dark to all his predecessors have received new light from the sciences of Palaeontology and Embryology.

* * * * *

BLIND TOM.

Only a germ in a withered flower,
That the rain will bring out—sometime.

Sometime in the year 1850, a tobacco-planter in Southern Georgia (Perry H. Oliver by name) bought a likely negro woman with some other field-hands. She was stout, tough-muscled, willing, promised to be a remunerative servant; her baby, however, a boy a few months old, was only thrown in as a makeweight to the bargain, or rather because Mr. Oliver would not consent to separate mother and child. Charity only could have induced him to take the picaninny, in fact, for he was but a lump of black flesh, born blind, and with the vacant grin of idiocy, they thought, already stamped on his face. The two slaves were purchased, I believe, from a trader: it has been impossible, therefore, for me to ascertain where Tom was born, or when. Georgia field-hands are not accurate as Jews in preserving their genealogy; *they* do not anticipate a Messiah. A white man, you know, has that vague hope unconsciously latent in him, that he is, or shall give birth to, the great man of his race, a helper, a provider for the world's hunger: so he grows jealous with his blood; the dead grandfather may have presaged the possible son; besides, it is a debt he owes to this coming Saul to tell him whence he came. There are some classes, free and slave, out of whom society has crushed this



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hope: they have no clan, no family-names among them, therefore. This idiot-boy, chosen by God to be anointed with the holy chrism, is only "Tom,"—"Blind Tom," they call him in all the Southern States, with a kind cadence always, being proud and fond of him; and yet—nothing but Tom? That is pitiful. Just a mushroom-growth,—unkinned, unexpected, not hoped for, for generations, owning no name to purify and honor and give away when he is dead. His mother, at work to-day in the Oliver plantations, can never comprehend why her boy is famous; this gift of God to him means nothing to her. Nothing to him, either, which is saddest of all; he is unconscious, wears his crown as an idiot might. Whose fault is that? Deeper than slavery the evil lies.

Mr. Oliver did his duty well to the boy, being an observant and thoroughly kind master. The plantation was large, heartsome, faced the sun, swarmed with little black urchins, with plenty to eat, and nothing to do.

All that Tom required, as he fattened out of baby- into boyhood, was room in which to be warm, on the grass-patch, or by the kitchen-fires, to be stupid, flabby, sleepy,—kicked and petted alternately by the other hands. He had a habit of crawling up on the porches and verandas of the mansion and squatting there in the sun, waiting for a kind word or touch from those who went in and out. He seldom failed to receive it. Southerners know nothing of the physical shiver of aversion with which even the Abolitionists of the North touch the negro: so Tom, through his very helplessness, came to be a sort of pet in the family, a playmate, occasionally, of Mr. Oliver's own infant children. The boy, creeping about day after day in the hot light, was as repugnant an object as the lizards in the neighboring swamp, and promised to be of as little use to his master. He was of the lowest negro type, from which only field-hands can be made,—coal-black, with protruding heels, the ape-jaw, blubber-lips constantly open, the sightless eyes closed, and the head thrown far back on the shoulders, lying on the back, in fact, a habit which he still retains, and which adds to the imbecile character of the face. Until he was seven years of age, Tom was regarded on the plantation as an idiot, not unjustly; for at the present time his judgment and reason rank but as those of a child four years old. He showed a dog-like affection for some members of the household,—a son of Mr. Oliver's especially,—and a keen, nervous sensitiveness to the slightest blame or praise from them,—possessed, too, a low animal irritability of temper, giving way to inarticulate yelps of passion when provoked. That is all, so far; we find no other outgrowth of intellect or soul from the boy: just the same record as that of thousands of imbecile negro-children. Generations of heathendom and slavery have dredged the inherited brains and temperaments of such children tolerably clean of all traces of power or purity, —palsied the brain, brutalized the nature. Tom apparently fared no better than his fellows.



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It was not until 1857 that those phenomenal powers latent in the boy were suddenly developed, which stamped him the anomaly he is to-day.

One night, sometime in the summer of that year, Mr. Oliver's family were wakened by the sound of music in the drawing-room: not only the simple airs, but the most difficult exercises usually played by his daughters, were repeated again and again, the touch of the musician being timid, but singularly true and delicate. Going down, they found Tom, who had been left asleep in the hall, seated at the piano in an ecstasy of delight, breaking out at the end of each successful fugue into shouts of laughter, kicking his heels and clapping his hands. This was the first time he had touched the piano.

Naturally, Tom became a nine-days' wonder on the plantation. He was brought in as an after-dinner's amusement; visitors asked for him as the show of the place. There was hardly a conception, however, in the minds of those who heard him, of how deep the cause for wonder lay. The planters' wives and daughters of the neighborhood were not people who would be apt to comprehend music as a science, or to use it as a language; they only saw in the little negro, therefore, a remarkable facility for repeating the airs they drummed on their pianos,—in a different manner from theirs, it is true,—which bewildered them. They noticed, too, that, however the child's fingers fell on the keys, cadences followed, broken, wandering, yet of startling beauty and pathos. The house-servants, looking in through the open doors at the little black figure perched up before the instrument, while unknown, wild harmony drifted through the evening air, had a better conception of him. He was possessed; some ghost spoke through him: which is a fair enough definition of genius for a Georgian slave to offer.

Mr. Oliver, as we said, was indulgent. Tom was allowed to have constant access to the piano; in truth, he could not live without it; when deprived of music now, actual physical debility followed: the gnawing Something had found its food at last. No attempt was made, however, to give him any scientific musical teaching; nor—I wish it distinctly borne in mind—has he ever at any time received such instruction.

The planter began to wonder what kind of a creature this was which he had bought, flesh and soul. In what part of the unsightly baby-carcass had been stowed away these old airs, forgotten by every one else, and some of them never heard by the child but once, but which he now reproduced, every note intact, and with whatever quirk or quiddity of style belonged to the person who originally had sung or played them? Stranger still the harmonies which he had never heard, had learned from no man. The sluggish breath of the old house, being enchanted, grew into quaint and delicate whims of music, never the same, changing every day. Never glad: uncertain, sad minors always, vexing the content of the hearer,—one inarticulate, unanswered question of pain in all, making them one. Even the vulgarest listener was troubled, hardly knowing why,—how sorry Tom's music was!



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At last the time came when the door was to be opened, when some listener, not vulgar, recognizing the child as God made him, induced his master to remove him from the plantation. Something ought to be done for him; the world ought not to be cheated of this pleasure; besides—the money that could be made! So Mr. Oliver, with a kindly feeling for Tom, proud, too, of this agreeable monster which his plantation had grown, and sensible that it was a more fruitful source of revenue than tobacco-fields, set out with the boy, literally to seek their fortune.

The first exhibition of him was given, I think, in Savannah, Georgia; thence he was taken to Charleston, Richmond, to all the principal cities and towns in the Southern States.

This was in 1858. From that time until the present Tom has lived constantly an open life, petted, feted, his real talent befogged by exaggeration, and so pampered and coddled that one might suppose the only purpose was to corrupt and wear it out. For these reasons this statement is purposely guarded, restricted to plain, known facts.

No sooner had Tom been brought before the public than the pretensions put forward by his master commanded the scrutiny of both scientific and musical skeptics. His capacities were subjected to rigorous tests. Fortunately for the boy: for, so tried,—harshly, it is true, yet skilfully,—they not only bore the trial, but acknowledged the touch as skilful; every day new powers were developed, until he reached his limit, beyond which it is not probable he will ever pass. That limit, however, establishes him as an anomaly in musical science.

Physically, and in animal temperament, this negro ranks next to the lowest Guinea type: with strong appetites and gross bodily health, except in one particular, which will be mentioned hereafter. In the every-day apparent intellect, in reason or judgment, he is but one degree above an idiot,—incapable of comprehending the simplest conversation on ordinary topics, amused or enraged with trifles such as would affect a child of three years old. On the other side, his affections are alive, even vehement, delicate in their instinct as a dog's or an infant's; he will detect the step of any one dear to him in a crowd, and burst into tears, if not kindly spoken to.

His memory is so accurate that he can repeat, without the loss of a syllable, a discourse of fifteen minutes in length, of which he does not understand a word. Songs, too, in French or German, after a single hearing, he renders not only literally in words, but in notes, style, and expression. His voice, however, is discordant, and of small compass.



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In music, this boy of twelve years, born blind, utterly ignorant of a note, ignorant of every phase of so-called musical science, interprets severely classical composers with a clearness of conception in which he excels, and a skill in mechanism equal to that of our second-rate artists. His concerts usually include any themes selected by the audience from the higher grades of Italian or German opera. His comprehension of the meaning of music, as a prophetic or historical voice which few souls utter and fewer understand, is clear and vivid: he renders it thus, with whatever mastery of the mere material part he may possess, fingering, dramatic effects, *etc.*: these are but means to him, not an end, as with most artists. One could fancy that Tom was never traitor to the intent or soul of the theme. What God or the Devil meant to say by this or that harmony, what the soul of one man cried aloud to another in it, this boy knows, and is to that a faithful witness. His deaf, uninstructed soul has never been tampered with by art-critics who know the body well enough of music, but nothing of the living creature within. The world is full of these vulgar souls that palter with eternal Nature and the eternal Arts, blind to the Word who dwells among us therein. Tom, or the daemon in Tom, was not one of them.

With regard to his command of the instrument, two points have been especially noted by musicians: the unusual frequency of occurrence of *tours de force* in his playing, and the scientific precision of his manner of touch. For example, in a progression of augmented chords, his mode of fingering is invariably that of the schools, not that which would seem most natural to a blind child never taught to place a finger. Even when seated with his back to the piano, and made to play in that position, (a favorite feat in his concerts,) the touch is always scientifically accurate.

The peculiar power which Tom possesses, however, is one which requires no scientific knowledge of music in his audiences to appreciate. Placed at the instrument with any musician, he plays a perfect bass accompaniment to the treble of music *heard for the first time as he plays*. Then taking the seat vacated by the other performer, he instantly gives the entire piece, intact in brilliancy and symmetry, not a note lost or misplaced. The selections of music by which this power of Tom's was tested, two years ago, were sometimes fourteen and sixteen pages in length; on one occasion, at an exhibition at the White House, after a long concert, he was tried with two pieces,—one thirteen, the other twenty pages long, and was successful.



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We know of no parallel case to this in musical history. Grimm tells us, as one of the most remarkable manifestations of Mozart's infant genius, that at the age of nine he was required to give an accompaniment to an aria which he had never heard before, and without notes. There were false accords in the first attempt, he acknowledges; but the second was pure. When the music to which Tom plays *secondo* is strictly classical, he sometimes balks for an instant in passages; to do otherwise would argue a creative power equal to that of the master composers; but when any chordant harmony runs through it, (on which the glowing negro soul can seize, you know,) there are no "false accords," as with the infant Mozart. I wish to draw especial attention to this power of the boy, not only because it is, so far as I know, unmatched in the development of any musical talent, but because, considered in the context of his entire intellectual structure, it involves a curious problem. The mere repetition of music heard but once, even when, as in Tom's case, it is given with such incredible fidelity, and after the lapse of years, demands only a command of mechanical skill, and an abnormal condition of the power of memory; but to play *secondo* to music never heard or seen implies the comprehension of the full drift of the symphony in its current,—a capacity to create, in short. Yet such attempts as Tom has made to dictate music for publication do not sustain any such inference. They are only a few light marches, gallops, *etc.*, simple and plaintive enough, but with easily detected traces of remembered harmonies: very different from the strange, weird improvisations of every day. One would fancy that the mere attempt to bring this mysterious genius within him in bodily presence before the outer world woke, too, the idiotic nature to utter its reproachful, unable cry. Nor is this the only bar by which poor Tom's soul is put in mind of its foul bestial prison. After any too prolonged effort, such as those I have alluded to, his whole bodily frame gives way, and a complete exhaustion of the brain follows, accompanied with epileptic spasms. The trial at the White House, mentioned before, was successful, but was followed by days of illness.

Being a slave, Tom never was taken into a Free State; for the same reason his master refused advantageous offers from European managers. The highest points North at which his concerts were given were Baltimore and the upper Virginia towns. I heard him sometime in 1860. He remained a week or two in the town, playing every night.



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The concerts were unique enough. They were given in a great barn of a room, gaudy with hot, soot-stained frescoes, chandeliers, walls splotched with gilt. The audience was large, always; such as a provincial town affords: not the purest bench of musical criticism before which to bring poor Tom. Beaux and belles, siftings of old country families, whose grandfathers trapped and traded and married with the Indians,—the savage thickening of whose blood told itself in high cheekbones, flashing jewelry, champagne-bibbing, a comprehension of the tom-tom music of schottisches and polkas; money-made men and their wives, cooped up by respectability, taking concerts when they were given in town, taking the White Sulphur or Cape May in summer, taking beef for dinner, taking the pork-trade in winter,—*toute la vie en programme*; the *debris* of a town, the roughs, the boys, school-children,—Tom was nearly as well worth a quarter as the negro-minstrels; here and there a pair of reserved, homesick eyes, a peculiar, reticent face, some whey-skinned ward-teacher's, perhaps, or some German cobbler's, but hints of a hungry soul, to whom Beethoven and Mendelssohn knew how to preach an unerring gospel. The stage was broad, planked, with a drop-curtain behind,—the Doge marrying the sea, I believe; in front, a piano and chair.

Presently, Mr. Oliver, a well-natured looking man, (one thought of that,) came forward, leading and coaxing along a little black boy, dressed in white linen, somewhat fat and stubborn in build. Tom was not in a good humor that night; the evening before had refused to play altogether; so his master perspired anxiously before he could get him placed in rule before the audience, and repeat his own little speech, which sounded like a Georgia after-dinner gossip. The boy's head, as I said, rested on his back, his mouth wide open constantly; his great blubber lips and shining teeth, therefore, were all you saw when he faced you. He required to be petted and bought like any other weak-minded child. The concert was a mixture of music, whining, coaxing, and promised candy and cake.

He seated himself at last before the piano, a full half-yard distant, stretching out his arms full-length, like an ape clawing for food,—his feet, when not on the pedals, squirming and twisting incessantly,—answering some joke of his master's with a loud "Yha! yha!" Nothing indexes the brain like the laugh; this was idiotic.

"Now, Tom, boy, something we like from Verdi."

The head fell farther back, the claws began to work, and those of his harmonies which you would have chosen as the purest exponents of passion began to float through the room. Selections from Weber, Beethoven, and others whom I have forgotten, followed. At the close of each piece, Tom, without waiting for the audience, would himself applaud violently, kicking, pounding his hands together, turning always to his master for the approving pat on the head. Songs,



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recitations such as I have described, filled up the first part of the evening; then a musician from the audience went upon the stage to put the boy's powers to the final test. Songs and intricate symphonies were given, which it was most improbable the boy could ever have heard; he remained standing, utterly motionless, until they were finished, and for a moment or two after,—then, seating himself, gave them without the break of a note. Others followed, more difficult, in which he played the bass accompaniment in the manner I have described, repeating instantly the treble. The child looked dull, wearied, during this part of the trial, and his master, perceiving it, announced the exhibition closed, when the musician (who was a citizen of the town, by-the-way) drew out a thick roll of score, which he explained to be a Fantasia of his own composition, never published.

“*This* it was impossible the boy could have heard; there could be no trick of memory in this; and on this trial,” triumphantly, “Tom would fail.”

The manuscript was some fourteen pages long,—variations on an inanimate theme. Mr. Oliver refused to submit the boy's brain to so cruel a test; some of the audience, even, interfered; but the musician insisted, and took his place. Tom sat beside him,—his head rolling nervously from side to side,—struck the opening cadence, and then, from the first note to the last, gave the *secondo* triumphantly. Jumping up, he fairly shoved the man from his seat, and proceeded to play the treble with more brilliancy and power than its composer. When he struck the last octave, he sprang up, yelling with delight:—

“Um's got him, Massa! um's got him!” cheering and rolling about the stage.

The cheers of the audience—for the boys especially did not wait to clap—excited him the more. It was an hour before his master could quiet his hysteric agitation.

That feature of the concerts which was the most painful I have not touched upon: the moments when his master was talking, and Tom was left to himself,—when a weary despair seemed to settle down on the distorted face, and the stubby little black fingers, wandering over the keys, spoke for Tom's own caged soul within. Never, by any chance, a merry, childish laugh of music in the broken cadences; tender or wild, a defiant outcry, a tired sigh breaking down into silence. Whatever wearied voice it took, the same bitter, hopeless soul spoke through all: “Bless me, even me, also, O my Father!” A something that took all the pain and pathos of the world into its weak, pitiful cry.

Some beautiful caged spirit, one could not but know, struggled for breath under that brutal form and idiotic brain. I wonder when it will be free. Not in this life: the bars are too heavy.



You cannot help Tom, either; all the war is between you. He was in Richmond in May. But (do you hate the moral to a story?) in your own kitchen, in your own back-alley, there are spirits as beautiful, caged in forms as bestial, that you *could* set free, if you pleased. Don't call it bad taste in me to speak for them. You know they are more to be pitied than Tom,—for they are dumb.



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KINDERGARTEN—WHAT IS IT?

What is a Kindergarten? I will reply by negatives. It is not the old-fashioned infant-school. That was a narrow institution, comparatively; the object being (I do not speak of Pestalozzi's own, but that which we have had in this country and in England) to take the children of poor laborers, and keep them out of the fire and the streets, while their mothers went to their necessary labor. Very good things, indeed, in their way. Their principle of discipline was to circumvent the wills of children, in every way that would enable their teachers to keep them within bounds, and quiet. It was certainly better that they should learn to sing *by rote* the Creed and the "definitions" of scientific terms, and such like, than to learn the profanity and obscenity of the streets, which was the alternative. But no mother who wished for anything which might be called the *development* of her child would think of putting it into an infant-school, especially if she lived in the country, amid

"the mighty sum
Of things forever speaking,"

where any "old grey stone" would altogether surpass, as a stand-point, the bench of the highest class of an infant-school. In short, they did not state the problem of infant culture with any breadth, and accomplished nothing of general interest on the subject.

Neither is the primary public school a Kindergarten, though it is but justice to the capabilities of that praiseworthy institution, so important in default of a better, to say that in one of them, at the North End of Boston, an enterprising and genial teacher has introduced one feature of Froebel's plan. She has actually given to each of her little children a box of playthings, wherewith to amuse itself according to its own sweet will, at all times when not under direct instruction,—necessarily, in her case, on condition of its being perfectly quiet; and this one thing makes this primary school the best one in Boston, both as respects the attainments of the scholars and their good behavior.

Kindergarten means a garden of children, and Froebel, the inventor of it, or rather, as he would prefer to express it, *the discoverer of the method of Nature*, meant to symbolize by the name the spirit and plan of treatment. How does the gardener treat his plants? He studies their individual natures, and puts them into such circumstances of soil and atmosphere as enable them to grow, flower, and bring forth fruit,—also to renew their manifestation year after year. He does not expect to succeed unless he learns all their wants, and the circumstances in which these wants will be supplied, and all their possibilities of beauty and use, and the means of giving them opportunity to be perfected. On the other hand, while he knows that they must not be forced against their individual natures, he does not leave them to grow wild, but prunes redundancies,

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removes destructive worms and bugs from their leaves and stems, and weeds from their vicinity,—carefully watching to learn what peculiar insects affect what particular plants, and how the former can be destroyed without injuring the vitality of the latter. After all the most careful gardener can do, he knows that the form of the plant is predetermined in the germ or seed, and that the inward tendency must concur with a multitude of influences, the most powerful and subtle of which is removed in place ninety-five millions of miles away.

In the Kindergarten *children* are treated on an analogous plan. It presupposes gardeners of the mind, who are quite aware that they have as little power to override the characteristic individuality of a child, or to predetermine this characteristic, as the gardener of plants to say that a lily shall be a rose. But notwithstanding this limitation on one side, and the necessity for concurrence of the Spirit on the other,—which is more independent of our modification than the remote sun,—yet they must feel responsible, after all, for the perfection of the development, in so far as removing every impediment, preserving every condition, and pruning every redundancy.

This analogy of education to the gardener's art is so striking, both as regards what we can and what we cannot do, that Froebel has put every educator into a most suggestive Normal School, by the very word which he has given to his seminary,—Kindergarten.

If every school-teacher in the land had a garden of flowers and fruits to cultivate, it could hardly fail that he would learn to be wise in his vocation. For suitable preparation, the first, second, and third thing is, to

“Come forth into the light of things,
Let Nature be your teacher.”

The “new education,” as the French call it, begins with children in the mother's arms. Froebel had the nurses bring to his establishment, in Hamburg, children who could not talk, who were not more than three months old, and trained the nurses to work on his principles and by his methods. This will hardly be done in this country, at least at present; but to supply the place of such a class, a lady of Boston has prepared and published, under copyright, Froebel's First Gift, consisting of six soft balls of the three primary and the three secondary colors, which are sold in a box, with a little manual for mothers, in which the true principle and plan of tending babies, so as not to rasp their nerves, but to amuse without wearying them, is very happily suggested. There is no mother or nurse who would not be assisted by this little manual essentially. As it says in the beginning,—“Tending babies is an art, and every art is founded on a science of observations; for love is not wisdom, but love must act *according to wisdom* in order to succeed. Mothers and nurses, however tender and kind-hearted, may, and oftenest do, weary and vex the nerves of children, in well-meant efforts to amuse them, and weary

themselves the while. Froebel's exercises, founded on the observations of an intelligent sensibility, are intended to amuse without wearying, to educate without vexing."

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Froebel's Second Gift for children, adapted to the age from one to two or three years, with another little book of directions, has also been published by the same lady, and is perhaps a still greater boon to every nursery; for this is the age when many a child's temper is ruined, and the inclination of the twig wrongly bent, through sheer *want of resource and idea*, on the part of nurses and mothers.

But it is to the next age—from three years old and upwards—that the Kindergarten becomes the desideratum, if not a necessity. The isolated home, made into a flower-vase by the application of the principles set forth in the Gifts[A] above mentioned, may do for babies. But every mother and nurse knows how hard it is to meet the demands of a child too young to be taught to read, but whose opening intelligence and irrepressible bodily activity are so hard to be met by an adult, however genial and active. Children generally take the temper of their whole lives from this period of their existence. Then “the twig is bent,” either towards that habit of self-defence which is an ever-renewing cause of selfishness, or to the sun of love-in-exercise, which is the exhaustless source of goodness and beauty.

[Footnote A: These Gifts, the private enterprise of an invalid lady, the same who first brought the subject of Kindergartens so favorably before the public in the *Christian Examiner* for November, 1858, can be procured at the Kindergarten, 15 Pinckney Street, Boston.]

The indispensable thing now is a sufficient society of children. It is only in the society of equals that the social instinct can be gratified, and come into equilibrium with the instinct of self-preservation. Self-love, and love of others, are equally natural; and before reason is developed, and the proper spiritual life begins, sweet and beautiful childhood may bloom out and imparadise our mortal life. Let us only give the social instinct of children its fair chance. For this purpose, a few will not do. The children of one family are not enough, and do not come along fast enough. A large company should be gathered out of many families. It will be found that the little things are at once taken out of themselves, and become interested in each other. In the variety, affinities develop themselves very prettily, and the rough points of rampant individualities wear off. We have seen a highly gifted child, who, at home, was—to use a vulgar, but expressive word—pesky and odious, with the exacting demands of a powerful, but untrained mind and heart, become “sweet as roses” spontaneously, amidst the rebound of a large, well-ordered, and carefully watched child-society. Anxious mothers have brought us children, with a thousand deprecations and explanations of their characters, as if they thought we were going to find them little monsters, which their motherly hearts were persuaded they were not, though they behaved like little sanchos at home,—and, behold, they were as harmonious,

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from the very beginning, as if they had undergone the subduing influence of a lifetime. We are quite sure that children begin with loving others quite as intensely as they love themselves,—forgetting themselves in their love of others,—if they only have as fair a chance of being benevolent and self-sacrificing as of being selfish. Sympathy is as much a natural instinct as self-love, and no more or less innocent, in a moral point of view. Either principle alone makes an ugly and depraved form of natural character. Balanced, they give the element of happiness, and the conditions of spiritual goodness and truth,—making children fit temples for the Holy Ghost to dwell in.

A Kindergarten, then, is children in society,—a commonwealth or republic of children,—whose laws are all part and parcel of the Higher Law alone. It may be contrasted, in every particular, with the old-fashioned school, which is an absolute monarchy, where the children are subjected to a lower expediency, having for its prime end quietness, or such order as has “reigned in Warsaw” since 1831.

But let us not be misunderstood. We are not of those who think that children, in any condition whatever, will inevitably develop into beauty and goodness. Human nature tends to revolve in a vicious circle, around the individuality; and children must have over them, in the person of a wise and careful teacher, a power which shall deal with them as God deals with the mature, presenting the claims of sympathy and truth whenever they presumptuously or unconsciously fall into selfishness. We have the best conditions of moral culture in a company large enough for the exacting disposition of the solitary child to be balanced by the claims made by others on the common stock of enjoyment,—there being a reasonable oversight of older persons, wide-awake to anticipate, prevent, and adjust the rival pretensions which must always arise where there are finite beings with infinite desires, while Reason, whose proper object is God, is yet undeveloped.

Let the teacher always take for granted that the law of love is quick within, whatever are appearances, and the better self will generally respond. In proportion as the child is young and unsophisticated, will be the certainty of the response to a teacher of simple faith:

“There are who ask not if thine eye
Be on them,—who, in love and truth,
Where no misgiving is, rely
Upon the genial sense of youth.

“And blest are they who in the main This faith even now do entertain,
Live in the spirit of this creed,
Yet find another strength, according to their need.”

Such are the natural Kindergartners, who prevent disorder by employing and entertaining children, so that they are kept in an accommodating and loving mood by



never being thrown on self-defence,—and when selfishness is aroused, who check it by an appeal to sympathy, or Conscience, which is the presentiment of reason, a fore-feeling of moral order, for whose culture material order is indispensable.



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But order must be kept by the child, not only unconsciously, but intentionally. Order is the child of reason, and in turn cultivates the intellectual principle. To bring out order on the physical plane, the Kindergarten makes it a serious purpose to organize *romping*, and set it to music, which cultivates the physical nature also. Romping is the ecstasy of the body, and we shall find that in proportion as children tend to be violent they are vigorous in body. There is always morbid weakness of some kind where there is no instinct for hard play; and it begins to be the common sense that energetic physical activity must not be repressed, but favored. Some plan of play prevents the little creatures from hurting each other, and fancy naturally furnishes the plan,—the mind unfolding itself in fancies, which are easily quickened and led in harmless directions by an adult of any resource. Those who have not imagination themselves must seek the aid of the Kindergarten guides, where will be found arranged to music the labors of the peasant, and cooper, and sawyer, the wind-mill, the watermill, the weather-vane, the clock, the pigeon-house, the hares, the bees, and the cuckoo. Children delight to personate animals, and a fine genius could not better employ itself than in inventing a great many more plays, setting them to rhythmical words, describing what is to be done. Every variety of bodily exercise might be made and kept within the bounds of order and beauty by plays involving the motions of different animals and machines of industry. Kindergarten plays are easy intellectual exercises; for to do anything whatever with a thought beforehand develops the mind or quickens the intelligence; and thought of this kind does not try intellect, or check physical development, which last must never be sacrificed in the process of education.

There are enough instances of marvellous acquisition in infancy to show that imbibing with the mind is as natural as with the body, if suitable beverage is put to the lips; but in most cases the mind's power is balanced by instincts of body, which should have priority, if they cannot certainly be in full harmony. The mind can afford to wait for the maturing of the body, for it survives the body; while the body cannot afford to wait for the mind, but is irretrievably stunted, if the nervous energy is not free to stimulate its special organs at least equally with those of the mind.

It is not, however, necessary to sacrifice the culture of either mind or body, but to harmonize them. They can and ought to grow together. They mutually help each other.

Doctor Dio Lewis's "Free Exercises" are also suitable to the Kindergarten, and may be taken in short lessons of a quarter of an hour, or even of ten minutes. Children are fond of precision also, and it will be found that they like the teaching best, when they are made to do the exercises exactly right, and in perfect time to the music.

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But the regular gymnastics and the romping plays must be alternated with quiet employments, of course, but still active. They will sing at their plays by rote; and also should be taught other songs by rote. But there can be introduced a regular drill on the scale, which should never last more than ten minutes at a time. This, if well managed, will cultivate their ears and voices, so that in the course of a year they will become very expert in telling any note struck, if not in striking it. The ear is cultivated sooner than the voice, and they may be taught to name the octave as 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and their imaginations impressed by drawing a ladder of eight rounds on the blackboard, to signify that the voice rises by regular gradation. This will fix their attention, and their interest will not flag, if the teacher has any tact.

Slates and pencils are indispensable in a Kindergarten from the first. One side of a slate can be ruled with a sharp point in small squares, and if their fancy is interested by telling them to make a fish-net, they will carefully make their pencils follow these lines, —which makes a first exercise in drawing. Their little fingers are so unmanageable that at first they will not be able to make straight lines even with this help. For variety, little patterns can be given them, drawn on the blackboard, (or on paper similarly ruled,) of picture-frames and patterns for carpets. When they can make squares well, they can be shown how to cross them with diagonals, and make circles inside of the squares, and outside of them, and encouraged to draw on the other side of the slate, from their own fancy, or from objects. Entire sympathy and no destructive criticism should meet every effort. Self-confidence is the first requisite for success. If they think they have had success, it is indispensable that it should be echoed from without. Of course there will be poor perspective; and even Schmidt's method of perspective cannot be introduced to very young children. A natural talent for perspective sometimes shows itself, which by-and-by can be perfected by Schmidt's method.[B]

[Footnote B: See *Common School Journal* for 1842-3.]

But little children will not draw long at a time. Nice manipulation, which is important, can be taught, and the eye for form cultivated, by drawing for them birds and letting them prick the lines. It will enchant them to have something pretty to carry home now and then. Perforated board can also be used to teach them the use of a needle and thread. They will like to make the outlines of ships and steamboats, birds, *etc.*, which can be drawn for them with a lead pencil on the board by the teachers. Weaving strips of colored card-board into papers cut for them is another enchanting amusement, and can be made subservient to teaching them the harmonies of colors. In the latter part of the season, when they have an accumulation of pricked birds, or have learned to draw them, they can be allowed colors to paint them in a rough manner. It is, perhaps, worth while to say, that, in teaching children to draw on their slates, it is better for the teacher to draw at the moment on the blackboard than to give them patterns of birds, utensils, *etc.*, because then the children will see how to begin and proceed, and are not discouraged by the mechanical perfection of their model.



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Drawing ought always rather to precede reading and writing, as the minute appreciation of forms is the proper preparation for these. But reading and writing may come into Kindergarten exercises at once, if reading is taught by the phonic method, (which saves all perplexity to the child's brain,) and accompanied by printing on the slate. It then alternates with other things, as one of the amusements. We will describe how we have seen it taught. The class sat before a blackboard, with slates and pencils. The teacher said, "Now let us make all the sounds that we can with the lips: First, put the lips gently together and sound m," (not *em*,)—which they all did. Then she said,—“Now let us draw it on the blackboard,—three short straight marks by the side of each other, and join them on the top,—that is m. What is it?” They sounded m, and made three marks and joined them on the top, with more or less success. The teacher said,—“Now put your lips close together and say p.” (This is mute and to be whispered). They all imitated the motion made. She said,—“Now let us write it; one straight mark, then the upper lip puffed out at the top.” M and p, to be written and distinguished, are perhaps enough for one lesson, which should not reach half an hour in length. At the next lesson these were repeated again. Then the teacher said,—“Now put your lips together and make the same motion as you did to say p; but make a little more sound, and it will be b” (which is sonorous). “You must write it differently from p;—you must make a short mark and put the *under* lip on.” “Now put your teeth on your under lip and say f.” (She gave the power.) “You must write it by making a short straight mark make a bow, and then cross it with a little mark across the middle.” “Now fix your lips in the same manner and sound a little, and you will make v. Write it by making two little marks meet at the bottom.”

This last letter was made a separate lesson of, and the other lessons were reviewed. The teacher then said,—“Now you have learned some letters,—all the lip—letters,”—making them over, and asking what each was. She afterwards added w,—giving its power and form, and put it with the lip-letters. At the next lesson they were told to make the letters with their lips, and she wrote them down on the board, and then said,— “Now we will make some tooth-letters. Put your teeth together and say t.” (She gave the power, and showed them how to write it.) “Now put your teeth together and make a sound and it will be d.” “That is written just like b, only we put the lip behind.” “Now put your teeth together and hiss, and then make this little crooked snake (s). Then fix your teeth in the same manner and buzz like a bee. You write z pointed this way.” “Now put your teeth together and say j, written with a dot.” At the next lessons the throat-letters were given; first the hard guttural was sounded, and they were told three ways to write it, c, k, q, distinguished as *round*, *high*, and *with a tail*. C was not sounded *see*, but *ke* (ke, ka, ku). Another lesson gave them the soft guttural g, but did not sound it *jee*; and the aspirate, but did not call it *aitch*.



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Another lesson gave the vowels, (or voice-letters, as she called them,) and it was made lively by her writing afterwards all of them in one word, *mieaou*, and calling it the cat's song. It took from a week to ten days to teach these letters, one lesson a day of about twenty minutes. Then came words: *mamma*, *papa*, *puss*, *pussy*, *etc.* The vowels were always sounded as in Italian, and *i* and *y* distinguished as *with the dot* and *with a tail*. At first only one word was the lesson, and the letters were reviewed in their divisions of lip-letters, throat-letters, tooth-letters, voice-letters. The latter were sounded the Italian way, as in the words *arm*, *egg*, *ink*, *oak*, and *Per_u_*. This teacher had Miss Peabody's "First Nursery Reading-Book," and when she had taught the class to make all the words on the first page of it, she gave each of the children the book and told them to find first one word and then another. It was a great pleasure to them to be told that now they could read. They were encouraged to copy the words out of the book upon their slates.

The "First Nursery Reading-Book" has in it *no* words that have exceptions in their spelling to the sounds given to the children as the powers of the letters. Nor has it any diphthong or combinations of letters, such as *oi*, *ou*, *ch*, *sh*, *th*. After they could read it at sight, they were told that all words were not so regular, and their attention was called to the initial sounds of *thin*, *shin*, and *chin*, and to the proper diphthongs, *ou*, *oi*, and *au*, and they wrote words considering these as additional characters. Then "Mother Goose" was put into their hands, and they were made to read by rote the songs they already knew by heart, and to copy them. It was a great entertainment to find the *queer* words, and these were made the nucleus of groups of similar words which were written on the blackboard and copied on their slates.

We have thought it worth while to give in detail this method of teaching to read, because it is the most entertaining to children to be taught so, and because many successful instances of the pursual of this plan have come under our observation; and one advantage of it has been, that the children so taught, though never going through the common spelling-lessons, have uniformly exhibited a rare exactness in orthography.

In going through this process, the children learn to print very nicely, and generally can do so sooner than they can read. It is a small matter afterwards to teach them to turn the print into script. They should be taught to write with the lead pencil before the pen, whose use need not come into the Kindergarten.



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But we must not omit one of the most important exercises for children in the Kindergarten,—that of block-building. Froebel has four Gifts of blocks. Ronge's "Kindergarten Guide" has pages of royal octavo filled with engraved forms that can be made by variously laying eight little cubes and sixteen little planes two inches long, one inch broad, and one-half an inch thick. Chairs, tables, stables, sofas, garden-seats, and innumerable forms of symmetry, make an immense resource for children, who also should be led to invent other forms and imitate other objects. So quick are the fancies of children, that the blocks will serve also as symbols of everything in Nature and imagination. We have seen an ingenious teacher assemble a class of children around her large table, to each of whom she had given the blocks. The first thing was to count them, a great process of arithmetic to most of them. Then she made something and explained it. It was perhaps a light-house,—and some blocks would represent rocks near it to be avoided, and ships sailing in the ocean; or perhaps it was a hen-coop, with chickens inside, and a fox prowling about outside, and a boy who was going to catch the fox and save the fowls. Then she told each child to make something, and when it was done hold up a hand. The first one she asked to explain, and then went round the class. If one began to speak before another had ended, she would hold up her finger and say,—“It is not your turn.” In the course of the winter, she taught, over these blocks, a great deal about the habits of animals. She studied natural history in order to be perfectly accurate in her symbolic representation of the habitation of each animal, and their enemies were also represented by blocks. The children imitated these; and when they drew upon their imaginations for facts, and made fantastic creations, she would say,—“Those, I think, were Fairy hens” (or whatever); for it was her principle to accept everything, and thus tempt out their invention. The great value of this exercise is to get them into the habit of representing something they have thought by an outward symbol. The explanations they are always eager to give teach them to express themselves in words. Full scope is given to invention, whether in the direction of possibilities or of the impossibilities in which children's imaginations revel,—in either case the child being trained to the habit of embodiment of its thought.

Froebel thought it very desirable to have a garden where the children could cultivate flowers. He had one which he divided into lots for the several children, reserving a portion for his own share in which they could assist him. He thought it the happiest mode of calling their attention to the invisible God, whose power must be waited upon, after the conditions for growth are carefully arranged according to *laws* which they were to observe. Where a garden is impossible, a flowerpot with a plant in it for each child to take care of would do very well.



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But the best way to cultivate a sense of the presence of God is to draw the attention to the conscience, which is very active in children, and which seems to them (as we all can testify from our own remembrance) another than themselves, and yet themselves. We have heard a person say, that in her childhood she was puzzled to know which was herself, the voice of her inclination or of her conscience, for they were palpably two, and what a joyous thing it was when she was first convinced that one was the Spirit of God, whom unlucky teaching had previously embodied in a form of terror on a distant judgment-seat. Children are consecrated as soon as they get the spiritual idea, and it may be so presented that it shall make them happy as well as true. But the adult who enters into such conversation with a child must be careful not to shock and profane, instead of nurturing the soul. It is possible to avoid both discouraging and flattering views, and to give the most tender and elevating associations.

But children require not only an alternation of physical and mental amusements, but some instruction to be passively received. They delight in stories, and a wise teacher can make this subservient to the highest uses by reading beautiful creations of the imagination. Not only such household-stories as "Sanford and Merton," Mrs. Farrar's "Robinson Crusoe," and Salzmänn's "Elements of Morality," but symbolization like the heroes of Asgard, the legends of the Middle Ages, classic and chivalric tales, the legend of Saint George, and "Pilgrim's Progress," can in the mouth of a skilful reader be made subservient to moral culture. The reading sessions should not exceed ten or fifteen minutes.

Anything of the nature of scientific teaching should be done by presenting *objects* for examination and investigation.[C] Flowers and insects, shells, *etc.*, are easily handled. The observations should be drawn out of the children, not made to them, except as corrections of their mistakes. Experiments with the prism, and in crystallization and transformation, are useful and desirable to awaken taste for the sciences of Nature. In short, the Kindergarten should give the beginnings of everything. "What is well begun is half done."

[Footnote C: Calkin's *Object Lessons* will give hints.]

We must say a word about the locality and circumstances of a Kindergarten. There is published in Lausanne, France, a newspaper devoted to the interests of this mode of education, in whose early numbers is described a Kindergarten; which seems to be of the nature of a boarding-school, or, at least, the children are there all day. Each child has a garden, and there is one besides where they work in common. There are accommodations for keeping animals, and miniature tools to do mechanical labor of various kinds. In short, it is a child's world. But in this country, especially in New England, parents would not consent to be so much separated from their children, and a few hours of Kindergarten in the early part of the day will serve an excellent purpose,—using up the effervescent activity of children, who may healthily be left to themselves the rest of the time, to play or rest, comparatively unwatched.



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Two rooms are indispensable, if there is any variety of age. It is desirable that one should be sequestered to the quiet employments. A pianoforte is desirable, to lead the singing, and accompany the plays, gymnastics, frequent marchings, and dancing, when that is taught,—which it should be. But a hand-organ which plays fourteen tunes will help to supply the want of a piano, and a guitar in the hands of a ready teacher will do better than nothing.

Sometimes a genial mother and daughters might have a Kindergarten, and devote themselves and the house to it, especially if they live in one of our beautiful country-towns or cities. The habit, in the city of New York, of sending children to school in an omnibus, hired to go round the city and pick them up, suggests the possibility of a Kindergarten in one of those beautiful residences up in town, where there is a garden before or behind the house. It is impossible to keep Kindergarten *by the way*. It must be the main business of those who undertake it; for it is necessary that every individual child should be borne, as it were, on the heart of the *garteners*, in order that it be *inspired* with order, truth, and goodness. To develop a child from within outwards, we must plunge ourselves into its peculiarity of imagination and feeling. No one person could possibly endure such absorption, of life in labor unrelieved, and consequently two or three should unite in the undertaking in order to be able to relieve each other from the enormous strain on life. The compensations are, however, great. The charm of the various individuality, and of the refreshing presence of conscience yet unprofaned, is greater than can be found elsewhere in this work-day world. Those were not idle words which came from the lips of Wisdom Incarnate:—"Their angels do always behold the face of my Father": "Of such is the kingdom of heaven."

A PICTURE.

[AFTER WITHER.]

Sweet child, I prithee stand,
While I try my novel hand
At a portrait of thy face,
With its simple childish grace.

Cheeks as soft and finely hued
As the fleecy cloud imbued
With the roseate tint of morn
Ere the golden sun is born:—
Lips that like a rose-hedge curl,
Guarding well the gates of pearl,
—What care I for pearly gate?
By the rose-hedge will I wait:—
Chin that rounds with outline fine,



Melting off in hazy line;
As in misty summer noon,
Or beneath the harvest moon,
Curves the smooth and sandy shore,
Flowing off in dimness hoar:—
Eyes that roam like timid deer
Sheltered by a thicket near,
Peeping out between the boughs,
Or that, trusting, safely browse:—
Arched o'er all the forehead pure,
Giving us the prescience sure
Of an ever-growing light;
As in deepening summer night,
Over fields to ripen soon
Hangs the silver crescent moon.



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* * * * *

TWO AND ONE.

I.

The winter sun streamed pleasantly into the room. On the tables lay the mother's work of the morning,—the neatly folded clothes she had just been ironing. A window was opened a little way to let some air into the room too closely heated by the brisk fire. The air fanned the leaves of the ivy-plant that stood in the window, and of the primrose which seemed ready to open in the warm sun. Above, there hung a cage, and a canary-bird shouted out now and then its pleasure at the sunny day, with a half-dream perhaps of a tropical climate in the tropical air with which the coal-fire filled the room. Mrs. Schroder leaned back in her old-fashioned rocking-chair, and folded her hands, one over the other, ready to rest after her morning's labor. She was willing to take the repose won by her work; indeed, this was the only way she had managed to preserve her strength for all the work it was necessary for her to do. She had been conscious that her powers had answered for just so much and no more, and she had never been able to make further demands upon them.

When years before she was left a widow, with two sons to support and educate, all her friends and neighbors prophesied that her health would prove unequal to either work, and agreed that it was very fortunate that she had a rich relation or two to help her. But, unfortunately, the rich relations preferred helping only in their own way. One uncle agreed to send the older boy to his father's relations in Germany, while the other wished to take the younger with him to his home in the South; and an aunt-in-law promised Mrs. Schroder work enough as seamstress to support herself.

It is singular how hard it is, for those who have large means and resources, to understand how to supply the little wants and needs of those less fortunate. The smallest stream in the mountains will find its way through some little channel, over rocks, or slowly through quiet meadows, into the great rivers, and finally feeds the deep sea, which is very thankless, and thinks little of restoring what is so prodigally poured into it. It only knows how to sway up with its grand tide upon the broad beaches, or to wrestle with turreted rocks, or, for some miles, perhaps, up the great rivers, it is willing to leave some flavor of its salt strength. So it is that we little ones, to the last, pour out our little stores into the great seas of wealth,—and the Neptunes, the gods of riches, scarcely know how to return us our due, if they would.



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When Mrs. Schroder, then, refused these kindly offers, because she knew that her husband had wished his boys should be brought up together and in America, and because she could not separate them from each other or from herself, the relations thought best to leave her to her own will, and drew back, feeling that they had done their part for humanity and kinship. Now and then Mrs. Schroder received a present of a worn shawl or a bonnet out of date, and one New Year there came inclosed a dollar-bill apiece for the boys. Ernest threw his into the fire before his mother could stop him, while Harry said he would spend his for the very meanest thing he could think of; and that very night he bought some sausages with it, to satisfy, as he said, only their lowest wants.

Mrs. Schroder succeeded in carrying out her will, in spite of prophecy. Her very delicacy of body led her to husband her strength, while the boys very early learned that they must help their mother to get through her day's work. Her feebleness of health helped her, too, in another way,—by stopping their boy-quarrels.

“Boys, don't wrangle so! If you knew how it makes my head ache!”

When these words came from the mother resting in her chair, the quarrel ceased suddenly. It ended without settlement, to be sure, which is the best way of finishing up quarrels. There are always seeds of new wars sown in treaties of peace. Austria is not content with her share of Poland, and Russia privately determines upon another bite of Turkey. John thinks it very unjust that he must give up his ball to Tom, and resolves to have the matter out when they get down into the street; while Tom, equally dissatisfied, feels that he has been treated like a baby, and despises the umpire for the partial decision.

These two boys, indeed, had their perpetual quarrel. Harry, the older, always got on in the world. He had a strong arm, a jolly face, and a solid opinion of himself that made its way without his asking for it. Ernest, on the other hand, was obliged to be constantly dependent on his brother for defence, for his position with other boys at school,—as he grew up, for his position in life, even. Harry was the favorite always. The schoolmaster—or teacher, as we call him nowadays—liked Harry best, although he was always in scrapes, and often behindhand in his studies, while Ernest was punctual, quiet, and always knew his lessons, though his eyes looked dreamily through his books rather than into them.

Harry had great respect for Ernest's talent, made way for it, would willingly work for him. Ernest accepted these benefits: he could not help it, they were so generously offered. But the consciousness that he could not live without them weighed him down and made him moody. He alternately reproached himself for his ingratitude, and his brother for his favors. Sometimes he called himself a slave for being willing to accept them; at other times he would blame himself as a tyrant for making such demands upon an elder brother.



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As Mrs. Schroder leaned back in her chair after her morning's labor, the door opened, and a young girl came into the room. She had a fresh, bright face, a brown complexion, a full, round figure. She came in quickly, nodded cheerily to Mrs. Schroder, and knelt down in front of the fire to warm her hands.

"I did want to come in this morning," she said,—“the very last day! I should have liked to help you about Ernest's things. But Aunt Martha must needs have a supernumerary wash, and I have just come in from hanging the last of the clothes upon the line.”

"It is very good of you, Violet," answered Mrs. Schroder, "but I was glad to-day to have plenty to do. It is the thinking that troubles me. My boys are grown up into men, and Ernest is going! It is our first parting. To-day I would rather work than think."

Violet was the young girl's name. A stranger might think that the name did not suit her. In her manner was nothing of the shrinking nature that is a characteristic of the violet. Timidity and reserve she probably did have somewhere in her heart,—as all women do,—but it had never been her part to play them out. She had all her life been called upon to show only energy, activity, and self-reliance. She was an only child, and had been obliged to be son and daughter, brother and sister in one. Her father was the owner of the house in which were the rooms occupied by Mrs. Schroder and her sons. The little shop on the lower floor was his place of business. He was a watchmaker, had a few clocks on the shelves of his small establishment, and a limited display of jewelry in the window, together with a supply of watch-keys, and minute-hands and hour-hands for decayed watches. For though his sign proclaimed him a watchmaker, his occupation perforce was rather that of repairing and cleaning watches and clocks than in the higher branch of creation.

Violet's childhood was happy enough. She was left in unrestrained liberty outside of the little back-parlor, where her Aunt Martha held sway. Out of school-hours, her joy and delight were to join the school-boys in their wildest plays. She climbed fences, raced up and down alley-ways, stormed inoffensive door-yards, chased wandering cats with the best of them. She was a favorite champion among the boys,—placed at difficult points of espionage, whether it were over beast, man, woman, or boy. She was proud of mounting some imaginary rampart, or defending some dangerous position. Sometimes a taunt was hurled from the enemy upon her allies for associating with a "girl;" but it always received a contemptuous answer,—“You'd better look out, she could lick any one of you!” And at the reply, Violet would look down from her post on the picketed fence, shake her long curls triumphantly, and climb to some place inaccessible to the enemy, to show how useful her agility could be to her own party.



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The time of sorrow came at twilight, when the boys separated for their homes,—when Harry and Ernest clattered up to their mother's rooms. They could be boys still. They might throw open the house-doors with a shout and halloo, and fling away caps and boots with no more than an uncared-for reprimand. But Violet must go noiselessly through the dark entry, and, as she turned to close the door that let her into the parlor, she was greeted by Aunt Martha's "Now do shut the door quietly!" As she lowered the latch without any sound, she would say to herself, "Why is it that boys must have all the fun, and girls all the work?" She felt as if she shut out liberty and put on chains. Her work began then,—to lay the tea-table, to fetch and carry as Aunt Martha ordered. All this was pleasanter than the quiet evening that followed, because she liked the occupation and motion. But to be quiet the whole evening, that was a trial! After the tea-things were cleared away, she would sit awhile by the stove, imagining all sorts of excitements in the combustion within; but she could not keep still long without letting a clatter of shovel and tongs, or some vigorous blows of the poker, show what a glorious drum she thought the stove would make. Or if Aunt Martha suggested her unloved and neglected dolls, she would retire to the corner with them inevitably to come back in disgrace. Either the large wooden-headed doll came noisily down from the high-backed chair, where she had been placed as the Maid of Saragossa, or a suspicious smell of burning arose, when Joan of Arc really did take fire from the candle on her imaginary funeral-pile. Knitting was no more of a sedative, though for many years it had stilled Aunt Martha's nerves. It was singular how the cat contrived always to get hold of Violet's ball of yarn and keep it, in spite of Violet's activity and the jolly chase she had for it all round the room, over chairs and under tables. Even her father, during these long evenings, often looked up over his round spectacles, through which he was perusing a volume of the "Encyclopedia," to wonder if Violet could never be quiet.

As she grew up, there was activity enough in her life, through which her temperament could let off its steam: a large house to be cared for and kept in order, some of the lodgers to be waited upon, and Aunt Martha, with her failing strength, more exacting than ever. Her evenings now were her happy times, for she frequently spent them in Mrs. Schroder's room. One of the economies in the Schroders' life was that their pleasures were so cheap. What with Harry's genial gayety and Ernest's spiritual humor, and the gayety and humor of the friends that loved them, they did not have to pay for their hilarity on the stage. There were quiet evenings and noisy ones, and Violet liked them both. She liked to study languages with Ernest; she liked the books from the City Library that they read aloud,—romances that were taken for Mrs. Schroder's pleasure, Ruskins which Ernest enjoyed, and Harry's favorites, which, to tell the truth, were few. He begged to be made the reader,—otherwise, he confessed, he was in danger of falling asleep.



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Violet had grown up into a woman, and the boys had become men; and now she was kneeling in front of Mrs. Schroder's fire.

"Ernest's last day at home," she said, dreamily. "Oh, now I begin to pity Harry!"

"To pity Harry?" said Mrs. Schroder. "Yes, indeed! But it is Ernest that I think of most. He is going away among strangers. He depends upon Harry far more than Harry depends upon him."

"It is just that," said Violet. "Harry has always been the one to give. But it will be changed now, when Ernest comes home. You see, he will be great then. He has been dependent upon us, all along, because genius must move so slowly at first; but when he comes back, he will be above us, and, oh! how shall we know where to find him?"

"You do not mean that my boy will look down upon his mother?" said Mrs. Schroder, raising herself in her chair.

"Look down upon us?" cried Violet. "Oh, no! it is only the little that do that, that they may appear to be high. The truly great never look down. They are kneeling already, and they look up. If they only would look down upon us! But it is the old story: the body can do for a while without the spirit, can make its way in the world for a little, and meantime the spirit is dependent upon the body. Of course it could not live without the body,—what we call life. But by-and-by spirit must assert itself, and find its wings. And where, oh, where, will it rise to? Above us,—above us all!"

"How strangely you talk!" said Mrs. Schroder, looking into Violet's face. "What has this to do with poor Ernest?"

"I was thinking of poor Harry," said Violet. "All this time he has been working for Ernest. Harry has earned the money with which Ernest goes abroad,—which he has lived upon all these years,—not only his daily bread, but what his talent, his genius, whatever it is, has fed itself with. Ernest is too unpractical to have been able even to feed himself!"

"And he knows it, my poor Ernest!" said Mrs. Schroder. "This is why he should be pitied. It is hard for a generous nature to owe all to another. It has weighed Ernest down; it has embittered the love of the two brothers."

"But it is more bitter for Harry," persisted Violet. "All this time Ernest could think of the grand return he could bring when his time should come. But Harry! He brings the clay out of which Ernest moulds the statue; but the spirit that Ernest breathes into the form, —will Harry understand it or appreciate it? The body is very reverent of the soul. But I think the spirit is not grateful enough to the body. There comes a time when it says to it, 'I can do without thee!' and spurns the kind comrade which has helped it on so far. Yet it



could not have done without the joy of color and form, of sight and hearing, that the body has helped it to.”

“You do not mean that Ernest will ever spurn Harry?—they are brothers!” said poor Mrs. Schroder.



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Violet looked round and saw the troubled expression in Mrs. Schroder's face, and laughed as she laid her head caressingly in her friend's lap.

"I have frightened you with my talk," she said. "I believe the hot air in the room bewildered my senses and set me dreaming. Yes, Harry and Ernest are brothers, and I believe they will always work together and for each other. I have no business with forebodings, this laughing, sunny day. The March sun is melting the icicles, and they came clattering down upon me, as I was in the yard, with a happy, twinkling, childish laugh. There are spring sounds all about, water melting and dripping everywhere, full of joy. I am the last person, dear mother Schroder, to make you feel sad."

Violet got up quickly, and busied herself about the room: filled the canary's cup with water, drew out the table, and made all the usual preparations necessary for dinner, talking all the time gayly, till she had dispersed all the clouds on Mrs. Schroder's brow, and then turned to go away.

"You will stay and see Harry and Ernest?" asked Mrs. Schroder. "They have gone to make the last arrangements."

"Not now," said Violet. "They will like to be alone with you. I will see Ernest to bid him good-bye."

II.

Two years passed away. At the end of this time Mrs. Schroder died. They had passed on, as years go, slowly and quickly. Sometimes, as a carriage takes us through narrow city-streets, and we look in at the windows we are passing, we wonder at the close life that is going on behind them, and we say to ourselves, "How slow the life must be within those confined walls!" At other times, when our own life is cramped or jarred by circumstances, we look with envy on the happy family-circles we see smiling within, and have a fancy that the roses have fallen to others, and we only have the thorns. There are full years, and there are years of famine, just as there come moments to all that seem like a life-time, and lives that hurry themselves away in a passing of the pendulum. It is of no use to shake the hour-glass; yet, when we are counting upon time, the sands hurry down like snow-flakes.

It was true, as Violet had foreboded, that Harry missed Ernest. He went heavily about his work, and the house seemed silent without him. Harry confessed this sadly to Violet, when his brother had been gone about a year. They had heard from Ernest in Florence, that he was getting on well. He had found occupation in the workshop of a famous sculptor, and had time besides to carry out some of his own designs.



“He writes me,” said Harry, “that he will be able now to support himself, and that he does not need my help. Do you know, Violet, that takes the life out of me? I feel as if I had nothing to work for. I always felt a pride in working for Ernest, because I thought he was fitted for something better. Violet, it saddens me to think he can do without me. I go to my daily work; I lift my hammer and let it fall; but it is all mechanically; there is no vital force in the blow. It is hard to live without him.”



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“This is what I was afraid of,” said Violet. “I was afraid he would think he could do without us. But he cannot do without you.”

“Say that he cannot do without *us*” said Harry; “for he needs you, as I need you, and the question is, with which the need is greater.”

Violet turned red and pale, and said,—

“We cannot answer that question yet.”

After Mrs. Schroder died, it was sad enough in the old rooms. In the daytime, when Harry was away at his work, Violet would go up-stairs and put all things in order, and make them look as nearly as possible as they did when the mother was there. Harry came to pass his evenings with Violet.

A few days after his mother’s death, he said to Violet,—

“Is it not time for you to tell me that it is I who need you more than Ernest? He writes very happily now. He is succeeding; he has an order for his statue. He writes and thinks of nothing else but what he will create,—of the ideas that have been waiting for an expression. I am a carpenter still, I shall never be more, and my work will always be less and lower than my love. Could you be satisfied with him? He has attained now, Ernest has, what he was looking for; and have I not a right to my reward?”

The tears tumbled from Violet’s eyes.

“Dear, noble Harry! I am not ready for you yet. I do believe he is above us both, and satisfied to be above us both; but I am not ready yet.”

A day or two afterwards, Harry brought Violet a letter from Italy. It was from an artist friend of Ernest’s, whose wife and mother had kindly received him into their home. Carlo wrote now that Ernest had been taken very ill. They thought him recovering, but he was still very low, and his mind depressed, and he continued scarcely conscious of those around him. He talked wildly, and begged that his home friends would come to him; and though his new Italian friends promised him all that kindness could give, Carlo wrote to ask if it were not possible for his brother or his mother to come out. He had been working very hard, was just finishing an order that had occupied him the last year, and he had overtaken his mind as well as his body.

“You will go to him!” exclaimed Violet, when she had read the letter.

“If nothing better can be done,” answered Harry. “Only yesterday I made a contract for work with a hard master. It would be difficult to break it; but I will do it gladly, if there is nothing better to be done.”



“You mean that you would like to have me go to Ernest,” said Violet.

“Will you go?” asked Harry. “That will be the very best thing.”

Aunt Martha broke in here. She had been sitting quietly at the other side of the table, as usual, apparently engrossed with her knitting.

“You do not mean to send Violet to Italy, and to take care of Ernest?” she exclaimed.

“What are you thinking of? I would never consent to Violet’s going alone; it would not be proper.”



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Violet grew crimson at the reproof. She was standing beneath the light, and turned away her head.

“Not if I were Harry’s betrothed?” she asked.

Aunt Martha looked up quickly. She saw the glad, relieved expression of Harry’s face.

“If you are engaged to Harry, that is different, indeed!” she said.

It did make a difference in Aunt Martha’s thoughts. In the first place, it gave her pleasure. Harry was well-to-do in, the world. He would make a good husband for Violet, and a kindly one. She liked him better than she did Ernest. She had supposed Violet would marry one or other of the boys, and, “just because things went at cross-grain in the world,” she had always supposed Violet would prefer Ernest. She had never liked him herself. He was always spinning cobwebs in his brain; she never could understand a word of his talk. She did not believe he would live, and then Violet would be left a poor widow, as his mother had been left when her Hermann died. She remembered all about that. Ernest’s absence had encouraged her with regard to Harry; but two years had passed, and it seemed to her the two were no nearer an engagement.

But now it was settled; and if this foolish plan of Violet’s going to Italy had brought it about, the plan itself wore a different color.

Aunt Martha said no more of the impropriety. She reserved her complainings for the subject of the trouble of getting Violet ready, all of a sudden, for such a voyage.

Little trouble fell to Aunt Martha’s share. Violet went about it gladly. She advised directly with a friend who could tell her from experience exactly how little she would want, while Harry completed all the business arrangements. The activity, the adventure of it, suited Violet’s old tastes. She had no dread of a solitary voyage, of passing through countries whose languages she could not speak. Though burdened with anxiety for Ernest and for Harry, she went away with a glad heart. Unconsciously to herself, she reversed her old exclamation, saying to herself,—

“The men, indeed, should not have all the work, and the women all the play!”

The journey was in fact easily accomplished. At another time Violet’s thoughts would have been occupied with the scenes she passed through. Now she travelled as a devotee travels heavenward, making a monastery of the world, and convent-walls out of rays from Paradise. She thought only of the end of her journey; and everything touched her through the throbbings of her heart. On shipboard, she was busy with the poor old sick father whom his children were carrying home to his native land. In passing through Paris, she used all her time in helping a sister to find a brother; because her energy was



always helpful. In travelling across France, she looked at her companions, asking herself to what home they were going, what friends they were bound to meet. From Marseilles to Leghorn, she was the only one of the women-passengers who was not sick; and she was called upon for help in different languages, which she could understand only through the teachings of her heart.



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It was this same teacher that led her to understand Ernest's friends in Florence, when she had found them, and that led them to understand her. Ernest was in much the same state as when they wrote. He was growing stronger, but his mind seemed to wander.

"And do you know, dear lady," said Monica, Carlo's mother, "that we fear he has been starving,—starving, too, when we, his friends, had plenty, and would have been glad to give him? He was to have been paid for his work when he had finished it; and he had given up his other work for his master, that he might complete his own statue. Oh, you should see that! He is putting it into the marble,—or taking it out, rather, for it has life almost, and springs from the stone."

"But Ernest?" asked Violet.

"Well, then, just for want of money, he was starving,—so the doctor says, now. I suppose he was too proud to write home for money, and his wages had stopped. And he was too proud to eat our bread. That was hard of him. Just the poor food that we have, to think he should have been too proud to let us give it him!—that was not kind."

Ernest did not recognize Violet at first, but she took her place in the daily care of him. Monica begged that she would prepare food for him such as he had been used to have at home. She was very sure that would cure him. It would be almost as good for him as his native air. She was very glad a woman had come to take care of him. "His brother's betrothed,—a sister,—she would bring him back to life as no one else could."

Violet did bring him back to life. Ernest had become so accustomed to her presence in his half-conscious state, that he never showed surprise at finding her there. He hardly showed pleasure; only in her absence his feverish restlessness returned; in her presence he was quiet.

He grew strong enough to come out into the air to walk a little.

"I must go to work soon," he said one day. "Monsieur will be coming for his Psyche."

"Your Psyche! I have not seen it!" exclaimed Violet. "I have not dared to raise the covering."

They went in to look at it. Violet stood silent before it. Yes, as Monica had said, it was ready to spring from the marble. It seemed almost too spiritual for form, it scarcely needed the wings for flight, it was ethereal already,—marble only so long as it remained unfinished.

At last Violet spoke.



“Do not let it go! Do not finish it; it will leave the marble then, I know! Oh, Ernest, you have seen the spirit, and the spirit only! Could not you hold it to earth more closely than that? It was too bold a thought of you to try to mould the spirit alone. Is not the body precious, too? Why wilt you be so careless of that?”

“If the body would care for me,” said Ernest, “I would care for the body. Indeed, this work shows that I have cared for the body,” he went on. “One of these days, I shall receive money for my work; I have already sold my Psyche. One lives on money, you know. But it is but a poor battle,—the battle of life. I shall finish my Psyche, give it to the man who buys it, and then”——



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“And then you will come home, come home to us!” said Violet; “and we will take care of you. You shall not miss your Psyche!”

“And then,” continued Ernest, shaking his head, “then I shall go into Sicily. I shall help Garibaldi. I shall join the Italian cause.”

“Garibaldi! The cause!” exclaimed Violet. “Are you not ashamed to plead it? You know you would go then not for others, but to throw away your own life! You are tired of living, and you seek that way to rid yourself of life! Confess it at once!”

“Very well, then,” answered Ernest, “it is so.”

“Then do not sully a good cause with a traitor’s help,” said Violet, “nor take its noble name. The life you offer would be worth no more than a spent ball. You have been a coward in your own fight, and Garibaldi does not—nor does Italy—want a coward in his ranks. Oh, Ernest, forgive me my hard words! but it is our life that you are spending so freely, it is our blood that you want to pour out! If you cannot live for yourself, for me, will you not live for Harry’s sake?”

“For you, for you, Heart’s-Ease!” exclaimed Ernest, calling Violet by one of her old childish names, “But Harry lives for you, and you for him; and God knows there is no life left for me. But you are right: I am a coward and a bungler, because I can create no life. I give myself to you and him.”

Violet stood long before the statue of Psyche, cold as the marble, with hot fires raging within.

“He loves me, loves me as Harry does! His love is deeper, perhaps,—higher, perhaps. He was not above me,—he lifted me above himself, looked up to me! He dies for me!”

Presently she found Ernest.

“Ernest, you say you will do as we wish. I must go home directly, and without you. I shall take a vessel from Leghorn. Harry and I planned my going home that way. It is less expensive, more direct; and I confess I do not feel so strong about going home alone as I did in coming. My head is full of thoughts, and I could not take care of myself; but I would rather go alone. You will stay here, and we will write to you, or Harry will come for you. But you must take care of yourself; you must not starve yourself.”

Her Italian friends accompanied her to the vessel and bade her good-bye, Ernest was with them. She wrote to Harry the day she sailed. The vessel looked comfortable enough; it was well-laden, and in its hold was the marble statue of a great man,—great in worth as well as in weight.

A few weeks after Violet left, Harry appeared in Florence. He had just missed her letter.



“I came to bring you both home,” he said. “I finished my contract successfully, and gave myself this little vacation.”

Harry was dismayed to find that Violet was gone.

“But we will return directly, and arrive in time, perhaps, to greet her as she gets home.”

Monica urged,—



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“But you must not keep him long. See how much he has done in Italy! You will see he must come back again.”

“Monsieur” had been for his statue, and was to send for it the next day, more than satisfied with it.

Harry was astonished.

“Five hundred dollars! It would take me long enough to work that out! Ah, Ernest, your hammering is worth more than mine!”

Harry’s surprise was not merely for the money earned. When he saw the white marble figure, which brought into the poor room where it stood grandeur and riches and life and grace, he wondered still more.

“I see now,” he said. “You spent your life on this. No wonder you were starving when your spirit was putting itself into this mould!”

Harry was in a hurry to return. Ernest’s little affairs were quickly settled. Harry was surprised to find Italian life was so like home life in this one thing: he had been treated so kindly, just as he would have been in his own home,—just as Mrs. Schroder, and even Aunt Martha, would have treated a poor Italian stranger who had sought a lodging in their house; they had welcomed Harry with the same warmth and feeling with which they had all along cared for Ernest. This was something that Harry knew how to translate.

“When we were boys,” he said to Ernest, as they set out to return, “and you used to talk about Europe, we little thought I should travel into it so carelessly as I did when I came here. I crossed it much as a pair of compasses would on the map: my only points of rest were the home I left and the one I was reaching for.”

Much in the same way they passed through it again. Harry spoke of and observed outward things, but everything showed that it was but a superficial observation. His thoughts were with Violet.

“The Nereid! are you very sure the Nereid is a sound vessel?” he often asked.

“What should I know of the Nereid?” at last answered Ernest, impatiently.

“I believe you don’t care a rush for Violet!” cried Harry. “You can have dreams instead! Your Psyche, your winged angels and all your visions, they suffice you. While for me, —I tell you, Ernest, she is my flesh and blood, my meat and drink. To think of her alone on that ocean drives me wild; that inexorable sea haunts me night and day.” He turned to look at Ernest, and saw him pale and livid.



“God forgive me!” he said. “I know you love her, too! But it is our old quarrel; we cannot understand each other, yet cannot live either of us without the other. Yet I am glad to quarrel even in the old way. That is pleasant, after all, is it not?”

They had a long, stormy voyage home; and a delay in crossing France had made them miss the steamer they hoped to take. At each delay, Ernest grew more silent, sadder, his face darker, his features thinner and more sharpened. Harry was wild in his impatience, and angry, but more and more thoughtful and careful for Ernest.



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At last they reached the harbor. A friend met them who had been warned of their arrival by telegraph from Halifax. He met them to tell them of ill news; they would rather hear it from him.

The Nereid was lost,—lost just outside the Bay,—the vessel, the crew, all the passengers,—in a fearful storm of a week ago, the very storm that had delayed their own passage.

“Let us go home,” said Harry. “Where is it?” asked Ernest. “Why were we not lost in the same storm?” cried Harry. “How could we pass quietly along the very place?”

The brothers went home into the old room. Kindly hands had been caring for it,—had tried to place all things in their accustomed order. Even the canary had come back from Aunt Martha’s parlor.

There was a letter on the table. Harry saw that only. It was Violet’s letter, which she wrote on leaving Leghorn. He tore it from its cover,—then gave it, opened, to Ernest.

“You must read it for me,—I cannot!” and he hurried into an inner room.

Ernest held the letter helplessly and looked round. For him there was a double desolation in the room. The books stood untouched upon the shelves; his mother’s work-basket was laid aside. Suddenly there came back to him the memory of that last day at home,—the joyous spring-day in March,—which was so full of gay sounds. The clatter of the dropping ice, the happy laugh of the water breaking into freedom, the song of the canary, now hushed by the presence of strangers,—the thoughts of these made gay even that moment of parting. And with them came the image of the dear mother and of the warm-hearted Violet. Oh, the parting was happier than the return! Now there was silence in the room, and absence,—such unuse about all things,—such a terrible stillness! He longed for a voice, for a sound, for words.

In his hands were words, her own, her last words. Half unconsciously he read through the letter, as if unwillingly too, because it might not belong to him. Yet they were her words, and for him.

“DEAR HARRY,—

“Do you know that I love him?—that I love Ernest? I ought to have known it, just because I did not know how to confess it to myself or you. I thought he was above us both; and when I pitied myself that he could not love me, I pitied you, and my pity, perhaps, I mistook for love of you. Perhaps I mistook it, for I know not but I was conscious all the time of loving him. I learned the truth when I stood by the side of his Psyche, and saw, that, though she hovered from the marble, though he had won fame and success, he was unsatisfied still. It is true, he must always remain unsatisfied,



because it is his genius that thirsts, and it is my ideal that he loves, not me. But he is dying; he asks for me. You never could refuse him what he asked. You will give me to him? If you were not so generous and noble-hearted, I could not ask you both for your pardon and your pity. But you are both, and will do with me as you will.



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“Your

“VIOLET.”

As Ernest finished reading, as he was fully comprehending the meaning of the words which at first had struck him idly, Harry opened the door and came in. Ernest could not look up at first. He thought, perhaps, he was about to darken the sorrow already heavy enough upon his brother.

But when Harry spoke and Ernest looked into his face, he saw there the usual clear, strong expression.

“I am going to tell you, Ernest, what I should have said before,—what I went to Florence to tell you.

“After Violet left, the whole truth began to come upon me. She loved you; I had no right to her. She pitied me; that was why she clung to me. You know I cannot think quickly. It was long before it all came out clearly; but when it did come, I was anxious to act directly. I had finished my work; I went to tell you that Violet was yours; she should stay with you in that warm Italian air that you liked so much; she should bring you back to life. But I was too late. I know not if it is my failure that has brought about this sorrow, or if God has taken it into His own hands. I only know that she was yours living, she is yours now. I must tell you that in the first moment of that terrible shock of the loss, there came a wicked, selfish gleam of gladness that I had not given her up to you. But I have wiped that out with my tears, and I can tell you without shame that is yours, that I have given her to you.”

“We can both love her now,” said Ernest.

“If she were living, she might have separated us,” said Harry; “but since God has taken her, she makes us one.”

And the brothers read together Violet’s letter.

* * * * *

THE NEW ATLANTIC CABLE.

When the indefatigable Cyrus told our people, five years ago, that he was going to lay a telegraph-cable in the bed of the ocean between America and Europe, and place New York and London in instantaneous communication, our wide-awake and enterprising fellow-citizens said very coolly that they should like to see him do it!—a phrase intended to convey the idea that in their opinion he had promised a great deal more than he could perform. But Cyrus was as good as his word. The cable was laid, and worked for the



space of three weeks, conveying between the Old and New World four hundred messages of all sorts, and some of them of the greatest importance. Four years have elapsed since the fulfilment of that promise, and now Mr. Field comes again before the public and announces that a new Atlantic cable is going to be laid down, which is not only going to work, but is to be a permanent success; and this promise will likewise be fulfilled. You may shrug your shoulders, my friend, and look incredulous, but I assure you the grand idea will be realized, and speedily. I have been heretofore as incredulous as any one; but having examined the evidence in its favor, I am fully convinced not only of the feasibility of laying a cable, and of the certainty of its practical operation when laid, but of its complete indestructibility. If you will accompany me through the following pages, my doubting friend, I will convince you of the correctness of my conclusions.



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When the fact of the successful laying of the old Atlantic cable was known, there was no class of people in this country more surprised at the result than the electricians, engineers, and practical telegraphers. Meeting a friend of mine, an electrician, and who, by the way, is also a great mathematician, and, like all of his class, inclined to be very exact in his statements, I exclaimed, in all the warmth and exuberance of feeling engendered by so great an event,—

“Isn’t it glorious, this idea of being able to send our lightning across the ocean, and to talk with London and Paris as readily as we do with New York and New Orleans?”

“It is, indeed,” responded my friend, with equal enthusiasm; “my hopes are more than realized by this wonderful achievement.”

“Hopes realized!” exclaimed I. “Why, I didn’t consider there was one chance in a thousand of success,—did you?”

“Why, yes,” replied my exact mathematical friend; “I didn’t think the chances so much against the success of the enterprise as that. From the deductions which I drew from a very careful examination of all the facts I could obtain, I concluded that the chances of absolute failure were about ninety-seven and a half per cent.!”

For many of the facts contained in this article I am indebted to the very clear and able address delivered by Mr. Cyrus W. Field before the American Geographical and Statistical Society, at Clinton Hall, New York, in May last, upon the prospects of the Atlantic telegraph.

At the start, of course, every one was very ignorant of the work to be done in establishing a telegraph across the ocean. Submarine telegraphy was in its infancy, and aerial telegraphy had scarcely outgrown its swaddling-clothes. We had to grope our way in the dark. It was only by repeated experiments and repeated failures that we were able to find out all the conditions of success.

The Atlantic telegraph, it is said by some, was a failure. Well, if it were so, replies Mr. Field, I should say (as is said of many a man, that he did more by his death than by his life) that even in its failure it has been of immense benefit to the science of the world, for it has been the great experimenting cable. No electrician ever had so long a line to work upon before; and hence the science of submarine telegraphy never made such rapid progress as after that great experiment. In fact, all cables that have since been laid, where the managers availed themselves of the knowledge and experience obtained by the Atlantic cable, have been perfectly successful. All these triumphs over the sea are greatly indebted to the bold attempt to cross the Atlantic made four years ago.



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The first Atlantic cable, therefore, has accomplished a great work in deep-sea telegraphy, a branch of the art but little known before. In one sense it was a failure. In another it was a brilliant success. Despite every disadvantage, it was laid across the ocean; it was stretched from shore to shore; and for three weeks it continued to operate, —a time long enough to settle forever the scientific question whether it was possible to communicate between two continents so far apart. This was the work of the first Atlantic telegraph; and if it lies silent at the bottom of the ocean till the destruction of the globe, it has done enough for the science of the world and the benefit of mankind to entitle it to be held in honored and blessed memory.

Now, as to the prospect of success in another attempt to lay a telegraph across the ocean. The most erroneous opinions prevail as to the difficulties of laying submarine telegraphs in general, and securing them against injury. It is commonly supposed that the number of failures is much greater than of successes; whereas the fact is, that the later attempts, where made with proper care, have been almost uniformly successful. In proof of this I will refer to the printed "List of all the Submarine Telegraph-Cables manufactured and laid down by Messrs. Glass, Elliot, & Co., of London," from which it appears that within the space of eight years, from 1854 to 1862, they have manufactured and laid down twenty-five different cables, among which are included three of the longest lines connecting England with the Continent,—namely, from England to Holland, 140 miles, to Hanover, 280 miles, and to Denmark, 368 miles,—and the principal lines in the Mediterranean,—as from Italy to Corsica and thence to Toulon, from Malta to Sicily, and from Corfu to Otranto, and besides these, the two chief of all, that from France to Algiers, 520 miles, laid in 1860, and the other, laid only last year, from Malta to Alexandria, 1,535 miles! All together the lines laid by these manufacturers comprise a total of 3,739 miles; and though some have been lying at the bottom of the sea and working for eight years, each one of them is at this hour in as perfect condition as on the day it was laid down, with the exception of the two short lines laid in shallow water along the shore between Liverpool and Holyhead, 25 miles, and from Prince Edward's Island to New Brunswick, 11 miles; the latter of which was broken by a ship's anchor, and the former by the anchor of the Royal Charter during the gale in which she was wrecked, both of which can be easily repaired.



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Where failures have occurred in submarine telegraphs, the causes are now well understood and easily to be avoided. Thus with the first Atlantic cable, its defects have all been carefully investigated by scientific men, and may be easily guarded against. When this cable was in process of manufacture in the factory of Messrs. Glass, Elliot, & Co., in Greenwich, near London, it was coiled in four large vats, and there left exposed, day after day, to the heat of a summer sun, which was intensified by the tarred coating of the cable to one hundred and twenty degrees. This went on, day after day, with the knowledge of the engineer and electrician of the company, although the directors had given explicit orders that sheds should be erected over the vats to prevent the possibility of such an occurrence. As might have been foreseen, the gutta-percha was melted, so that the conductor which it was desired to insulate was so twisted by the coils that it was left quite bare in numberless places, thus weakening, and eventually, when the cable was submerged, destroying the insulation. The injury was partially discovered before the cable was taken out of the factory at Greenwich, and a length of about thirty miles was cut out and condemned. This, however, did not wholly remedy the difficulty, for the defective insulation became frequently and painfully apparent while the cable was being submerged. Still further evidence of its imperfect condition was afforded when it came to be cut up for charms and trinkets.

The first cable was, to a great extent, an experiment,—a leap in the dark. Its material and construction were as good as the state of knowledge at that time provided, and in many respects not unsuitable; but the company could not avail itself, at that time, of the instruments or apparatus for testing its conducting power and insulation, in the manner since pointed out by experience. The effects of temperature, as we have seen, were not provided for. The vast differences in the conducting power of copper were discovered only by means of that cable, when made. The mathematical law whereby the proportions of insulation to conduction are determined had not been fully investigated; and it was even argued by some of the pretended electricians in the employ of the company, that, the smaller the conductor, the more rapidly the current could pass through it. No mode of protecting the external sheath from oxidation had then been discovered; and the kind of machinery necessary for submerging cables in deep water could only be theoretically assumed.

Looking back to that period, and granting that there was too much haste in the preparations, and that other mistakes were committed which could now be foreseen and avoided, it is not too much to say, that, if that cable could be laid and worked, as was done, after one failure in 1857, and the consequent uncoiling and storage of it in an exposed situation, and after three attempts in 1858, under the most fearful circumstances as to weather, it would be an easy task to lay a cable constructed and submerged by the light of present experience.



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[Illustration: The Cable laid in 1858.]

[Illustration: The proposed New Cable.]

The above cuts, representing sections of the cable laid in 1858 and the proposed new cable, will serve to show the difference between the two, and the immense superiority of the latter over the former. In the old Atlantic cable the copper conducting-wire weighed but ninety-three pounds to the mile, while in the new cable it weighs five hundred and ten pounds to the mile, *or more than five times as much*. Now the size, or diameter, of a telegraphic conductor is just as important an item, in determining the strength of current which can be maintained upon it with a given amount of battery-force, as the length of the conductor. To produce the effects by which the messages are expressed at the end of a telegraphic wire or cable, it is necessary that the electric current should have a certain intensity or strength. Now the intensity of the current transmitted by a given voltaic battery along a given line of wire will decrease, other things being the same, in the same proportion as the length of the wire increases. Thus, if the wire be continued for ten miles, the current will have twice the intensity which it would have, if the wire had been extended to a distance of twenty miles. It is evident, therefore, that the wire may be continued to such a length that the current will no longer have sufficient intensity to produce at the station to which the despatch is transmitted those effects by which the language of the despatch is signified. *But the intensity of the current transmitted by a given voltaic battery upon a wire of given length will be increased in the same proportion as the area of the section of the wire is augmented*. Thus, if the diameter of the wire be doubled, the area of its section being increased in a fourfold proportion, the intensity of the current transmitted along the wire will be increased in the same ratio. The intensity of the current may also be augmented by increasing the number of pairs of the generating plates or cylinders composing the galvanic battery.

All electrical terms are arbitrary, and necessarily unintelligible to the general reader. I shall, therefore, use them as sparingly as possible, and endeavor to make myself clearly understood by explaining those which I do use.

All telegraphic conductors offer a certain resistance to the passage of an electric current, and the amount of this resistance is proportional to the length of the conductor, and inversely to its size. In order to overcome this resistance, it is necessary to increase the number of the cells in the battery, and thus obtain a fluid of greater force or intensity.



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On aerial telegraph-lines this increase in the intensity of the battery occasions no particular inconvenience, other than by tending to the more rapid destruction of the small copper coils, or helices, employed; but upon submarine lines it has the effect of increasing the static electricity, or electricity of tension, which accumulates along the surface of the gutta-percha covering of the conducting-wire, in the same manner as static electricity accumulates on the surface of glass, or of a stick of sealing-wax, by rubbing it with a piece of cloth. The use of submarine or of subterranean conductors occasions, from the above cause, a small retardation in the velocity of the transmitted electricity. This retardation is not due to the length of the path which the electric current has to traverse, since it does not take place with a conductor, equally long, insulated in the air; but it arises from a static reaction, caused by the passage of an intense current through a conductor well insulated, but surrounded outside its insulating coating by a conducting body, such as sea-water or moist ground, or even by the metallic envelope of iron wires placed in communication with the ground. When this conductor is presented to one of the poles of a battery, the other pole of which communicates with the ground, it becomes charged with static electricity, like the coating of a Leyden-jar,—electricity which is capable of giving rise to a discharge-current, even after the voltaic current has ceased to be transmitted. Volta showed in one of his beautiful experiments, that, in putting one of the ends of his pile in communication with the earth, and the other with a non-insulated Leyden-jar, the jar was charged in an instant of time to a degree proportional to the force of the pile. At the same time an instantaneous current was observed in the conductor between the pile and the jar, which had all the properties of an ordinary current. Now it is evident that the subaqueous wire with its insulating covering may be assimilated exactly to an immense Leyden-jar. The glass of the jar represents the gutta-percha; the internal coating is the surface of the copper wire; the external coating is the surrounding metallic envelope and water. To form an idea of the capacity of this new kind of battery, we have only to remember that the surface of the wire is equal to fourteen square yards per mile. Bringing such a wire into communication by one of its ends with a battery, of which the opposite pole is in contact with the earth, whilst the other extremity of the wire is insulated, must cause the wire to take a charge of the same character and tension as that of the pole of the battery touched by it.

These currents of static induction are proportional in intensity to the force of the battery and the length of the wire, whilst an inverse relation is true as regards the length of the conductor with the ordinary voltaic current.

Professor Wheatstone proved, by actual experiment, that a continuous current may be maintained in the circuit of the long wire of an electric cable, of which one of the ends is insulated, whilst the other communicates with one of the poles of a battery, whose other pole is connected with the ground. This current he considers due to the uniform and continual dispersion of the statical electricity with which the wire is charged along its whole length.



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It was mainly owing to the retardation from this cause that communication through the Atlantic cable was so exceedingly slow and difficult.

I will now endeavor to show why the new cable will not be liable to this difficulty, to anything like the same extent.

I have alluded to the resistance offered by the conductor of a telegraph-cable to the passage of an electric current, and to the retardation of this current by static induction. The terms *retardation* and *resistance* are not considered technically synonymous, but are intended, as electrical terms, to designate two very different forces. The resistance of a wire, as we have seen above, is proportional to its length, and inversely to its diameter. It is overcome by increasing the number of cells in the battery, or, in other words, by increasing the intensity or force of the current. The retardation in a telegraphic cable, on the contrary, is proportional to the length of the conducting-wire and the intensity of the battery. In the former case, by increasing the electrical force you overcome the resistance; while in the latter, by augmenting the electrical force you increase the retardation.

From the foregoing law it will be seen that there are two ways of lessening the resistance upon telegraphic conductors,—one by reducing the length, and the other by increasing the area of the section of the conducting-wire. Now, as already remarked, the copper conducting-wire in the old cable weighed but ninety-three pounds to the mile, while in the new cable it weighs five hundred and ten pounds to the mile, or more than five times as much. If, then, by comparison, we estimate the resistance in the old Atlantic cable to have been equal to two thousand miles of ordinary telegraph-wire, the increased size of the conducting-wire of the new cable reduces the resistance to one-fifth that distance, or four hundred miles. And while it required two hundred cells of battery to produce intensity sufficient to work over the two thousand miles of resistance in the old cable, it will require but one-fifth as much, or forty cells, to overcome the four hundred miles of resistance in the new cable. The retardation which resulted from the intense current generated by two hundred cells will be also proportionately reduced in the comparatively small battery of forty cells. Thus we perceive, that, while the length of the cable is, electrically and practically, reduced to one-fifth of its former length, the retardation of the current is also decreased in the same proportion. Therefore, if, with the old cable, three words per minute could be transmitted, with the new cable we shall be able to transmit five times as many, or fifteen words per minute. This is not equal to our Morse system on the land-lines, which will signal at the rate of thirty-five words per minute, still less to the printing system, which can signal at the rate of fifty words per minute; but, even at this rate, the cable would



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be enabled to transmit in twenty-four hours one thousand despatches containing an average of twenty words apiece. Mr. Field, however, claims for the cable a speed of only twelve words per minute, which would reduce the number of despatches of twenty words each that could be transmitted in twenty-four hours to eight hundred and sixty-four. We will suppose, however, that the cable transmits only five hundred telegrams per day; this number, at ten dollars per message, would give an income of five thousand dollars per diem, or one million five hundred and sixty-five thousand dollars per annum. Quite a handsome revenue on an outlay of about one million of dollars!

The only instrument which could be used successfully in signalling through the old cable was one of peculiar construction, called the Marine Galvanometer. In this instrument, momentum and inertia are almost wholly avoided by the use of a needle weighing only one and a half grains, combined with a mirror reflecting a ray of light, which indicates deflections with great accuracy. By this means a gradually increasing or decreasing current is at each instant indicated at its due strength. Thus, when this galvanometer is placed as the receiving-instrument at the end of a long submarine cable, the movement of the spot of light, consequent on the completion of a circuit through the battery, cable, and earth, can be so observed as to furnish a curve representing very accurately the arrival of an electric current. Lines representing successive signals at various speeds can also be obtained, and, by means of a metronome, dots and dashes can be sent with nearly perfect regularity by an ordinary Morse key, and the corresponding changes in the current at the receiving end of the cable accurately observed.

A system of arbitrary characters, similar to those used upon the Morse telegraph, was employed, and the letter to be indicated was determined by the number of oscillations of the needle, as well as by the length of time during which the needle remained in one place. The operator, who watched the reflection of the deflected needle in the mirror, held a key in his hand communicating with a local instrument in the office, which he pressed down or raised, according to the deflection of the needle; and another operator deciphered the characters thus produced upon the paper. This mode of telegraphing was, of necessity, very slow, and it will not surprise the reader that the fastest rate of speed over the cable did not exceed three words per minute. Still, had the old cable continued in operation a few months longer, experience and practice would have enabled the operator to transmit and receive with very much greater facility. On our land-lines, operators of long experience acquire a dexterity which enables them not only to transmit and receive telegrams with wonderful rapidity, but to work the instruments during storms, when those of less experience would be unable to receive a dot. There is no occupation in which



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skill and experience are more necessary to success than in that of telegraphing, and at the time the Atlantic cable was laid no experience had been obtained upon similar lines, or with the instruments employed. Now, however, the company can avail itself of experienced operators from lines of nearly equal length, and who will require no time for experimenting, but may commence operations as soon as the two ends of the cable are landed upon the shores of Europe and America.

In the old cable the copper wire was covered but three times with gutta-percha, while in the new it is covered four times with the purest gutta-percha and four times with Chatterton's patent compound, by which the cable is rendered absolutely impenetrable to water. The old cable was covered with eighteen strands of small iron wire, which, as they had no other covering, were directly exposed to the action of the water. The new is covered with thirteen strands, each strand consisting of three wires of the best quality, and covered with gutta-percha, to render it indestructible in salt water. By this new construction, it has double the strength of the old cable, at the same time that it is lighter in the water, a very important matter in laying it across the ocean.

The risk of loss in laying the new cable would be very much diminished by the fact that it would be of such strength, that, even if broken, it could be recovered, as has been done in the Mediterranean; and besides, the principal and most expensive materials, copper and gutta-percha, being indestructible, would have at all times a market value.

Other routes to Europe have been proposed, and have been at times quite popular, the most feasible of which are those *via* Behring's Straits, or the Aleutian Islands, and *via* Labrador, Greenland, Iceland, and the Faroe Isles.

To the route *via* Behring's Straits there are several grave objections. The distance from New York to London by a route crossing the three continents of America, Asia, and Europe, is about eighteen thousand miles, or more than nine times as great as that from Newfoundland to Ireland. Of course, the mere cost of constructing a continuous telegraph three-quarters of the distance around the globe, and of maintaining the hundreds of stations that would be necessary over such a length of land-lines, would be enormous. But even that is not the chief difficulty. A line which should traverse the whole breadth of Siberia would encounter wellnigh insuperable obstacles in the country itself, as it would have to pass over mountains and across deserts; while, as it turned north to Kamtschatka, it would come into a region of frightful cold, where winter reigns the greater part of the year. Of this whole country a large part is not only utterly uncivilized, but uninhabited, and portions which are occupied are held by savage and warlike tribes.



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Of the Greenland route, Doctor Hayes, the well-known Arctic traveller, expresses himself in the most decided manner, that it is wholly impracticable. He says it must be obvious that the ice which hugs the Greenland coast will prevent a cable, if laid, from remaining in continuity for any length of time. Doctor Wallich, naturalist attached to Sir Leopold McClintock's expedition to survey the Northern route, considers it impracticable on account of the volcanic nature of the bottom of the sea near Iceland, and the ridges of rock and the immense icebergs near Greenland.

The main argument in favor of this route, in preference to the more direct one across the Atlantic, is, that it would be impossible to work in one continuous circuit a line so long as that from Newfoundland to Ireland. This would seem to be answered sufficiently by the success of the old Atlantic cable. But it is alleged that it worked slowly and with difficulty, which is true, and hence it is thought that the distance would be at least a very great obstacle. But we have shown, that, practically, by the increased size of the conducting-wire, the new cable has been reduced in length four-fifths, and will work five times as fast as the old one. The cable extending from Malta to Alexandria is fifteen hundred and thirty-five miles long, and the whole of this line can be worked through without relay or repetition in a satisfactory manner, as regards both its scientific and commercial results, and with remarkably low battery-power. The Gutta-Percha Company, which made the core of this cable, says that a suitably made and insulated telegraph-conductor, laid intact between Ireland and Newfoundland, can be worked efficiently, both in a commercial and scientific sense, and they are prepared to guaranty the efficient and satisfactory working of a line of the length of the Atlantic cable as manufactured by themselves, and submerged and maintained in that state.

It can be shown by the testimony and experience of those most eminent in the science and practice of oceanic telegraphy, that neither length of distance, within the limits with which the Atlantic Company has to deal, nor depth of water, is any insuperable impediment to efficient communication by such improved conductors of electricity as are now proposed to be laid down. All those who are best able to form a sound opinion, from long-continued experimental researches on this particular point, are willing to pledge their judgment, that, on such a length of line as that between Ireland and Newfoundland, and with such a cable and such improved instruments as are now at command, not less than twelve words per minute could be transmitted from shore to shore, and that this may be done with greatly diminished battery-power as compared with that formerly used.

I think I have shown by facts, and not theory merely, that the Atlantic cable can and will be successfully laid down and worked, thus supplying the long-needed link between the three hundred thousand miles of electric telegraph already in operation on the opposite shores of the Atlantic.



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There are many of our people who are inclined to look coldly upon this enterprise, from a conviction that it would give Great Britain an undue advantage over us in case war should occur between the two countries, and I confess to having entertained the same views; but the case is so well put by Mr. Field, in his address before the American Geographical Society, as, in my judgment, to relieve every apprehension upon this point.

The relative geographical position of the two countries cannot be changed. It so happens, that the two points on the opposite sides of the Atlantic nearest to each other, and which are therefore the natural termini of an ocean telegraph, are both in British territory. Of course, the Government which holds both ends can control the use of the telegraph, or stop it altogether. It has the power, and the only check upon the abuse of that power must be by a treaty, made beforehand. Shall we refuse to aid in constructing the line, for fear that England, in the exasperation of a war, would disregard any treaty stipulations in reference to its use? Then we throw away our only security. For, suppose a war to break out to-morrow, the first step of England would be to lay a cable herself, for her own sole and exclusive benefit. Then she would not only have the control, but would be unrestrained by any treaty-obligations binding her to respect the neutrality of the telegraph. We should then find this great medium of communication between the two hemispheres, which we might have made, if not an ally, at least a neutral, turned into a powerful antagonist.

Would it not, therefore, be better that such a line of telegraph should be constructed by the joint efforts of both countries, and be guarded by treaty-stipulations, so that it might be placed, as far as possible, under the protection of the faith of nations, and of the honor of the civilized world?

Mr. Field says, that, in the negotiations on this subject, Great Britain has never shown the slightest wish to take advantage of its geographical position to exact special privileges, or a desire to appropriate any advantages which it was not willing to concede equally to the United States.

Should not the Atlantic telegraph, if laid down under the conditions proposed by the Company, instead of being a cause of apprehension, in case of war, be rather looked upon with favor, as tending to lessen the risk of war between the United States and all European countries, affording, as it would, facilities for the prompt interchange of notes between the Government of the United States and those of the various nations on the other side of the Atlantic, whenever any misunderstanding should unhappily arise?

Let us, then, throw aside all feeling of apprehension from this cause, and be prepared to hail, with the same enthusiasm we experienced in 1858 at the laying of the old, the completion of the new Atlantic cable.

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THE CABALISTIC WORDS.

[Since the following poem was written, we have had from the President the pledge that the "cabalistic words" shall be uttered by him on the first of January, 1863, unless the rebellion is abandoned before that time. Thanks and honor to the President for the promise! But we shall not look for the magical operation of the words till they are uttered without reservation or qualification.]

Hear, O Commander of the Faithful, hear
A legend trite to many a childish ear;
But scorn it not, nor let its teaching fail,
Although familiar as a nursery tale.

Cassim the Covetous, whose god was gold,
Once, by strange chance, found riches manifold
Hid in a rocky cavern, where a band
Of robbers who were ravaging the land
Kept their bright spoils. Cassim had learnt the spell
By which the dazzling heaps were guarded well.
Two cabalistic words he speaks, and, lo!
The door flies open: what a golden glow!
He enters,—speaks the words of power once more,
And swift upon him clangs the ponderous door.
Croesus! what joy to eyes that know their worth!
Huge bags of gold and diamonds on the earth!
Here piles of ingots, there a glistening heap
Of coins that all their minted lustre keep.
Cassim is ravished at the wondrous sight,
And rubs his hands with ever new delight;
Absorbed in gazing, lets the hours go by,
Nor can enough indulge his gloating eye.
He chooses what he can to bear away,
And then reluctant seeks the outer day.

The words,—what *are* they,—those that ope the door?
He falters,—loses all so plain before;—
Tries this word,—that,—in vain!—he cannot speak
The magic sentence;—he grows faint and weak,—
Spurns the base gold, cause of his wild despair;—
What if the thieves should come and find him there?—
Hark! they are coming!—yes, they come!—they shout
The precious words;—ah, now they end his doubt!—



Too late he hears; in vain he tries to fly;
Trembling he sinks upon his knees—to die!

Commander of the Faithful! dark the strait
Thy people stand in, in this hour of fate;
Thick walls of gloom and doubt have shut them in;
They grope beneath the ban of one great sin.
Yet there are two short words whose potent spell
Shall burst with thunder-crash these gates of hell,
Open a vista to celestial light,
Lead us to peace through the eternal Right.
Oh, speak those words, those saving words of power,
In this most pregnant, this supremest hour,—
Words writ in martyr blood, as all may see!—
Commander of the Faithful, say, BE FREE!

* * * * *

CONVERSATIONAL OPINIONS OF THE LEADERS OF SECESSION.



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A MONOGRAPH.

The causes of the present Rebellion, the personal history of its leaders, and the incidents immediately preceding the breaking out of the conspiracy, will ever remain objects of chief interest to the historian of the present period of the Republic. Influenced by a desire to obtain unimpeachable information upon these topics from unprejudiced sources, the writer of the following article, then a student at Yale College, availed himself of the vacation in December, 1860, and January, 1861, to visit the National capital, and while there to improve the reasonably ready access with which most public men are approached, whenever the object is either to give or to receive information, for the purpose of studying a period then promising to exceed in importance anything in the past history of the nation. It has been suggested to the writer, that certain interviews, such as younger men, when collegians, were then allowed with the frank Southern leaders, and which he has occasionally sketched in conversation, have had the seal of privacy removed by the tide of events, and should now be described for the public, as aiding to unmask, from unquestionable authority, the real causes and origin of the Rebellion, and contributing something, perhaps, to sustain public sentiment in the defence of the nation against a conspiracy which the statements of these Southern apologists themselves prove to have been conceived in the most reckless disregard of honor and law, and which, if successful, will give birth to a neighboring nation actuated by the same spirit.

The more important interviews alluded to were with the Honorable Robert Toombs, the Honorable R.M.T. Hunter, and the Honorable Jefferson Davis, at that time prominent members, as is well known, of the United States Senate, from the States respectively of Georgia, Virginia, and Mississippi. The communications of the Senators are proved to have been sincere by their subsequent speeches and by public events. The writer is by no means insensible to the breach of privilege, of which, under ordinary circumstances, notwithstanding the unfolding of events, he would be guilty, in detailing in print private conversations; but he believes that the public will sustain the propriety of the present revelations, now that the persons chiefly concerned have become enemies of the nation and of mankind.

Not, as he may possibly be accused, with the purpose of adding a syllable of unnecessary length to the narrative, but for the sake of vividness in presenting the idea of the *personnel* of the Southern leaders, soon to be known only as historical characters, and of scrupulous accuracy in representing their sentiments, to which, in this case, a notice of time, place, and manner seems as necessary as that of matter, the writer has taken not a little pains, through all the usual means, to remember, and will endeavor to state, the conversations, always with logical, and nearly always, he believes, with verbal accuracy, in order that the conclusions to be drawn from them by the reader may have the better support.



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It is well known that public men in Washington, out of business hours, are visited without formal introduction or letters, especially upon their reception-days, and that the privilege of a single interview implies no distinction to the visitor. The urbanity and frankness with which proper approaches are met, especially by the Southern leaders, are also well known. Young men, with unprejudiced minds, upon whom public characters are always anxious to impress the stamp of their own principles, are perhaps received with quite as much frankness as others.

* * * * *

The first interview sought was with Mr. Toombs, the most daring and ingenuous, and perhaps the most gifted in eloquence of the Southern leaders, whose house, at that time, was a lofty building upon F Street, only two doors from the residence of Mr. Seward. A negro servant, who, with all the blackness of a native African, yet with thin lips and almost the regular features of a Caucasian, appeared to the writer to be possibly the descendant of one of the superior, princely African tribes, showed the way to an unoccupied parlor. The room was luxuriously furnished with evidences of wealth and taste: a magnificent pianoforte, several well-chosen paintings, and a marble bust of some public character standing upon a high pedestal of the same material in the corner, attracting particular attention, and a pleasant fire in the open grate making the December evening social. A step presently heard in the hall, elastic, buoyant, and vigorous, was altogether too characteristic of Mr. Toombs's portly, muscular, confident, and somewhat dashing figure, to be mistaken for any other than his own. Mr. Toombs appeared to be now about forty-five years of age, but carried in his whole mien the elastic vigor, and irresistible self-reliance, frankness, decision, and sociality of character, which mark his oratory and his public career. His good-evening, and inquiry concerning the college named on the card of the writer, were in a tone that at once placed his visitor at ease.

"Your first visit to Washington, Mr. ——?"

"Yes, Sir. Like others, I have been attracted by the political crisis, and the purpose of studying it from unprejudiced sources."

"Crisis? Oh, *that's past.*"

The writer will not soon forget the tone of perfect confidence and *nonchalance* with which this was uttered. The time was the last week of December, 1860.

"You are confident, then, Sir, that fifteen States will secede?"

"Secede? Certainly,—they *must* secede. You Northerners,—you are from a Northern college, I believe,"—referring to the writer's card,—“you Northerners wish to make a new Constitution, or rather to give such an interpretation to the old one as to make it

virtually a new document. How can society be kept together, if men will not keep their compacts? Our fathers provided, in adopting their Constitution,

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for the protection of their property. But here are four billions of the property of the South which you propose to outlaw from the common Territories. You say to us, by your elected President, by your House of Representatives, by your Senate, by your Supreme Court, in short, by every means through which one party can speak to another, that these four billions of property, representing the toil of the head and hand of the South for the last two hundred years, shall not be respected in the Territories as your property is respected there. And this property, too, is property which you tax and which you allow to be represented; but yet you will not protect it. How can we remain? We should be happy to remain, if you would treat us as equals; but you tax us, and will not protect us. We will resist. D—n it,”—this and other striking expressions are precisely Mr. Toombs’s language,—“we will meet you on the border with the bayonet. Society cannot be kept together, unless men will keep their compacts.”

This was said without the intonation of fierceness or malignity, but with great decision and the vigor of high spirit.

It was taking, of course, with considerable emphasis, a side in a famous Constitutional question, familiar to all readers of American Congressional Debates, once supported by Mr. Calhoun, and rather strangely, too, with that philosophical leader, confusing the absurdly asserted State right of seceding at will with the undoubted right, when there exists no peaceful remedy, of seceding from intolerable oppression: an entire position which Mr. Webster especially, and subsequent statesmen, in arguments elucidating the nature and powers of the General Government, to say nothing of the respect due to a moral sentiment concerning slavery, which, permeating more than a majority of the people, has the force, when properly expressed, wherever the Constitution has jurisdiction, of supreme law, are thought by most men, once and forever, to have satisfactorily answered. It was a complaint, certainly, which the South had had ever since the Constitution was formed, and which could with no plausibility be brought forward as a justification of war, while there existed a Constitutional tribunal for adjusting difficulties of Constitutional interpretation. Yet, as it was almost universally asserted, of course, by the Northern partisan presses, and by Northern Congressmen, that the Rebellion was utterly causeless, and as the writer was therefore exceedingly anxious to obtain, concerning their grievances, the latest opinions of the Southern leaders, as stated by themselves, he ventured to propose, in a pause of Mr. Toombs’s somewhat rapid rhetoric, a question which, at that moment, seemed of central importance to the candid philosophical inquirer into the moving forces of the times:—

“Are we, then, Sir, to consider Mr. Calhoun’s old complaint—the non-recognition of slave-property under the Federal Constitution—as constituting now the *chief grievance* of the South?”



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“Undoubtedly,” was Mr. Toombs's instant reply, “*it all turns on that. What you tax you must protect.*”

This is the very strongest argument of the Southern side. But the alleged slave-property is protected, though only under municipal law, by the Constitution. To protect it elsewhere is against its whole spirit, and, in the present state of public sentiment, against its very letter. Originally, as is well known, it was not proposed to protect at all, *under the General Government*, property so monstrous, except as it became necessary as a compromise, in order to secure a union. But the provision of the Constitution that the slave-trade should be abolished, the absolute power given to Congress to make all laws for the Territories, the spirit of the preamble, the principles of the Declaration, indeed, the whole history of the origin and adoption of the fundamental law, prove that its principle and its expectation were, if not absolutely to place slavery in the States in process of extinction, at least never to recognize it except indirectly and remotely under municipal law, not even by admitting the word *slave* to its phraseology.

“Even in the Northern States themselves, to say nothing of the Territories, I am not safe with my property. I can travel through France or England and be safe; but if I happen to lose my servant up in *Vairmount*,”—Mr. Toombs pronounced the word with a somewhat marked accent of derision,—“and undertake to recover him, I get jugged. Besides, your Northern statesmen are far from being honest. Here is Billy Seward, for instance,”—with a gesture toward his neighbor's house,—“who says slavery is contrary to the Higher Law, and that he is bound as a Christian to obey the Higher Law; but yet he takes an oath to uphold the Constitution, which protects slavery. This inconsistency runs through most of the Northern platforms. How can we live with such men? They will not be true even to a compact which they themselves acknowledge.”

“You would think, then, Wendell Phillips, for instance, more consistent in his political opinions than Mr. Seward?”

“Certainly. I can understand his position. ‘Slavery,’ he says, ‘is wrong. The Constitution protects slavery; therefore I will have nothing to do with the Constitution, and cannot become a citizen.’ This is logical and consistent. I can respect such a position as that.”

Here Mr. Toombs—ejecting, as perhaps the writer ought not to relate, a competent mass of tobacco-saliva into the blazing coal—paused somewhat reflectively, perhaps unpleasantly revolving certain possible indirect influences of the position he had characterized.

“Upon which side, Sir, do you think there is usually the most misunderstanding,—on the part of the North concerning the South? or on the part of the South concerning the North?”



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“Oh, by all odds,” he replied, instantly, “we understand you best. We send fifty thousand travellers, more or less, North every summer to your watering-places. Hot down in Mobile,”—his style taking somewhat unpleasantly the intonation as well as the negligence of the bar-room,—“can’t live in Mobile in the summer. Then your papers circulate more among us than ours among you. Our daughters are educated at Northern boarding-schools, our sons at Northern colleges: both my colleague and myself were educated at Northern colleges. For these reasons, by all odds, we have a better opportunity for understanding you than you have for understanding us.”

“In case of general secession and war,” the writer ventured next to inquire, “would there probably, in your opinion, be danger of a slave insurrection?”

“None at all. Certainly far less than of ‘Bread or Blood’ riots at the North.”

The writer was surprised to find, notwithstanding Mr. Toombs’s eulogy of Southern opportunities, his understanding of the North so imperfect, and still more surprised at the political and social principles involved in the spirit of what followed.

“Your poor population can hold ward-meetings, and can vote. But we know better how to take care of ours. They are in the fields, and under the eye of their overseers. There can be little danger of an insurrection under our system.”

The subject and the manner of the man, in spite of his better qualities, were becoming painful, and the writer ventured only one more remark.

“An ugly time, certainly, if war comes between North and South.”

“Ugly time? *Oh, no!*”

The writer will never forget the tone of utter carelessness and *nonchalance* with which the last round-toned exclamation was uttered.

“Oh, no! War is nothing. Never more than a tenth part of the adult population of a country in the field. We have four million voters. Say a tenth of them, or four hundred thousand men, are in the field on both sides. A tenth of them would be killed or die of camp diseases. But *they* would die, *any way*. War is nothing.”

The tone perfectly proved this belief, not badinage.

“Some property would be destroyed, towns injured, fences overturned, and the Devil raised generally; but then all that would have a good effect. Only yaller-covered-literature men and editors make a noise about war. Wars are to history what storms are to the atmosphere,—purifiers. We shall meet, as we ought, whoever invades our rights, with the bayonet. We are the gentlemen of this land, and gentlemen always make revolutions in history.”



This was said in the tone of an injured, but haughty man, with perfect intellectual poise and earnestness, yet with a fervor of feeling that brought the speaker erect in his chair.

The significance of the last remarks, which the writer can make oath he has preserved *verbatim*, being somewhat calculated to draw on a debate, of course wholly unfitted to the time and place, the writer, apologizing for having taken so much time at a formal interview, and receiving, of course, a most courteous invitation to renew the call, found himself, after but twenty minutes' conversation, on the street, in the lonely December evening, with a mind full of reflections.



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The utter recklessness concerning life and property with which the splendid intellect, under the lead of the ungovernable passions of this man, was plunging the nation into a civil war of which no one could foresee the end, was the thought uppermost. Certainly, the abstract manliness of asserting rights supposed to be infringed it was in itself impossible not to respect. But the man seemed to love war for its own sake, as pugnacious schoolboys love sham-fights, with a sort of glee in the smell of the smoke of battle. The judicial calmness of statesmanship had entirely disappeared in the violence of sectional passion. Perhaps he might be capable of ruining his country from pure love of turbulence and power, could he but find a pretext of force sufficient to blind first himself and then others. Yet Robert Toombs, in the Senate Chamber, takes little children in his arms, and is one of the kindest of the noblemen of Nature in the sphere of his unpolitical sympathies. The reader who is familiar with Mr. Toombs's speeches will need no assurance that he spoke frankly.[A]

[Footnote A: Ten days later, in the Senate, with a face full of the combined erubescence of revolutionary enthusiasm and unstatesmanlike anger, Mr. Toombs closed a speech to the Northern Senators in the following amazing words, (*Congressional Globe*, 1860-61, p. 271,) which justify, it will be seen, every syllable of the report of the conversation upon the same points:—

“You will not regard confederate obligations; you will not regard constitutional obligations; you will not regard your oaths. What am I to do? Am I a freeman? Is my State, a free State, to lie down and submit because political fossils raise the cry of ‘The Glorious Union’? Too long already have we listened to this delusive song. We are freemen. We have rights: I have stated them. We have wrongs: I have recounted them. I have demonstrated that the party now coming into power has declared us outlaws, and is determined to exclude four thousand millions of our property from the common territories,—that it has declared us under the ban of the empire and out of the protection of the laws of the United States, everywhere. They have refused to protect us from invasion and insurrection by the Federal power, and the Constitution denies to us in the Union the right either to raise fleets or armies for our own defence. All these charges I have proven by the record, and I put them before the civilized world, and demand the judgment of to-day, of to-morrow, of distant ages, and of Heaven itself, upon these causes. I am content, whatever it be, to peril all in so noble, so holy a cause. We have appealed time and time again for these constitutional rights. You have refused them. We appeal again. Restore us these rights as we had them, as your court adjudges them to be, just as all our people have said they are, redress these flagrant wrongs, seen of all men, and it will restore fraternity and peace and unity to all of us. Refuse them, and what then? We shall then ask you to ‘let us depart in peace.’ Refuse that, and you present us war. We accept it; and inscribing upon our banners the glorious words, ‘Liberty and Equality,’ we will trust to the blood of the brave and the God of battles for security and tranquillity.”



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Sincere, but undoubtedly mistaken, Mr. Toombs! To this philippic, let the words of another Southern, but not sectional Senator, reply, and that from a golden age:—

“But if, unhappily, we should be involved in war, in civil war, between the two parts of this Confederacy, in which the effort upon the one side should be to restrain the introduction of slavery into the new territories, and upon the other side to force its introduction there, what a spectacle should we present to the astonishment of mankind, in an effort, not to propagate right, but—I must say it, though I trust it will be understood to be said with no design to excite feeling—a war to propagate wrong in the territories thus acquired from Mexico. It would be a war in which we should have no sympathies, no good wishes, in which all mankind would be against us; for, from the commencement of the Revolution down to the present time, we have constantly reproached our British ancestors for the introduction of slavery into this country.”—HENRY CLAY, *Congressional Globe*, Part II., Vol. 22, p. 117.]

Sick at heart, as the future of the nation stood to his dim vision through the present, the writer found his way to his hotel. At this time the North was silent, apparently apathetic, unbelieving, almost criminally allowed to be undeceived by its presses and by public men who had means of information, while this volcano continued to prepare itself thus defiantly beneath the very feet of a President sworn to support the laws!

* * * * *

The formal interview with the Honorable R.M.T. Hunter was sought in company with two other students of New-England colleges. We had hoped to meet Mr. Mason at the same apartments, but were disappointed. The great contrast of personal character between Mr. Hunter and Mr. Toombs made the concurrence of the former in the chief views presented by the latter the more significant. The careful habits of thought, the unostentatiousness, and the practical common sense for which the Virginian farmer is esteemed, and which had made his name a prominent one for President of a Central Confederacy, in case of the separate secession of the Border States, were curiously manifested both in his apartments and his manner. The chamber was apparently at a boarding-house, but very plainly furnished with red cotton serge curtains and common hair-cloth chairs and sofa. The Senator's manner of speech was slow, considerate,—indeed, sometimes approaching awkwardness in its plain, farmer-like simplicity. One of the first questions was the central one, concerning the chief grievance of the South, which had been presented to Mr. Toombs.

“Yes,” was Mr. Hunter's reply, somewhat less promptly given, “it may be said to come chiefly from that,—the non-recognition of our property under the Constitution. We wish our property recognized, as we think the Constitution provides. We should like to remain with the North.”

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He spoke without a particle of expressed passion or ardor, though by no means incapable, when aroused, as those who have seen his plethoric countenance and figure can testify, of both.

“We are mutually helpful to each other. We want to use your navy and your factories. You want our cotton. The North to manufacture, and the South to produce, would make the strongest nation. But, if we separate, we shall try to do more in Virginia than we do now. We shall make mills on our streams.”

His language was chiefly Saxon monosyllables.

“The climate is not as severe, the nights are not as long with us as with you. I think we can do well at manufacturing in Virginia. The Chesapeake Bay and our rivers should aid commerce. As for the slaves, I think there is little danger of any trouble. There may be some,” he said, with a frankness that surprised us slightly, but in the same moderate, honest way, his hands clasped upon his breast, and the extended feet rubbing together slowly, “in the Cotton States, where they are very thick together; but I think that there is very little danger in Virginia. The way they take to rise in never shows much skill. The last time they rose in our State, I think the attempt was brought on by some sign in an eclipse of the moon.”

Nearly all that passed of political interest is contained in the foregoing sentences, except one honest reply to a question concerning his opinion of the probability of the North’s attempting coercion.

“If only three States go out, they may coerce,” said Mr. Hunter; “but if fifteen go, I guess they won’t try.”

At the present period of the Rebellion, this indication of the anticipations of its leaders in engaging in it must be of interest.

It must be understood that the writer and his companions presented themselves simply as students, with no fixed exclusive predilections for either of the public parties in politics,—which, in the writer’s case at least, was certainly a statement wholly true,—and that this evident freedom from political bias secured perhaps an unusual share of the confidence of the Southern Senators. It will be remembered, also, that in every conversation, however startling the revelation of criminal purpose or absurd motive, the manner of these Senators was always totally devoid of any approach to that vulgar intellectual levity which too often, in treating of public affairs, painfully characterizes the fifth-rate men whom the North sometimes chooses to make its representatives. The manner of the Southern leaders was to us a sufficient proof of their sincerity.

* * * * *



At the house of the Honorable Jefferson Davis, now in the world's gaze President of the then nascent Confederacy, the writer, in the intelligent and genial company of the graduate of Harvard and the student of Amherst before mentioned, called formally, on the evening of the New Year's reception-day. A representative from one of the Southwestern States was present, but we were soon admitted to the front of the open blazing grate of the reception-parlor. We had before seen Mr. Davis busy in the Senate.



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The urbanity, the intellectual energy, and the intensely shrewd watchfulness and ambition, combined with a covertly expressed, but powerful native instinct for strategy and command, which have made Mr. Davis a public leader, were evident at the first glance. The Senator seemed compact of ambition, will, intellect, activity, and shrewdness. A high and broad, but square forehead; the aquiline nose; the square, fighting chin; the thin, compressed, but flexible lips; the almost haggardly sunken cheek; the piercing, not wholly uncovered eye; the dark, somewhat thinning hair; the clear, slightly browned, nervous complexion, all well given in the best current photographs, were united to a figure slightly bent in the shoulders, of more respiratory than digestive breadth, in outlines almost equally balancing ruggedness and grace, of compactness wrought by the pressure of perhaps few more than fifty summers, not above medium height, but composed throughout of silk and steel. A certain similarity between the decorations of the parlor and the character of the owner, perhaps more fanciful than real, at once attracted attention. Everything was simple, graceful, and rich, without being tropically luxuriant; the paintings appeared to be often of airy, winged, or white-robed figures, that suggested a reflective and not unimaginative mind in the one who had chosen them. This was the leader whom Mr. Calhoun's fervent political metaphysics and his own ambition for place and power had misled. His conversation was remarkable in manner for perfect unostentatiousness, clearness, and self-control, and in matter for breadth and minuteness of political information. In the whole conversation, he never uttered a broken or awkwardly constructed sentence, nor wavered, while stating facts, by a single intonation. This considerable intellectual energy, combined with courtesy, was his chief fascination. Yet, underneath all lay an atmosphere of covert haughtiness, and, at times, even of audacious remorselessness, which, under stimulative circumstances, were to be feared. Undoubtedly, passion and ambition were natively stronger in the countenance than reason, conscience, and general sympathy,—an observation best felt to be true when the face was compared in imagination with the faces of some of the world's chief benefactors; but culture, native urbanity, and a powerful reflective tendency had evidently so wrought, that, though conscience might be imperilled frequently by great adroitness in the casuistry of self-excuse, justice could not be consciously opposed for any length of time without powerful silent reaction. The quantity of being, however, though superior, was not of so high a measure as the quality, and the principal deficiencies, though perhaps almost the sole ones, were plainly moral. In his presence, no man could deny to him something of that dignity, of a kind superior to that of intellect and will, which must be possessed by every leader as a basis of confidence. But mournful severe truth would testify that there was yet, at times, palpably something of the treacherous serpent in the eye, and it could not readily be told where it would strike.



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In reply to a reference to a somewhat celebrated speech by Senator Benjamin of Louisiana, which we had heard the day previous, he said that we might consider it, as a whole, a very fair statement both of the arguments and the purposes of the South. Perhaps a speech of more horrible doctrine, upheld by equal argumentative and rhetorical power, has never been heard in the American Senate. In reply, also, to the one central question concerning the chief grievance of the South, he gave in substance the same answer, uttered perhaps with more logical calmness, that had been given by Mr. Hunter and Mr. Toombs, that it was substantially covered by Mr. Calhoun's old complaint, the non-recognition of slave-property under the Federal Constitution. Of course we were as yet too well established in the belief that slavery in the United States is upheld by the Constitution only very remotely and indirectly, under local or municipal law, to desire, even by questions, to draw on any debate.

In reply to a question by the gentleman from Harvard, he spoke of a Central Confederacy as altogether improbable, and thought, if Georgia seceded, as the telegrams for the last fortnight had indicated she would, Maryland would be sure to go. "I think the commercial and political interests of Maryland," he remarked, in his calm and simple, but distinct and watchful manner, manifesting, too, at the same time, a natural command of dignified, antithetical sentences, "would be promoted, perhaps can be only preserved, by secession. Her territory extends on both sides of a great inland water communication, and is at the natural Atlantic outlet, by railway, of the Valley of the West. Baltimore in the Union is sure to be inferior to Philadelphia and New York: Baltimore out of the Union is sure to become a great commercial city. In every way, whether we regard her own people or their usefulness to other States, I think the interests of Maryland would be promoted by secession."

"But would not Maryland lose many more slaves, as the border member of a foreign confederacy, than she does now in the Union?"

The reply to this question we looked for with the greatest interest, since no foreign nation, such as the North would be, in case of the success of the attempted Confederacy, ever thinks of giving up fugitives, and since the policy of the South upon this point, in case she should succeed, would determine the possibility or impossibility of peace between the two portions of the Continent.

Mr. Davis's reply was in the following words, uttered in a tone of equal shrewdness, calmness, and decision:—

"I think, for all Maryland would lose in that way she would be more than repaid by reprisals. While we are one nation and you steal our property, we have little redress; *but when we become two nations, we shall say, Two can play at this game.*"

We breathed more freely after so frank an utterance. The great importance of this reply, coming from the even then proposed political chief of the Confederacy, as indicating the

impossibility of peace, even in case of the recognition of the South, so long as it should continue, as it has begun, to make Slavery the chief corner-stone of the State, will be at once perceived.



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“But,” the writer ventured to inquire, “what will become of the Federal District, since its inhabitants have no ‘State right of secession’?”

“Have you ever studied law?” he asked.

The gentleman from Amherst confessed our ignorance of any point covering the case.

“There is a rule in law,” continued Mr. Davis, “that, when property is granted by one party to another for use for any specified purpose, and ceases to be used for that purpose, it reverts by law to the donor. Now the territory constituting at present the District of Columbia was granted, as you well know, by Maryland to the United States for use as the seat of the Federal capital. When it ceases to be used for that purpose, it, with all its public fixtures, will revert by law to Maryland. But,” and his eye brightened to the hue of cold steel in a way the writer will never forget, as he uttered, in a tone perfectly self-poised, undaunted, and slightly defiant, the words, “*that is a point which may be settled by force rather than by reason.*”

This was January 1, 1861, only eleven days after South Carolina had passed her Act of Secession, and shows that even then, notwithstanding the professed desire of the South to depart in peace, the attack not only upon the national principles of union, but upon the national property as well, was projected. Mr. Davis, loaded with the benefits of his country, yet occupied a seat in the Senate Chamber, under the most solemn oath to uphold its Constitution, which, even if his grievances had been well founded, afforded Constitutional and peaceful remedies that he had never attempted to use. Presenting regards, very formal indeed, sick at heart, indignant, and anxious, we left the house of the traitor.

The historical conclusions to be drawn from the above slight sketches are important in several respects. Mr. Davis, Mr. Toombs, and Mr. Hunter are among the strongest leaders of the Rebellion. Representing the Northern, Southeastern, and Southwestern populations of the disaffected regions, their testimony had a wide application, and was perhaps as characteristic and pointed in these brief conversations, occurring just upon the eve of the bursting of the storm, as we should have heard in a hundred interviews. That they spoke frankly was not only evidenced to us by their entire manner, but, as it is not unimportant to repeat, has been proved by subsequent events. The conversations, therefore, indicate,—

1. That the grand, fundamental, legal ground for the Rebellion was a view of Constitutional rights by which property in human beings claimed equal protection under the General Government with the products of Free Labor, and to be admitted, therefore, at will, to all places under the jurisdiction of the Federal power, and not simply to be protected under local or municipal law,—rights which the South proposed to vindicate, constitutionally, by Secession, or, in other words, by the domination of State over National sovereignty: an entire view of the true intent of the Federal compacts and

powers, which, in the great debates between Mr. Webster and Mr. Calhoun, to say nothing of elucidations by previous and subsequent jurists and statesmen, has been again and again abundantly demonstrated to be absurd.



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2. That the immediate, comprehensive pretext for the Rebellion was the success of a legal majority having in its platform of principles the doctrine of the non-extension of involuntary human bondage in the territories over which the Constitution had given to the whole people absolute control, a doctrine which the mass of the Southern populations were educated to believe not only deadly to their local privileges, but distinctly unconstitutional.
3. That the leaders of the Rebellion frankly admitted, that, excepting this one point of Constitutional grievance, the interests of the populations which they represented would be better subserved in the Union than out of it.
4. That the leaders of the Rebellion appear not to have anticipated coercion; but yet, from the earliest days of Secession, contemplated the spoliation of the Southern National property, and particularly the seizure of the Federal capital.
5. That, even should the independence of the South be acknowledged, peace could not result so long as Slavery should continue: their avowed system of reprisals for the certain escape of slaves precluding all force in any but piratical international law.
6. That the spirit of the Rebellion is the haughty, grasping, and, except within its own circle, the remorseless spirit universally characteristic of oligarchies, before the success of whose principles upon this continent the liberties of the whites could be no safer than those of the blacks.

“We are the gentlemen of this land,” said the Georgian senator, “and gentlemen always make revolutions in history.” And just previously he had said, with haughty significance, “*Your* poor population can hold ward-meetings, and can vote. But *we* know better how to take care of ours. They are in the fields, and under the eye of their overseers.”

In these two brief remarks, taken singly, or, especially, in juxtaposition, from so representative a source, and so characteristic of oligarchical opinions everywhere, appears condensed the suggestive political warning of these times, indeed of all times, and which a people regardful of civil and religious liberty can never be slow to heed.

Let the pride of race and the aristocratic tendencies which underlie the resistance of the South prevail, and we shall see a new America. The land of the fathers and of the present will become strange to us. In place of a thriving population, each member socially independent, self-respecting, contented, and industrious, contributing, therefore, to the general welfare, and preserving to posterity and to mankind a national future of inconceivable power and grandeur, we shall see a class of unemployed rich and unemployed poor, the former a handful, the latter a host, in perpetual feud. The asylum of nations, ungratefully rejecting the principles of equality, to which it has owed a career of prosperity unexampled in history, will find in arrested commerce, depressed credit, checked manufactures, an effeminate and selfish, however brilliant, governing class,

and an impoverished and imbruted industrial population, the consequences of turning back upon its path of advance. The condition of the most unfortunate aristocracies of the Old World will become ours.



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But the venerated principles partially promulgated in our golden age forbid such unhappy auspices. Undoubtedly gentlemen make revolutions in history; but since all may be Christians, may not all men be gentlemen? At least, have not all men, everywhere, the sacred and comprehensive right of equal freedom of endeavor to occupy their highest capacities? *Does not the Creator, who makes nothing in vain, wherever He implants a power, imply a command to exercise that power according to the highest aspiration, and is not responsibility eternally exacted, wherever power and command coexist?* By that fearful sanction, may not all men, everywhere, become the best they can become? What that may be, is not free, equal, and perpetual experiment, judged by conscience in the individual and by philanthropy in his brother, and not by arrogance or cupidity in his oppressor, to decide? To secure the wisdom and perpetuity of this experiment, are not governments instituted? Is not a monopoly of opportunity by any single class, by all historical and theoretical proof, not only unjust to the excluded, but crippling and suicidal to the State? Nay, is not the slightest infringement of regulated social and political justice, liberty, and humanity, in the person of black or of white, that makes the greatest potential development of the highest in human nature impossible or difficult, to be resisted, as a violation of the peace of the soul, endless treachery to mankind, an affront to Heaven? Would not the very soil of America, in which Liberty is said to inhere, cry out and rise against any but an affirmative answer to such questions?

A near future will decide.

* * * * *

THE HOUR AND THE MAN.

The Twenty-Second of September, 1862, bids fair to become as remarkable a date in American history as the Fourth of July, 1776; for on that day the President of the United States, availing himself of the full powers of his position, declared this country free from that slaveholding oligarchy which had so long governed it in peace, and the influence of which was so potently felt for more than a year after it had broken up the Union, and made war upon the Federal Government. Be the event what it may,—and the incidents of the war have taught us not to be too sanguine as to the results of any given movement,—President Lincoln has placed the American nation in a proper attitude with respect to that institution the existence of which had so long been the scandal and the disgrace of a people claiming to be the freest on earth, but whose powers had been systematically used and abused for the maintenance and the extension of slave-labor.



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It was our misfortune, and in some sense it was also our fault, that we were bound to uphold the worst system of slavery that ever was known among men; for we must judge of every wrong that is perpetrated by the circumstances that are connected with it, and our oppression of the African race was peculiarly offensive, inasmuch as it was a proceeding in flagrant violation of our constantly avowed principles, was continued in face of the opinions of the founders of the nation, was frankly upheld on the unmanly ground that the intellectual weakness of the slaves rendered it safe to oppress them, and was not excused by that general ignorance of right which has so often been brought forward in palliation of wrong,—as slavery had come under the ban of Christendom years before Americans could be found boldly bad enough to claim for it a divine origin, and to avow that it was a proper, and even the best, foundation for civil society. Our offence was of the rankest, and its peculiar character rendered us odious in the eyes of the nations, who would not admit the force of our plea as to the great difficulties that lay in the way of the removal of the evil, as they had seen it condemned by most communities, and abolished by some of their number.

The very circumstance upon which Americans have relied for the justification of their form of slavery, namely, that it was confined to one race, and that race widely separated from all other races by the existence of peculiar characteristics, has been regarded as an aggravation of their misconduct by all humane and disinterested persons. The Greek system of slavery, which was based on the idea that Greeks were noblemen of Heaven's own creating, and that they therefore were justified in treating all other men as inferiors, and making the same use of them as they made of horses; the Roman system, which was based on the will of society, and therefore made no exceptions on the score of color, but saw in all strangers only creatures of chase; the Mussulman system, brought out so strongly by the action of the States of Barbary, and which was colored by the character of the long quarrel between Mahometans and Christians, and under which Northern Africa was filled with myriads of slaves from Southern Europe, among whom were men of the highest intellect,—Cervantes, for example;—all these systems of servitude, and others that might be adduced, were respectable in comparison with our system, which proceeded upon the blasphemous assumption that God had created and set apart one race that should forever dwell in the house of bondage. If, in some respects, our system has been more humane than that of other peoples in other times, the fact is owing to that general improvement which has taken place the earth over during the present century. The world has gone forward, and even American slaveholders have been compelled to go with it, whether they would or not.



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It was a distinctive feature of slavery, as here known, that it tended to debauch the mind of Christendom. So long as all men were liable to be enslaved, and even Shakspeare and Milton were in some danger of sharing the fate of Cervantes,—and the Barbary corsairs did actually carry off men from the British Islands in the times of Milton and Shakspeare,—there could not fail to grow up a general hostility to slavery, and the institution was booked for destruction. But when slavery came to be considered as the appropriate condition of one race, and the members of that race so highly qualified to engage in the production of cotton and sugar, tobacco and rice, the danger was, not only that slavery would once more come into favor, but that the African slave-trade would be replaced in the list of legitimate commercial pursuits, and become more extensive than it was in those days when it was defended by bishops and kings' sons in the British House of Lords. That this is not an unfounded opinion will be admitted by those who recollect that the London "Times," that representative of the average English mind, but recently published articles that could mean nothing less than a desire to revive the old system of slavery, with all that should be necessary to maintain it in force; that Mr. Carlyle is an advocate of the oppression of negroes; and that the French Government at one time seemed disposed to have resort to a course that must, if adopted, have converted Africa into a storehouse of slaves.

Our slaveholders were not blind to this altered state of the European mind, of which they availed themselves, and of which, in a certain sense, they had the best of all rights to avail themselves, for it was largely their own work. At the same time that England abolished slavery in her dominions, the chief Nullifiers, who were the fathers of the Secession Rebellion, assumed the position that negro slavery was good in itself, and that it was the duty of white men to uphold and to extend it. This was done by Governor McDuffie, of South Carolina, in 1834, and it was warmly approved by many Southern men, as well out of South Carolina as in that most fanatical of States, but generally condemned by the Democrats of that time, though now it is not uncommon to find men in the North who accept all that the old Nullifier put forward as a new truth eight-and-twenty years ago. Earnestly and zealously, and with no small amount of talent, the friends of slavery labored to impose their views upon the entire Southern mind,—and that not so much because they loved slavery for itself as because they knew, that, if the slaveholding interest could be placed in opposition to the Federal Union, that Union might be destroyed. They were fanatics in their attachment to slavery, but even their fanaticism was secondary to their hatred of that power which, as represented by Andrew Jackson, had trampled down Nullification, and compelled Carolina and Calhoun to retreat from



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cannon and the gallows. Mr. Rhett, then Mr. Barnwell Smith, said, in the debates in the Convention on the proposition to accept the Tariff Compromise of 1833, that he hated the star-spangled banner; and unquestionably he expressed the feelings of many of his contemporaries, who deemed submission prudent, but who were consoled by the reflection that slavery would afford them a far better means for breaking up the Union than it was possible to get through the existence of any tariff, no matter how protective it might be. All the great leaders of the first Secession school had passed away from the earth, when Rhett "still lived" to see the flag he hated pulled down before the fire that was poured upon Fort Sumter from Carolina's batteries worked by the hands of Carolinians. Calhoun, Hamilton, McDuffie, Hayne, Trumbull, Cooper, Harper, Preston, and others, men of the first intellectual rank in America, had departed; but Rhett survived to see what they had labored to effect, and what they would have effected, had they not encountered one of those iron spirits to whom is sometimes intrusted the government of nations, and who are of more value to nations than gold and fleets and armies. All that we have lately seen done, and more, would have been done thirty years since, had any other man than Andrew Jackson been at that time President of the United States. There was much cant in those days about "the one-man power," because President Jackson saw fit to make use of the Constitutional qualified veto-power to express his opposition to certain measures adopted by Congress; but the best exhibition of "the one-man power" that the country ever saw, then or before or since, was when the same magistrate crushed Nullification, maintained the Union, and secured the nation's peace for more than a quarter of a century. We never knew what a great man Jackson was, until the country was cursed by Buchanan's occupation of the same chair that Jackson had filled,—a chair that he was unworthy to dust,—and by his cowardice and treachery which made civil war inevitable. One man, at the close of 1860, could have done more than has yet been accomplished by the million of men who have been called to arms because no such man was then in the nation's service. The "one hour of Dundee" was not more wanting to the Stuarts than the one month of Jackson was wanting to us but two years ago.

The powerful teaching of the Nullifiers was successful. The South, which assumed to be the exclusive seat of American nationality, while the North was declared given up to sectionalism, with no other lights on its path than "blue lights," became the South so devoted to slavery that it could see nothing else in the country. Old Union men of 1832 became Secessionists, though Nullification, the milder thing of the two, had been too much for them to endure. They not only endured the more hideous evil, but they embraced it. Between 1832 and 1860 a change had been wrought such as twice that time could not have

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accomplished at any earlier period of human history. The old Southern ideas respecting slavery had disappeared, and that institution had become an object of idolatry, so that any criticisms to which it was subjected kindled the same sort of flame that is excited in a pious community when objects of devotion are assailed and destroyed by the hands of unbelievers. The astonishing material prosperity that accompanied the system of slave-labor had, no doubt, much to do with the regard that was bestowed upon the system itself. That was the time when Cotton became King,—at least, in the opinion of its worshippers. The Democratic party of the North passed from that position of radicalism to which the name of *Locofocoism* was given, to the position of supporters of the extremest Southern doctrines, so that for some years it appeared to exist for no other purpose than to do garrison-duty in the Free States, the cost of its maintenance being supplied by the Federal revenues. Abroad the same change began to be noted, the demand for cotton prevailing over the power of conscience. Everything worked as well for evil as it could work, and as if Satan himself had condescended to accept the post of stage-manager for the disturbers of America's peace.

To take advantage of the change that had been brought about was the purpose of the whole political population of the South. But though that section was united in its determination to support the supremacy of slavery, it was far from being united in its opinions as to the best mode of accomplishing its object. There were three parties in the South in the last days of the old Union. The first, and the largest, of these parties answered very nearly to the Southern portion of the Democratic party, and contained whatever of sense and force belonged to the South. It was made up of men who were firmly resolved upon one thing, namely, that they would ruin the Union, if they should forever lose the power to rule it; but they had the sagacity to see that the ends which they had in view could be more easily achieved in the Union than out of it. They were not disunionists *per se*, but were quite ready to become disunionists, if the Union was to be governed otherwise than in the direct and immediate interest of slavery. Slavery was the basis of their political system, and they knew that it could be better served by the American Union's continued existence than by the construction of a Southern Confederacy, provided the former should do all that slaveholders might require it to do.

The second Southern party, and the smallest of them all, was composed of the minions of the Nullifiers, and of their immediate followers, men whose especial object it was to destroy the Union, and who hated the subservient portion of the Northern people far more bitterly than they hated Republicans, or even Abolitionists. They would have preferred abolition and disunion to the triumph of slavery and the preservation of the

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Union. It was not that they loved slavery less, but that they hated the Union more. Even if the country should submit to the South, the leaders of this faction knew that they would not be the Southrons to whom should be intrusted the powers and the business of government. Few of them were of much account even in their own States, and generally they could have been set down as chiefs of the opposition to everything that was reasonable. A remarkable proof of the little hold which this class of men had on even the most mad of the Southern States, when at the height of their fury, was afforded by the refusal of South Carolina to elect Mr. Rhett Governor, her Legislature conferring that post on Mr. Pickens, a moderate man when compared with Mr. Rhett, and who, there is reason for believing, would have prevented a resort to Secession altogether, could he have done so without sacrificing what he held to be his honor.

The third Southern party consisted of men who desired the continuance of the Union, but who wished that some "concessions" should be made, or "compromises" effected, in order to satisfy men, one portion of whom were resolved upon having everything, while the other portion were resolute in their purpose to destroy everything that then existed of a national character. This third party was mostly composed of those timid men whose votes count for much at ordinary periods, but who in extraordinary times are worse than worthless, being in fact incumbrances on bolder men. They loved the Union, because they loved peace, and were opposed to violence of all kinds; but their Unionism was much like Bailie Macwheeble's conscience, which was described as never doing him any harm. What they would have done, had Government been able to send a strong force to their assistance at the beginning of the war, we cannot undertake to say; but they have done little to aid the Federal cause in the field, while their influence in the Federal councils has been more prejudicial to the country than the open exertions of the Secessionists to effect the nation's destruction.

Of these parties, the first had every reason to believe that it could soon regain possession of Congress, and that in 1864 it would be able to elect its candidate to the Presidency. Hence it had no wish to dissolve the Union; and if its leaders could have had their way, the Union would have been spared. But the second party, making up for its deficiency in numbers by the intensity of its zeal, and laboring untiringly, was too much for the moderates. Hate is a stronger feeling than love of any kind, stronger even than love of spoils; and the men who followed Rhett and Yancey, Pryor and Spratt, hated the Union with a perfect hatred. They got ahead of the men who followed Davis and Stephens, and the rest of those Southern chiefs who would have been content with the complete triumph of Southern principles in the Republic as it stood in 1860. As they broke up the Democratic



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party in order to render the election of the Republican candidate certain, so that they might found on his election the *cri de guerre* of a “sectional triumph” over the South, so they “coerced” the Southern people into the adoption of a war-policy. We have more than once heard Mr. Lincoln blamed for “precipitating matters” in April, 1861. He should have temporized, it has been said, and so have preserved peace; but when he called for seventy-five thousand volunteers, he made war unavoidable. The truth is, that Mr. Lincoln did not begin the war. It was begun by the South. His call for volunteers was the consequence of war being made on the nation, and not the cause of war being made either on the South or by the South. The enemy fired upon and took Fort Sumter before the first call for volunteers was issued; and that proceeding must be admitted to have been an act of war, unless we are prepared to admit that there is a right of Secession. And Fort Sumter was fired upon and taken through the influence of the violent party at the South, who were resolved that there should be war. They knew that it was beyond the power of the Federal Government to send supplies to the doomed fort, and that in a few days it would pass into the hands of the Confederates; and this they determined to prevent, because they knew also that the mere surrender of the garrison, when it had eaten its last rations, would not suffice to “fire the Northern heart.” They carried their point, and hence it was that war was begun the middle of April, 1861. But for the triumph of the violent Southern party, the contest might have been postponed, and even a peace patched up for the time, and the inevitable struggle put off to a future day. As it was, Government had no choice, and was compelled to fight; and it would have been compelled to fight, had it been composed entirely of Quakers.

War being unavoidable, and it being clear that slavery was the cause of it as well as its occasion, and that it would be the main support of our enemy, it ought to have followed that our first blow should be directed against that institution. Nothing of the kind happened. Whatever Government may have thought on the subject, it did nothing to injure slavery. But for this forbearance, which now appears so astonishing, we are not disposed to blame the President. He acted as the representative of the country, which was not then prepared to act vigorously against the root of the evil that afflicted it. A moral blindness prevailed, which proved most injurious to the Union cause, and from the effect of which it may never recover. It was supposed that it was yet possible to “conciliate” the South, and that that section could be induced to “come back” into the Union, provided nothing should be done to hurt its feelings or injure its interests! Looking back to the summer of 1861, it is with difficulty that we can believe that men were then in possession of their senses, so inconsistent



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was their conduct. The Rebels were at least as sensitive on the subject of their military character as they were on that of slavery; and yet, while we could not be sufficiently servile on the latter subject, we acted most offensively on the former. We asserted, in every form and variety of language, our ability to “put them down;” and but for the circumstance that not the slightest atom of ability marked the management of our military affairs, we should have made our boasting good. Men who could not say enough to satisfy themselves on the point of the right of the chivalrous Southrons to create, breed, work, and sell slaves, were equally loud-mouthed in their expressed purpose to “put down” the said Southrons because they had rebelled, and rebelled only because they were slaveholders, and for the purpose of placing slavery beyond the reach of wordy assault in the country of which it should be the governing power. There has been much complaint that foreigners have not understood the nature of our quarrel, and that the general European hostility to the American national cause is owing to their ignorance of American affairs. How that may be we shall not stop to inquire; but it is beyond dispute that no European community has ever displayed a more glaring ignorance of the character of the contest here waged than was exhibited by most Americans in the early months of that contest, and down to a recent period. The war was treated by nearly the whole people as if slavery had no possible connection with it, and as if all mention of slavery in matters pertaining to the war were necessarily an impertinence, a foreign subject lugged into a domestic discussion. Three-fourths of the people were disposed querulously to ask why Abolitionists couldn't let slavery alone in war-time. It was a bad thing, was Abolitionism, in time of peace; but its badness was vastly increased when we had war upon our hands. Half the other fourth of the citizens were disposed to agree with the majority, but very shame kept them silent. It was only the few who had a proper conception of the state of things, and they had little influence with the people, and, consequently, none with Government. Had they said much, or attempted to do anything, probably they would have found Federal arms directed against themselves with much more of force and effectiveness in their use than were manifested when they were directed against the Rebels. When a Union general could announce that he would make use of the Northern soldiers under his command to destroy slaves who should be so audacious as to rebel against Rebels, and the announcement was received with rapturous approval at the North, it was enough to convince every intelligent and reflecting man that no just idea of the struggle we were engaged in was common, and that a blind people were following blind leaders into the ditch,—even into that “last ditch” to which the Secessionists have so often been doomed, but in which they so obstinately continue to refuse to find their own and their cause's grave.



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That Government was not much ahead of the people in 1861, and through most of the present year, respecting the position of slavery, is very evident to all who know what it did, and what it refused to do, with regard to that institution. With a hardiness that would have been strongly offensive, if it had not been singularly ridiculous, Mr. Seward told the astonished world of Europe that the fate of slavery did not depend upon the event of our contest,—which was as much as to say that we should not injure it, happen what might; and no one then supposed that the Confederates would willingly strike a blow at it, either to conciliate foreign nations or to obtain black soldiers. The words of the Secretary of State did us harm in England, with the religious portion of whose people it is something like an article of faith that slavery is an addition to the list of deadly sins. They injured us, too, with the members of the various schools of liberal politicians over all Europe; and they furnished to our enemies abroad the argument that there really was no difference between the North and the South on the slavery question, and that therefore the sympathies of all generous minds should be with the Southrons, who were the weaker party. Our cause was irreparably damaged in Europe through the indiscretion of the Honorable Secretary, who cannot be accused of any love for slavery, but who was then, as he appears to be up to the present hour, ignorant of the nature and the extent of the contest of which his country is the scene. Other members of the Administration had sounder ideas, but their weight in it was not equal to that of the Secretary of State.

It is but fair to the President to say, that his conduct was such that it was obvious that he did not favor slavery because he had any respect for it. He pulled so hard upon the chains that bound him, that his desire to throw them off was clear to the world; but they were too strong, and too well fastened, to be got rid of easily. He feared that all the Unionists of the Border States would be lost, if he should adopt the views of the Emancipationists; and the fear was natural, though in point of fact his course had no good effect in those States, beyond that of conciliating a portion of the Kentuckians. North Carolina, under the old system the most moderate of the Slave States, was as far gone in Secession as South Carolina, and furnished far more men to the Southern armies than her neighbor. The Virginians and Missourians who went with us would have pursued the same course, had the President's opinions on slavery been as radical and pronounced as those of Mr. Garrison. Maryland was kept from wheeling into the Secession line only by the presence on her soil, and in her vicinity, of strong Federal armies. In Tennessee, at a later period of the war, as in North Carolina, Federal power extended as far as Federal guns could throw Federal shot, though Tennessee had not been renowned for her extreme attachment to slavery.



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But the heavy weight on the Presidential mind came from the Free States, in which the Pro-Slavery party was so powerful, and the nature of the war was so little understood, that it was impossible for Government to strike an effective blow at the source of the enemy's strength. Before that could be done, it would be necessary that the Northern mind should be trained to justice in the school of adversity. The position of the President in 1861 was not unlike to that which the Prince of Orange held in 1687. Had William made his attempt on England in 1687, the end would have been failure as complete as that of Monmouth in 1685. It was necessary that the English mind should be educated up to the point of throwing aside some cherished doctrines, the maintenance of which stood in the way of England's safety, prosperity, and greatness. William allowed the fruit he sought to ripen, and in 1688 he was able to do with ease that which no human power could have done in 1687. So was it with Mr. Lincoln, and here. Had the Proclamation lately put forth been issued in 1861, either it would have fallen dead, or it would have met with such opposition in the North as would have rendered it impossible to prosecute the war with any hope of success. There would probably have been *pronunciamientos* from some of our armies, and the Union might have been shivered to pieces without the enemy's lifting their hands further against it. We do not say that such would have been the course of events, had the Proclamation then appeared, but it might have taken that turn; and the President had to allow for possibilities that perhaps it never occurred to private individuals to think of,—men who had no sense of responsibility either to the country, to the national cause, or to the tribunal of history. He would not move as he was advised to move by good men who had not taken into consideration all the circumstances of the case, and who could not feel as he was forced to feel because he was President of the United States. Probably, if he had been a private citizen, he would have been the foremost man of the Emancipation party; but the place he holds is so high that he must look over the whole land, and necessarily he sees much that others can never behold. He saw that one of two things would happen in a few months after the beginning of active warfare, toward the close of last winter: either the Rebels would be beaten in the field, in which event there would be reasonable hope of the Union's reconstruction, and the people could then take charge of slavery, and settle its future condition as to them should seem best,—or our armies would be beaten, and the people would be made to understand that slavery could no longer be allowed to exist for the support of an enemy who had announced from the beginning of their war-movement that their choice was fixed upon conquest, or, failing that, annihilation.



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It was written that we should fail in the field. We sought to take Richmond, with an army of force that appeared to be adequate to the work. We were beaten; and after some months of severe warfare, the country had the supreme felicity of celebrating the eighty-sixth anniversary of its Independence by thanking Heaven that its principal army had escaped capture by falling back to the fever-laden banks of a river on which lay a naval force so strong as to prevent the further advance of the victorious Southrons. The exertions that were made to remove that army from a place that threatened its total destruction through pestilence led to another series of actions, in which we were again beaten, and the Secession armies found themselves hard by the very station which they had so long held after their victory at Bull Run. Had their numbers been half as large as we estimated them by way of accounting for our defeats, they could have marched into Washington, and the American Union would have been at an end, while the Southern Confederacy would have taken the place which the United States had possessed among the nations. Fortunately, the enemy were not strong enough to hazard everything upon one daring stroke. General Lee was as prudent, or as timid, after his victories over General Pope, as, according to some authorities, Hannibal was after winning "the field of blood" at Cannae. What he did, however, was sufficient to show how serious was the danger that threatened us. If he could not take Washington, which stood for Rome, he might take Baltimore, which should be Capua. He entered Maryland, and his movements struck dismay into Pennsylvania. Harrisburg was marked for seizure, and the archives of the second State of the Union were sent to New York; and Philadelphia was considered so unsafe as to cause men to remove articles of value thence to her ancient rival's protection. That the enemy meant to invade the North cannot well be doubted; but the resistance they encountered, leading to their defeat at South Mountain and Antietam, forced them to retreat. Had they won at Antietam, not only would Washington have been cut off from land-communication with the North, but Pennsylvania would have been invaded, and the Southrons would have fattened on the produce of her rich fields. While these things were taking place in Virginia and Maryland, Fortune had proved equally unfavorable to us in the South and the Southwest. We had been defeated near Charleston, and most of our troops at Port Royal had been transferred to Virginia. Charleston and Mobile saw ships constantly entering their harbors, bringing supplies to the Secession forces. Wilmington and Savannah were less liable to attack than some Northern towns. An attack on Vicksburg had ended in Federal failure. By the aid of gunboats we had prevented the enemy from taking Baton Rouge, and destroyed their iron-clad Arkansas; but our soldiers had to abandon that town, and leave it to be watched by ships, while they hastened



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to the defence of New Orleans, a city which they could not have held half an hour, had the protecting naval force been withdrawn. The Southwest was mostly abandoned by our troops, and the tide of war had rolled back to the banks of the Ohio. Nashville was looked upon as lost, Louisville was in great danger of being taken, and for some days there was a perfect panic throughout the country respecting the fate of Cincinnati, the prevailing opinion being that the enemy had as good a chance of getting possession of that town as we had of maintaining possession of it. There was hardly a quarter to which a Unionist could look without encountering something that filled his mind with vexation, disappointment, shame, and gloom. All that the most hopeful of loyal men could say was, that the enemy had been made to evacuate Maryland, and that they had not proceeded beyond threats against any Northern State: and that was a fine theme for congratulations, after seventeen months of warfare, in which the Rebels were to have been beaten and the Union restored!

Such was the state of affairs, when, six days after the Battle of Antietam, President Lincoln issued his Proclamation against slavery. Some persons were pleased to be much astonished when it appeared. They said they had been deceived. They were right. They were self-deceived. They had deceived themselves. The President had received their pledge of support, which they, with an egotism which is not uncommon with politicians, had construed into a pledge from him to support slavery at all hazards, under all circumstances, and against all comers. He had given no pledge either to them or to their opponents. Plainly as man could speak, he had said that his object was the nation's safety, either with slavery or without it, the fate of slavery being with him a secondary matter. If any construction was to be put upon his words to Mr. Greeley beyond their plainest possible meaning, it was that he preferred the destruction of slavery to its conservation, for it was known that he had been an anti-slavery man for years, and he had been made President by a party which was charged by its foes with being so fanatically opposed to slavery that it was ready to destroy the Constitution in order to gain a place from which it could hope to effect its extermination. But Mr. Lincoln meant neither more nor less than what he said, his sole object being the overthrow of the Rebels. He has done no more than any President would have been compelled to do who should have sought to do his duty. Mr. Douglas could have done no less, had he been chosen President, and had rebellion followed his election, as we believe would have been the fact. The Proclamation is not an "Abolition" state-paper. Not one line of it is of such matter as any Abolitionist would have penned, though all Abolitionists may be glad that it has appeared, because its promulgation is a step in the right direction,—a step sure to be taken, unless the first Federal efforts



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should also have been the last, because leading to the defeat of the Rebels, and the return of peace. The President nowhere says that he seeks the abolition of slavery. The blow he has dealt is directed against slavery in the dominions of the Confederacy. That Confederacy claims to be a nation, and some of our acts amount to a virtual recognition of the claim which it makes. Now, if we were at war with an old nation of which slavery was one of the institutions, it could not be said that we had not the right to offer freedom to its slaves. Objection might be made to the proclamation of an offer of the kind, but it would be based on expediency. England would not accept a plan that was formed half a century ago for the partition of the United States, and which had for its leading idea the proclamation of freedom to American slaves; but her refusal was owing to the circumstance that she was herself a great slaveholding power, and she had no thought of establishing a precedent that might soon have been used with fatal effect against herself. She did not close her ears to the proposition because she had any doubt as to her right to avail herself of an offer of freedom to slaves, or because she supposed that to make such an offer would be to act immorally, but because it was inexpedient for her to proceed to extremities with us, due regard being had to her own interests. Had slavery been abolished in her dominions twenty years earlier, she would have acted against American slavery in 1812-15, and probably with entire success. President Lincoln does not purpose going so far as England could have gone with perfect propriety. She could have proclaimed freedom to American slaves without limitation. He has regard to the character of the war that exists, and so his Proclamation is not threat, but a warning. In substance, he tells the Rebels, that, if they shall persist in their rebellion after a certain date, their slaves shall be made free, if it shall be in his power to liberate them. He gives them exactly one hundred days in which to make their election between submission and slavery and resistance and ruin; and these hundred days may become as noted in history as those Hundred Days which formed the second reign of Napoleon I., as well through the consequences of the action that shall mark their course as through the gravity of that action itself.

Objections have been made to the time of issuing the Proclamation. Why, it has been asked, spring it so suddenly upon the country? Why publish it just as the tide of war was turning in our favor? Why not wait, and see what the effect would be on the Southern mind of the victories won in Maryland?—We have no knowledge of the immediate reasons that moved the President to select the twenty-second of September for the date of his Proclamation; but we can see three reasons why that day was a good one for the deed which thereon was done. The President may have argued, (1,) that the American mind had been brought up to



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the point of emancipation under certain well-defined conditions, and that, if he should not avail himself of the state of opinion, the opportunity afforded him might pass away, never to return with equal force; (2,) that foreign nations might base acknowledgment of the Confederacy on the defeats experienced by our armies in the last days of August, on the danger of Washington, and on the advance of Rebel armies to the Ohio, and he was determined that they should, if admitting the Confederacy to national rank, place themselves in the position of supporters of slavery; and, (3,) that the successes won by our army in Maryland, considering the disgraceful business at Harper's Ferry, were not of that pronounced character which entitles us to assert any supremacy over the enemy as soldiers. Something like this would seem to be the process through which President Lincoln arrived at the sound conclusion that the hour had come to strike a heavy blow at the enemy, and that he was the man for the hour.

Thus much for the Proclamation itself, the appearance of which indicates the beginning of a new period in the Secession contest, and shows that the American people are capable of conquering their prejudices, provided their schooling shall be sufficiently severe and costly. But the Proclamation itself, and without any change in our military policy, cannot be expected to accomplish anything for the Federal cause. Its doctrines must be enforced, if there is to be any practical effect from the change of position taken by the country and the President. If the same want of capacity that has hitherto characterized the war on our part is to be exhibited hereafter, the Proclamation might as well have been levelled against the evils of intemperance as against the evils of slavery. Never, since war began, has there been such imbecility displayed in waging it as we have contrived to display in our attacks on the enemies of the Union. It used to be supposed that Austria was the slowest and the most stupid of military countries; but America has got ahead of Austria in the art of doing nothing—or worse than nothing—with myriads of men and millions of money. We stand before the world a people to whom military success seems seldom possible, and, when possible, rarely useful. If we win a victory, we spend weeks in contemplating its beauties, and never think of improving it. Had one of our generals won the Battle of Jena, he would have rested for six weeks, and permitted the Prussian army to reorganize, instead of following it with that swiftness which alone can prevent brave men from speedily rallying after a lost battle. Had one of them won Waterloo, he would not have dreamed of entering France, but would have liberally given to Napoleon all the time that should have been necessary for his recovery from so terrible a defeat. They have nothing in them of the qualities even of old Bluecher, who never was counted a first-class commander. Forbearance has never ceased to be a virtue with them.



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Whether their slackness is of native growth, or is the consequence of instructions from Government, it is plain that adherence to it can never lead to the conquest of the Southrons. There is now a particular reason why it should give way to something of a very different character. The Proclamation has changed the conditions of the contest, and to be defeated now, driven out of the field for good and all, would be a far more mortifying termination of the war than it could have been, if we had already failed utterly. We have committed the unpardonable sin against slavery, and to fail now would be to place ourselves in the same position that is held by the commander of a ship of war who nails his colors to the mast, and yet has to get them down in order to prevent his conqueror from annihilating him. The action of the Confederate Congress with reference to the Proclamation, so far as we have accounts of it, shows that the President's action has intensified the character of the conflict, and that the enemy are preparing to fight under the banner of the pirate, declaring that they will show no quarter, because they look upon the Proclamation as declaring that there shall be no quarter extended to them. The President of the United States, they say, has avowed it to be his purpose to inaugurate a servile war in their country, and they call fiercely for retaliation. They mean, by using the words "servile war," to convey the impression that there is to be a general slaying and ravishing throughout the South, on and after the first of next January, under the special patronage of the American President, who has ordered his soldiers and his sailors, his ships and his corps, to be employed in protecting black ravishers of white women and black murderers of white children. All they say is mere cant, and is intended for the European market, which they now supply as liberally with lies as once they did with cotton. Our foolish foes in England accept every falsehood that is sent them from Richmond, and hence the torrent of misrepresentation that flows from that city to London. Let it continue to flow. It can do us no harm, if our action shall be in correspondence with our cause and our means. If we succeed, falsehood cannot injure us; if we fail, we shall have something of more importance than libels to think of. We should bear in mind that our armies are not to succeed because the slaves shall rise, but that the slaves are to be freed as a consequence of the success of our armies. That our armies may succeed, there must be more energy displayed both by their commanders and by Government. The Proclamation must be enforced, or it will come to nought. There is nothing self-enforcing about it. Its mere publication will no more put an end to the Rebellion than President Lincoln's first proclamation, calling upon the Rebels to cease their evil-doings and disperse, could put an end to it. Its future value, like that of all papers that deal with the leading interests of mankind, must depend altogether



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upon the future action of the men from whom it emanates, and that of their constituents. It stands to-day where the Declaration of Independence stood for the five years that followed its promulgation, waiting for its place in human annals to be prepared for it by its supporters. Of what worth would the Declaration of Independence be now, had it not been for Trenton and Princeton, Saratoga and Yorktown? Of no worth at all; and its authors would be looked upon as a band of sentimental political babblers, who could enunciate truths which neither they nor their countrymen had the capacity to uphold and practically to demonstrate. But the Declaration of Independence is one of the most immortal of papers because it proved a grand success; and it was successful because the men who put it forth were fully competent to the grand work with the performance of which they were charged. It is for Mr. Lincoln himself to say whether the Proclamation of September 22, 1861, shall take rank with the Declaration of July 4, 1776, or with those evidences of flagrant failure that have become so common since 1789,—with the French Declaration of the Rights of Man, and Mexican Constitutions. That it is the people's duty to support the President is said by almost all men; but is it not equally the duty of the President to support the people? And have they not supported him,—supported him with men, with money, with the surrender of the enjoyment of some of their dearest rights, with their full confidence, with good wishes and better deeds, and with all the rest of the numerous moral and material means of waging war vigorously and triumphantly? And if they have done and are doing all this, who will be to blame, if the enemy shall accomplish their purpose?

The President and his immediate associates are placed so high by their talents and their positions that they must be supposed open to the love of fame, and to desire honorable mention in their country's annals, especially as they have to do with matters of such transcendent importance, greater even than those that absorbed the attention of Washington and Hamilton, of Jefferson and Madison, of Jackson and Livingston. It is for themselves to decide what shall be said of them hereafter, and through all future time,—whether they shall be blessed or banned, cursed or canonized. The judgment that shall be passed upon them and their work will be given according to the result, and from it there can be no appeal. The Portuguese have a well-known proverb, that "the way to hell is paved with good intentions;" but it is not the laborers on that broad and crowded highway who gain honorable immortality. The decisions of posterity are not made with reference to men's motives and intentions, but upon their deeds. With posterity, success is the proper proof of merit, when nothing necessary to its winning is denied to the players in the world's great games. Richmond is worshipped, and Richard detested, not because the former was good and great, and the latter



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wicked and weak, for Richard was the better and the abler man, but for the reason that the decision was in Richmond's favor on Bosworth Field. The only difference between Catiline and Caesar, according to an eminent statesman and scholar, is this: Catiline was crushed by his foes, and Caesar's foes were crushed by him. This may seem harsh, but we fear that it is only too true,—that it is in accordance with that irreversible law of the world which makes success the test of worth in the management of human affairs. If Mr. Lincoln and his confidential officers would have the highest American places in after-days as well as to-day, let them win those places by winning the nation's battle. They can have them on no other terms. That is one of the conditions of the part they accepted when they took upon themselves their present posts at the beginning of a period of civil convulsion. If they fail, they will be doomed to profound contempt. In the words of the foremost man of all this modern world, uttered at the very crisis of his own fortunes,—Napoleon I., in the summer of 1813,—“To be judged by the event is the inexorable law of history.”

HOW TO CHOOSE A RIFLE.

To the Editors of the ATLANTIC MONTHLY.

Some thirty years ago, a gentleman who had just returned from Europe was trying to convey an idea of the size and magnificence of St. Peter's Church to a New-England country-clergyman, and was somewhat taken aback by the remark of the good man, that “the Pope must require a very powerful voice to fill such a building.”

The anecdote has been brought to my mind by the unexpected position in which I am placed, as the recipient of such a multitude of letters, and from such widely separated portions of the country, elicited by my article on Rifle-Clubs in the “Atlantic” for September, that I find myself called upon to address an audience extending from Maine to Minnesota. Fortunately for me, however, the columns of the “Atlantic” afford facilities of communication not enjoyed by the Pope, and through that medium I crave permission to reply to inquiries which afford most gratifying proof of the wide-spread interest which is awakened in the subject.

Almost every letter contains the inquiry, “What is the new breech-loading rifle you allude to, and where is it to be had?”—but a large proportion of them also ask advice as to the selection of a rifle; and with such evidence of general interest in the inquiry, I have thought I could not do better than to frame my reply specially to this point.

The rifle above alluded to is not yet in the market, and probably will not be for some time to come. Only three or four samples have been manufactured, and after being subjected to every possible test short of actual service in the hands of troops, it has



proved so entirely satisfactory that preparations are now making for its extensive production. Thus far it is known as the Ashcroft rifle, from the name of the proprietor, Mr. E.H. Ashcroft of Boston, the persevering energy of whose efforts to secure its introduction will probably never be appreciated as it deserves, except perhaps by those who have gone through the trial of bringing out an idea involving in its conception a great public benefit.



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Lieutenant Busk, in his "Hand-Book for Hythe," says, "I cannot imagine a much more helpless or hopeless position than that of an individual who, having determined to expend his ten or twenty guineas in the purchase of a rifle, and, guided only by the light of Nature, applies to a respectable gun-maker to supply his want. I never hear of an inexperienced buyer in search of a rifle without being reminded of the purchaser of a telescope, who, on asking the optician, among a multitude of other questions, whether he would be able to discern an object through it four miles off, received for reply, 'See an object *four* miles off, Sir? You can see an object four-and-twenty thousand miles off, Sir,—you can see the moon, Sir!' In like manner, if you naively inquire of a gun-maker whether a particular rifle will carry two hundred yards, the chances are he will exclaim, emphatically, 'Two hundred yards, Sir? It will carry fifteen hundred.' And so no doubt it may. The only question, is, How?"

The questions which have been addressed to me for a few weeks past have given me a keen appreciation of the difficulties alluded to, in which multitudes are at this moment plunged, to whom I shall be but too happy if it is in my power to extend a helping hand.

At the outset, however, it is but fair to declare my conviction that no man who has any just appreciation of the subject would attempt to *choose* a gun for another, any more than he would a horse, or, I had almost said, a wife; but he may lay down certain general rules which each individual must apply for himself, exercising his own taste in the details. Thus, I have elsewhere declared my own predilection for Colt's rifle; and I hold to it notwithstanding a strong prejudice against it which very generally exists. I do not mean to assert that it is a better shooter than many others, and still less would I urge any one else to procure one because I like it, but I simply say that its performance is equal to my requirements, and that the whole construction and getting-up of the gun suit my fancy; and the fact that another man dislikes it is no reason why I should discard it.

I have known men who were continually changing their guns, and seemed satisfied only with novelties. With such a taste I have no sympathy, but, on the contrary, my feeling of attachment to a trusty weapon strengthens with my familiarity with its merits, till it becomes so near akin to affection that I should find it hard to part with one which had served me well, and was associated in my mind with adventures whose interest was derived from its successful performance.

The first piece of advice I would offer to a novice in search of a gun is, "Don't be in a hurry."



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The demand is such that a buyer is constantly urged to close a bargain by the assurance that it may be his last chance to secure such a weapon as the one he is examining,—and great numbers of mere toys have thus been forced upon purchasers, who, if they ever practise enough to acquire a taste for shooting, will send them to the auction-room, and make another effort to procure a gun suited to their wants. Several new patterns of guns have been produced within the last year, some of which are very attractive in their appearance, and to an inexperienced person seem to possess sufficient power for any service they may ever be called upon to perform. They are well finished, compact, light, and pretty. A Government Inspector, indeed, would be apt to make discoveries of “malleable iron,” which would cause their instant rejection, but which in reality constitutes no ground of objection to guns whose parts are not required to be interchangeable. They might be described as “well adapted for ladies’ use, or for boys learning to shoot;” but it gave me a sickening sense of the inexperience of many a noble-hearted youth who may have entered the service from the purest motives of patriotism, when a dealer, who was exhibiting one of these parlor-weapons, with a calibre no larger than a good-sized pea, informed me that he had sold a great many to young officers, being so light that they could be carried slung upon the back almost as easily as a pistol. It is with no such kid-glove tools as these that so many of our officers have been picked off by Southern sharpshooters. At a long range they are useless; at close quarters, which is the only situation in which an officer actually needs fire-arms, a revolver is far preferable. I know of no rifle so well adapted to an officer’s use as Colt’s carbine,—of eighteen or twenty-one inch barrel, and not less than 44/100 of an inch calibre. It may be depended upon for six hundred yards, the short barrel renders its manipulation easy in a close fight, and the value of the repeating principle at such a time can be estimated only by that of life.

In a perfectly calm atmosphere, the light guns I have alluded to will shoot very well for one or two hundred yards; but no one can conceive, till he proves it by actual trial, what an amazing difference in precision is the result of even a very slight increase of weight of ball, when the air is in motion. Even in a dead calm no satisfactory shooting can be done beyond two hundred yards with a lighter ball than half an ounce, and any one who becomes interested in rifle-practice will soon grow impatient of being confined to short ranges and calm weather. This brings us, then, to the question of calibre, which I conceive to be the first one to be decided in selecting a gun, and the decision rests upon the uses to which the gun is to be applied. If it is wanted merely for military service, nothing better than the Enfield can be procured; but if the purchaser proposes to study



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the niceties of practice, and to enter into it with a keen zest, he will need a very different style of gun. A calibre large enough for a round ball of fifty to the pound, or an elongated shot of about half an ounce, is sufficient for six hundred yards; and a gun of that calibre, with a thirty-inch barrel, and a weight of about ten pounds, is better suited to the general wants of purchasers than any other size. In this part of the country it is by no means easy to find a place where shooting can be safely practised even at so long a range as five hundred yards,—which is sixty yards more than a quarter of a mile. It is always necessary to have an attendant at the target to point out the shots, and even then the shooter needs a telescope to distinguish them. For ordinary purposes, therefore, the calibre I have indicated is all-sufficient; but if a gun is wanted for shooting up to one thousand yards, the shot should be a full ounce weight. These are points which each man must determine for himself, and, having done so, let him go to any gun-maker of established reputation, and, before giving his order, let him study and compare the different forms of stocks, till he finds what is required for his peculiar physical conformation,—and giving directions accordingly, he will probably secure a weapon whose merits he will not fully appreciate till he has attained a degree of skill which is the result only of long-continued practice.

But never buy a gun, and least of all a rifle, without trying it; and do not be satisfied with a trial in a shop or shooting gallery, but take it into the field; and if you distrust yourself, get some one in whom you have confidence to try it for you. Choose a perfectly calm day. Have a rest prepared on which not only the gun may be laid, but a support may also be had for the elbows, the shooter being seated. By this means, and with the aid of globe- and peek-sights, (which should always be used in trying a gun,) it may as certainly be held in the same position at every shot as if it were clamped in a machine. For your target take a sheet of cartridge-paper and draw on it a circle of a foot, and, inside of that, another of four inches in diameter. Paint the space between the rings black, and you will then have a black ring four inches wide surrounding a white four-inch bull's-eye, against which your globe-sight will be much more distinctly seen than if it were black. Place the target so that when shooting you may have the sun on your back. On a very bright day, brown paper is better for a target than white. Begin shooting at one hundred yards and fire ten shots, with an exact aim at the bull's-eye, wiping out the gun after each shot. Do not look to see where you hit, till you have fired your string of ten shots; for, if you do, you will be tempted to alter your aim and make allowance for the variation, whereas your object now is not to hit the bull's-eye, but to prove the shooting of the gun; and if you find, when you get through, that



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all the shots are close together, you may be sure the gun shoots well, though they may be at considerable distance from the bull's-eye. That would only prove that the line of sight was not coincident with the line of fire, which can be easily rectified by moving the forward sight to the right or left, according as the variation was on the one side or the other. Having fired your string of ten shots, take a pair of dividers, and, with a radius equal to half the distance between the two hits most distant from each other, describe a circle cutting through the centre of each of those hits. From the centre of this circle measure the distance to each of the hits, add these distances together and divide the sum by ten, and you have the average variation, which ought not to be over two inches at the utmost, and if the gun is what it ought to be, and fired by a good marksman, would probably be much less. This is a sufficient test of the precision for that distance, and the same method may be adopted for longer ranges. But if the gun shoots well at one hundred yards, its capacity for a longer range may be proved by its penetrating power. Provide a number of pieces of seasoned white-pine board, one inch thick and say two feet long by sixteen inches wide. These are to be secured parallel to each other and one inch apart by strips nailed firmly to their sides, and must be so placed that when shot at the balls may strike fairly at a right angle to their face. Try a number of shots at the distance of one hundred yards, and note carefully how many boards are penetrated at each shot. The elongated shots are sometimes turned in passing through a board so as to strike the next one sideways, which of course increases the resistance very greatly, and such shots should not be counted; but if you find generally that the penetration of those which strike fairly is not over six inches, you may rest assured the gun cannot be relied on, except in a dead calm, for more than two hundred yards, and with anything of a breeze you will make no good shooting even at that distance. Nine inches of penetration is equal to six hundred yards, and twelve inches is good for a thousand.

A striking proof of the prevailing ignorance of scientific principles in rifle-shooting is afforded by the fact that it is still a very common practice to vary the charge of powder according to the distance to be shot. The fact is, that beyond a certain point any increase of the initial velocity of the ball is unfavorable both to range and precision, owing to the ascertained law that the ratio of increase of atmospheric resistance is four times that of the velocity, so that, after the point is reached at which they balance each other, any additional propulsive power is injurious. The proper charge of powder for any rifle is about one-seventh the weight of the ball, and the only means which should ever be adopted for increasing the range is the elevating sight.



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In conclusion, I would impress upon the young rifleman the importance of always keeping his weapon in perfect order. If you have never looked through the barrel of a rifle, you can have no conception what a beautifully finished instrument it is; and when you learn that the accuracy of its shooting may be affected by a variation of the thousandth part of an inch on its interior surface, you may appreciate the necessity of guarding against the intrusion of even a speck of rust. Never suffer your rifle to be laid aside after use till it has been thoroughly cleaned,—the barrel wiped first with a wet rag, (cotton-flannel is best,) then rubbed dry, then well oiled, and then again wiped with a dry rag. In England this work may be left to a servant, but with us the servants are so rare to whom such work can be intrusted that the only safe course is to see to it yourself; and if you have a true sportsman's love for a gun, you will not find the duty a disagreeable one.

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THE PRESIDENT'S PROCLAMATION.

In so many arid forms which States incrust themselves with, once in a century, if so often, a poetic act and record occur. These are the jets of thought into affairs, when, roused by danger or inspired by genius, the political leaders of the day break the else insurmountable routine of class and local legislation, and take a step forward in the direction of catholic and universal interests. Every step in the history of political liberty is a sally of the human mind into the untried future, and has the interest of genius, and is fruitful in heroic anecdotes. Liberty is a slow fruit. It comes, like religion, for short periods, and in rare conditions, as if awaiting a culture of the race which shall make it organic and permanent. Such moments of expansion in modern history were the Confession of Augsburg, the plantation of America, the English Commonwealth of 1648, the Declaration of American Independence in 1776, the British emancipation of slaves in the West Indies, the passage of the Reform Bill, the repeal of the Corn-Laws, the Magnetic Ocean-Telegraph, though yet imperfect, the passage of the Homestead Bill in the last Congress, and now, eminently, President Lincoln's Proclamation on the twenty-second of September. These are acts of great scope, working on a long future, and on permanent interests, and honoring alike those who initiate and those who receive them. These measures provoke no noisy joy, but are received into a sympathy so deep as to apprise us that mankind are greater and better than we know. At such times it appears as if a new public were created to greet the new event. It is as when an orator, having ended the compliments and pleasantries with which he conciliated attention, and having run over the superficial fitness and commodities of the measure he urges, suddenly, lending himself to some happy inspiration, announces with vibrating voice the grand human principles involved,—the bravoes and wits who greeted him loudly thus far are surprised and overawed: a new audience is found in the heart of the assembly,—an audience hitherto passive and unconcerned, now at last so searched and kindled that they come forward, every one a representative of mankind, standing for all nationalities.



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The extreme moderation with which the President advanced to his design,—his long-avowed expectant policy, as if he chose to be strictly the executive of the best public sentiment of the country, waiting only till it should be unmistakably pronounced,—so fair a mind that none ever listened so patiently to such extreme varieties of opinion,—so reticent that his decision has taken all parties by surprise, whilst yet it is the just sequel of his prior acts,—the firm tone in which he announces it, without inflation or surplusage,—all these have bespoken such favor to the act, that, great as the popularity of the President has been, we are beginning to think that we have underestimated the capacity and virtue which the Divine Providence has made an instrument of benefit so vast. He has been permitted to do more for America than any other American man. He is well entitled to the most indulgent construction. Forget all that we thought shortcomings, every mistake, every delay. In the extreme embarrassments of his part, call these endurance, wisdom, magnanimity, illuminated, as they now are, by this dazzling success.

When we consider the immense opposition that has been neutralized or converted by the progress of the war, (for it is not long since the President anticipated the resignation of a large number of officers in the army, and the secession of three States, on the promulgation of this policy,)—when we see how the great stake which foreign nations hold in our affairs has recently brought every European power as a client into this court, and it became every day more apparent what gigantic and what remote interests were to be affected by the decision of the President,—one can hardly say the deliberation was too long. Against all timorous counsels he had the courage to seize the moment; and such was his position, and such the felicity attending the action, that he has replaced Government in the good graces of mankind. “Better is virtue in the sovereign than plenty in the season,” say the Chinese. ‘Tis wonderful what power is, and how ill it is used, and how its ill use makes life mean, and the sunshine dark. Life in America had lost much of its attraction in the later years. The virtues of a good magistrate undo a world of mischief, and, because Nature works with rectitude, seem vastly more potent than the acts of bad governors, which are ever tempered by the good-nature in the people, and the incessant resistance which fraud and violence encounter.

The acts of good governors work at a geometrical ratio, as one midsummer day seems to repair the damage of a year of war.

A day which most of us dared not hope to see, an event worth the dreadful war, worth its costs and uncertainties, seems now to be close before us. October, November, December will have passed over beating hearts and plotting brains: then the hour will strike, and all men of African descent who have faculty enough to find their way to our lines are assured of the protection of American law.



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It is by no means necessary that this measure should be suddenly marked by any signal results on the negroes or on the Rebel masters. The force of the act is that it commits the country to this justice,—that it compels the innumerable officers, civil, military, naval, of the Republic to range themselves on the line of this equity. It draws the fashion to this side. It is not a measure that admits of being taken back. Done, it cannot be undone by a new Administration. For slavery overpowers the disgust of the moral sentiment only through immemorial usage. It cannot be introduced as an improvement of the nineteenth century. This act makes that the lives of our heroes have not been sacrificed in vain. It makes a victory of our defeats. Our hurts are healed; the health of the nation is repaired. With a victory like this, we can stand many disasters. It does not promise the redemption of the black race: that lies not with us: but it relieves it of our opposition. The President by this act has paroled all the slaves in America; they will no more fight against us; and it relieves our race once for all of its crime and false position. The first condition of success is secured in putting ourselves right. We have recovered ourselves from our false position, and planted ourselves on a law of Nature.

“If that fail,
The pillared firmament is rottenness,
And earth’s base built on stubble.”

The Government has assured itself of the best constituency in the world: every spark of intellect, every virtuous feeling, every religious heart, every man of honor, every poet, every philosopher, the generosity of the cities, the health of the country, the strong arms of the mechanics, the endurance of farmers, the passionate conscience of women, the sympathy of distant nations,—all rally to its support. Of course, we are assuming the firmness of the policy thus declared. It must not be a paper proclamation. We confide that Mr. Lincoln is in earnest, and, as he has been slow in making up his mind, has resisted the importunacy of parties and of events to the latest moment, he will be as absolute in his adhesion. Not only will he repeat and follow up his stroke, but the nation will add its irresistible strength. If the ruler has duties, so has the citizen. In times like these, when the nation is imperilled, what man can, without shame, receive good news from day to day, without giving good news of himself? What right has any one to read in the journals tidings of victories, if he has not bought them by his own valor, treasure, personal sacrifice, or by service as good in his own department? With this blot removed from our national honor, this heavy load lifted off the national heart, we shall not fear henceforward to show our faces among mankind. We shall cease to be hypocrites and pretenders, but what we have styled our free institutions will be such.



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In the light of this event the public distress begins to be removed. What if the brokers' quotations show our stocks discredited, and the gold dollar costs one hundred and twenty-seven cents? These tables are fallacious. Every acre in the Free States gained substantial value on the twenty-second of September. The cause of disunion and war has been reached, and begun to be removed. Every man's house-lot and garden are relieved of the malaria which the purest winds and the strongest sunshine could not penetrate and purge. The territory of the Union shines to-day with a lustre which every European emigrant can discern from far: a sign of inmost security and permanence. Is it feared that taxes will check immigration? That depends on what the taxes are spent for. If they go to fill up this yawning Dismal Swamp, which engulfed armies and populations, and created plague, and neutralized hitherto all the vast capabilities of this continent,—then this taxation, which makes the land wholesome and habitable, and will draw all men unto it, is the best investment in which property-holder ever lodged his earnings.

Whilst we have pointed out the opportuneness of the Proclamation, it remains to be said that the President had no choice. He might look wistfully for what variety of courses lay open to him: every line but one was closed up with fire. This one, too, bristled with danger, but through it was the sole safety. The measure he has adopted was imperative. It is wonderful to see the unseasonable senility of what is called the Peace party, through all its masks, blinding their eyes to the main feature of the war, namely, its inevitableness. The war existed long before the cannonade of Sumter, and could not be postponed. It might have begun otherwise or elsewhere, but war was in the minds and bones of the combatants, it was written on the iron leaf, and you might as easily dodge gravitation. If we had consented to a peaceable secession of the Rebels, the divided sentiment of the Border States made peaceable secession impossible, the insatiable temper of the South made it impossible, and the slaves on the border, wherever the border might be, were an incessant fuel to rekindle the fire. Give the Confederacy New Orleans, Charleston, and Richmond, and they would have demanded St. Louis and Baltimore. Give them these, and they would have insisted on Washington. Give them Washington, and they would have assumed the army and navy, and, through these, Philadelphia, New York, and Boston. It looks as if the battle-field would have been at least as large in that event as it is now. The war was formidable, but could not be avoided. The war was and is an immense mischief, but brought with it the immense benefit of drawing a line, and rallying the Free States to fix it impassably,—preventing the whole force of Southern connection and influence throughout the North from distracting every city with endless confusion, detaching that force and reducing it to handfuls, and, in the progress of hostilities, disinfecting us of our habitual proclivity, through the affection of trade, and the traditions of the Democratic party, to follow Southern leading.



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These necessities which have dictated the conduct of the Federal Government are overlooked, especially by our foreign critics. The popular statement of the opponents of the war abroad is the impossibility of our success. "If you could add," say they, "to your strength the whole army of England, of France, and of Austria, you could not coerce eight millions of people to come under this Government against their will." This is an odd thing for an Englishman, a Frenchman, or an Austrian to say, who remembers the Europe of the last seventy years,—the condition of Italy, until 1859,—of Poland, since 1793,—of France, of French Algiers,—of British Ireland, and British India. But, granting the truth, rightly read, of the historical aphorism, that "the people always conquer," it is to be noted, that, in the Southern States, the tenure of land, and the local laws, with slavery, give the social system not a democratic, but an aristocratic complexion; and those States have shown every year a more hostile and aggressive temper, until the instinct of self-preservation forced us into the war. And the aim of the war on our part is indicated by the aim of the President's Proclamation, namely, to break up the false combination of Southern society, to destroy the piratic feature in it which makes it our enemy only as it is the enemy of the human race, and so allow its reconstruction on a just and healthful basis. Then new affinities will act, the old repulsions will cease, and, the cause of war being removed, Nature and trade may be trusted to establish a lasting peace.

We think we cannot overstate the wisdom and benefit of this act of the Government. The malignant cry of the Secession press within the Free States, and the recent action of the Confederate Congress, are decisive as to its efficiency and correctness of aim. Not less so is the silent joy which has greeted it in all generous hearts, and the new hope it has breathed into the world.

It was well to delay the steamers at the wharves, until this edict could be put on board. It will be an insurance to the ship as it goes plunging through the sea with glad tidings to all people. Happy are the young who find the pestilence cleansed out of the earth, leaving open to them an honest career. Happy the old, who see Nature purified before they depart. Do not let the dying die: hold them back to this world, until you have charged their ear and heart with this message to other spiritual societies, announcing the melioration of our planet.

"Incertainties now crown themselves assured,
And Peace proclaims olives of endless age."

Meantime that ill-fated, much-injured race which the Proclamation respects will lose somewhat of the dejection sculptured for ages in their bronzed countenance, uttered in the wailing of their plaintive music,—a race naturally benevolent, joyous, docile, industrious, and whose very miseries sprang from their great talent for usefulness, which, in a more moral age, will not only defend their independence, but will give them a rank among nations.



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REVIEWS AND LITERARY NOTICES.

History of Friedrich the Second, called Frederick the Great. By THOMAS CARLYLE. In Four Volumes. Vol. III. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1862.

Although History flows in a channel never quite literally dry, and for certain purposes a continuous chronicle of its current is desirable, it is only in rare reaches, wherein it meets formidable obstacles to progress, that it becomes grand and impressive; and even in such cases the interest deepens immeasurably, when some master-spirit arises to direct its energies. The period of Frederick the Great was not one of these remarkable passages. It was marked, however, with the signs that precede such. Europe lay weltering and tossing in seemingly aimless agitation, yet in real birth-throes; and the issue was momentous and memorable, namely: The People. From the hour in which they emerged from the darkness of the French Revolution, they have so absorbed attention that men have had little opportunity to look into the causes which forced them to the front, and made wiser leadership thenceforth indispensable to peaceful rule. The field, too, was repulsive with the appearance of nearly a waste place, save only that Frederick the Second won the surname of "Great" by his action thereon. And it may be justly averred that only to reveal his life, and perhaps that of one other, was it worthy of resuscitation. To do this was an appalling labor, for the skeleton thereof was scattered through the crypts of many kingdoms; yet, by the commanding genius of Mr. Carlyle, bone hath not only come to his bone, but they have been clothed with flesh and blood, so that the captains of the age, and, moreover, the masses, as they appeared in their blind tusslings, are restored to sight with the freshness and fulness of Nature. Although this historical review is strictly illustrative, it is altogether incomparable for vividness and originality of presentation. The treatment of official personages is startlingly new. All ceremony toward them gives place to a fearful familiarity, as of one who not only sees through and through them, but oversees. Grave Emptiness and strutting Vanity, found in high places, are mocked with immortal mimicry. Indeed, those of the "wind-bag" species generally, wherever they appear in important affairs, are so admirably exposed, that we see how they inevitably lead States to disaster and leave them ruins, while their pompous and feeble methods of doing it are so put as to call forth the contemptuous smiles, yea, the derisive laughter, of all coming generations. In fine, the alternate light and shade, which so change the aspect and make the mood of human nature, were never so touched in before; and therefore it is the saddest and the merriest story ever told.



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In bold and splendid contrast with this picture of national life flow the life and fortunes of Frederick. If the qualities of his progenitors prophesied this right royal course, his portrait, by Pesne, shows him to have been conceived in some happy moment when Nature was in her most generous mood. What finish of form and feature! and what apparent power to win! Yet in what serene depths it rests, to be aroused only by some superb challenger! No strength of thought or stress of situation seems to have had power to line the curves of beauty. Observe, too, the full-blown mouth, which never saw cause to set itself in order to form or fortify a purpose. When it is remembered that in opening manhood this prince was long imprisoned under sentence of death for attempting to escape from paternal tyranny, and that his friend actually died on the gallows merely for generous complicity in this offence against the state of a king, and that neither of the terrible facts left permanent trace on his countenance or cloud on his spirit, it should create no surprise that nothing but the march of time was ever visible there. Though trained in such a school, and in the twenty-eighth year of his age when he reached the throne, he yet gave a whole and a full heart to his subjects, and sought to guide them solely for their good. From this purpose he never swerved; and though his somewhat too trustful methods were rapidly changed by stern experience, his people felt more and more the consummate wisdom of his guidance, and they became unconquerable by that truth and that faith. Almost on the first day of his reign, he invited Voltaire, the greatest of literary heroes, the most adroit and successful assaulter of kingcraft and priestcraft that ever lived, to his capital and to his palace; and in a most friendly spirit consulted him on the advancement of art and letters, exhausted him by the touchstone of superior capacity, and even fathomed him by a glance so keen and so covert that it always took, but never gave, and then complimented him home in so masterly a manner that he was lured into the fond belief that he had found a disciple. A mind so capacious and so reticent is always an enigma to near observers. Hence it is that the transcendently great may be more truly known to after-ages than to any contemporary. By the patient research and profound insight of Mr. Carlyle, Frederick the Great is thus rising into clear and perennial light. What deserts of dust he wrought in, and what a jungle of false growths he had to clear away, Dryasdust and Smelfungus mournfully hint and indignantly moralize,—under such significant names does this new Rhadamanthus reveal the real sins of mankind, and deliver them over to the judgment of their peers. Frederick, indeed, is among them, but not of them. The way in which he is made to come forth from the mountains of smoke and cinders remaining of his times is absolutely marvellous. As some mighty and mysterious necromancer quickens



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the morbid imagination to supernatural sight, and for a brief moment reveals through rolling mist and portentous cloud the perfect likeness of the one longed for by the rapt gazer, so Frederick is restored in this biography for the perpetual consolation and admiration of all coming heroes. In comprehension and judgment of the actions and hearts of men, and in vividness of writing, not that which shook the soul of Belshazzar in the midst of his revellers was more powerful, or more sure of approval and fulfilment. It is not only one of the greatest of histories and of biographies, but nothing in literature, from any other pen, bears any likeness to it. It is truly a solitary work,—the effort of a vast and lonely nature to find a meet companion among the departed.

1. *The Rejected Stone; or, Insurrection vs. Resurrection in America.* By a Native of Virginia. Second Edition. Boston: Walker, Wise, & Co. 1862.

2. *The Golden Hour.* By MONCURE D. CONWAY, Author of "The Rejected Stone." *Impera parendo.* Boston: Ticknor & Fields. 1862.

Seldom have political writings found such accomplices in events as these, whose final criticism appears in the great Proclamation of the President. Two campaigns have been the bloody partisans of this earnest pen: the impending one will cheerfully undertake its final vindication. Not because these two little books stand sole and preeminent, the isolated prophecies of an all but rejected truth, nor because they have created the opinion out of which the President gathers breath for his glorious words. Mr. Conway would hardly claim more, we think, than to have spoken frankly what the people felt, the same people which hailed the early emancipating instinct of General Fremont. We see the fine sense of Mr. Emerson in his advice to hitch our wagon to a star, but there must be a well-seasoned vehicle, with a cunning driver to thrust his pin through the coupling, one not apt to jump out when the axles begin to smoke.

At the first overt act of this great Rebellion, anti-slavery men perceived the absurdity of resisting a symptom instead of attacking the disease. They proclaimed the old-fashioned truth, that an eruption can be rubbed back again into the system, not only without rubbing out its cause, but at the greatest hazard to the system, which is loudly announcing its difficulty in this cutaneous fashion. But Northern politicians saw that the inflammatory blotches made the face of the country ugly and repulsive: their costliest preparations have been well rubbed in ever since, without even yet reducing the rebellious red; on the contrary, it flamed out more vigorously than ever. Their old practice was not abandoned, the medicines only were changed. The wash of compromise was replaced by the bath of blood. And into that dreadful color the tears and agony of a million souls have been distilled, as if they would make a mixture powerful enough to draw out all our trouble by the pores. The very skin of the Rebellion chafed and burned more fiercely with all this quackery.



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If Slavery is our disease, the Abolition of Slavery is our remedy. Our bayonets only cupped and scored the patient, our war-measures in and out of Congress only worked dynamically against other war-measures far more dogged and desperate than our own. The sentence of Emancipation is the specific whose operation will be vital, by effecting an alteration in the system, and soon annihilating that condition of the blood which feeds our fevers and rushes in disgusting blotches to the face. "No,"—a Northern minority still says,—“every fever has its term; only watch your self-limiting disease, keep the patient from getting too much hurt during his delirium, and he will be on 'Change before long.”

No doubt of that. He loves to be on 'Change; of all the places in the country, out of his own patriarchal neighborhoods, not even Saratoga and Newport were ever so exhilarating to him as Wall Street and State Street, and he longs to be well enough to infest his whilom haunts. Slavery is a self-limited disease, for it suffers nothing but itself to impose its limits. In that sense the North would soon have his old crony on the pavement again, with one yellow finger in his button-hole, and another nervously playing at a trigger behind the back. For the North was paying roundly in men and dollars to renew that pleasurable intercourse, to get the dear old soul out again as little dilapidated as possible, with as much of the old immunities and elasticities preserved as an attack so violent would allow.

The President said to the deputation of Quakers, “Where the Constitution cannot yet go, a proclamation cannot.” This was accepted by a portion of the North as another compact expression of Presidential wisdom. It was the common sense, curtly and neatly put, upon which our armies waited, and for whose cold and bleached utterances our glorious young men were sent home from Washington by rail in coffins, red receipts of Slavery to acknowledge Northern indecision. It was the kind of common sense which, after every family-tomb has got its tenant, and wives, mothers, sisters tears to be their bread and meat continually, would have jogged on 'Change snugly some fine morning arm in arm with the murderer of their noble dead.

For, though neither the Constitution nor a proclamation can quite yet go down practically into Slavery, Slavery might come up here to find the Constitution in its old place at the Potomac ferry, and without a toll or pike to heed.

It seemed so sensible to say, that, where one document cannot go, another cannot! And yet it depends upon what is in the document. If the Constitution *could* go South now, it would be the last thing we should want to send, at this stage of the national malady. It contains the immunity out of which the malady has flamed. Its very neutrality is the best protection which a conquered South could have, and a moral triumph that would richly compensate it for a military defeat. Would it not have been quite as sagacious, and equally aphoristic, if the President had said, “Where a proclamation cannot go, the Constitution never can again”? He has said it! And if the proclamation goes first, the Constitution will follow to bless and to save.

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Both of these little books of Mr. Conway are devoted to showing the necessity for a proclamation of emancipation, as simple justice, as military policy, as mercy to the South, to put us right at home and abroad, to destroy at once the cause of the Republic's shame and sorrow. He combats various objections: such as that a proclamation of that nature would send home instantly the pro-slavery officers and men who are now fighting merely to enhance their own importance or to restore the state of things before the war: that a proclamation of emancipation, finding its way, as it surely would, to the heart of every slave, would breed insurrections and all the horrors of a servile war: that such a document would not be worth the paper which it blotted, until the military power of the South was definitively broken: that it would convert the Border States into active foes, and make them rush by natural proclivity into the bosom of Secession. Mr. Conway disposes well of a great deal of trash which even good Republican papers, upon which we have hitherto relied, but can do so no longer, have vented under all these heads of objections.

He writes with such enthusiasm, and is so plainly a dear lover and worshipper of the justice which can alone exalt this nation, that we are carried clear over the wretched half-republicanism which has been trying all the year to say eminently sound and unexceptionable things, we forget the deceit and expediency whose leaded columns have been more formidable than those which rolled the tide of war back again to the Potomac. Great is the animating power of faith, when faithfully brought home to the universal instinct for righteousness. Mr. Conway was born and bred among slaveholders, knows them and their institution, knows the slave, and his moral condition, and his expectations: so that these inspiring prophecies of his are more than those of a lively and talented pamphleteer.

His earnest purpose in writing lifts us pretty well over some things in his style which seem to us discordant with his glorious theme. He has a way, as good as the President's, to whom much of his matter is addressed, of making his apologues and stories tell; they are apt, and give the reader the sensation of being clinched. One feels like a nail when it catches the board. But sometimes the transition to a grotesque allusion from a fine touch of fancy or from the inbred religiousness of the subject is abrupt. Jean Paul may offer you, in his most glowing page, a quid of tobacco, if he pleases; the shock is picturesque, and sometimes lets in a deep analogy. But the hour in which Mr. Conway writes, the height of faith from which his pen stoops to the mortal page, the unspeakable solemnity of the theme, which our volunteers are rudely striving to trace upon their country's bosom with their blood, and our women are steeping in their tears, ought to drive all flippancy shuddering from the lines in which sarcasm itself should be measured and awful as the deaths which gird us round.



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But the two volumes are full of power and feeling. They are written so that all may read. Their effect is popular, without stooping deliberately to become so. They are among the brightest and simplest pages which this exciting period has produced. It would be a great mistake to gauge their effect by what they bring to pass in the minds of cabinet-officers, editors, and party-leaders: for they put into plain, stout language the growing instinct of the people to get at the cause of the war which lays them waste.

Some of the most effective pages in these volumes are those which lament the dread alternative of war, and which show that emancipation would be merciful to all classes at the South. It is no paradox that to free the slaves to-morrow would restore health to the South and regenerate its people.

And we are glad that Mr. Conway speaks so emphatically against that measure of colonization, whether the proposition be to deport the contrabands to Hayti, or to tote them away to Central America under the leadership of intelligent colored representatives of the North. All these are plans which look to the eventual removal of the only men at the South who know how to labor, and who are now the only representatives there of the country's industrial ideas. We pray you, Mr. President, to use the money voted for colonizing purposes to rid the country of the men in the Border and Cotton States who cannot or will not work, slave-owners and bushwhackers, who kill and harry, but who never did an honest stroke of work in their lives, and whom, with or without slavery, this Republic will have to support. Take some Pacific Island for a great Alms-House, and inaugurate an exodus of the genuine Southern pauper; he is only an incumbrance to the industrious and humble-minded blacks, from whose toil the country may draw the staples of free sugar and free cotton, raised upon the soil which is theirs by the holy prescription of blood and sorrow. "If it were not for your presence in the country," says the President to the colored men, "we should have no war!" If it were not for silverware and jewelry, no burglaries would be committed! Don't let us get rid of the villains, but of the victims; thereby villainy will cease!

Let Mr. Pomeroy be sent to annex some of the Paumotu or Tongan groups, where spontaneous bread-fruit would afford Mr. Floyd good plucking, and Messrs. Wigfall, Benjamin, and Prior could even have their chewing done by proxy, for the native pauper employs the old women to masticate his Ava into drink. There they might continue to take their food from other people's mouths, with the chance now and then of a strong anti-slavery clergyman well barbecued, a luxury for which they have howled for many a year. That is the place for your oligarchic pauper, where the elements themselves are field-hands, with Nature for overseer, manufactures superfluous and free-trade a blessing, and plenty of colored persons to raise the mischief with. That is the sole crop which they have raised at home. Let their propensities be transferred to a place unconnected with the politics or the privileges of a Christian Republic.



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But let this great Republic drive into exile the wheat-growers of the West, the miners and iron-men of Pennsylvania, and the farmers of New England, as soon as these men who have created the cotton-crop which clothes a world, and who only wait for another stimulus to supersede the lash. Let them find it, as in Jamaica, in a plot of ground, their seed and tools, their hearth-side and marriage, their freedom, and the shelter of a country which wants to use the products of their hands.

If it be an object to stretch a great band of free tropical labor across Central America, to people those wastes with ideas which shall curb the southward lust of men, and nourish a grateful empire against the intrigues of European States, let that be done, if the colored American of the Border States is willing to advance the project. Let the project be clearly understood, and its prospective upholders frankly invited to become men, and aid their country's welfare. But never let colonization be opened like an artery, through whose "unkindest cut" some of the best blood of the country shall slip away and be lost forever. We want the cotton labor even more extensively diffused, to conquer John Bull with bales, as at New Orleans. Let no cotton-grower ever budge.

The Life and Letters of Washington Irving. By his Nephew, PIERRE M. IRVING. Vols. I and II. New York: G.P. Putnam.

If to be loved and admired by all, to have troops of personal friends, to enjoy a literary reputation wide in extent and high in degree, to be as little stung by envy and detraction as the lot of humanity will permit, to secure material prosperity with only occasional interruptions and intermissions, make up the elements of a happy life, then that of Washington Irving must be pronounced one of the most fortunate in the annals of literature. It is but repeating a trite remark to say that happiness depends more upon organization than upon circumstances, more upon what we are than upon what we have. Saint-Simon said of the Duke of Burgundy, father of Louis XV., that he was born terrible: it certainly may be said of Washington Irving that he was born happy. Some men are born unhappy: that is, they are born with elements of character, peculiarities of temperament, which generate discontent under all conditions of life. Their joints are not lubricated by oil, but fretted by sand. The contemporaries of Shakspeare, who for the most part had little comprehension of his unrivalled genius, expressed their sense of his personal qualities by the epithet gentle, which was generally applied to him,—a word which meant rather more than it does now, comprising sweetness, courtesy, and kindness. No one word could better designate the leading characteristics of Irving's nature and temperament. No man was ever more worthy to bear "the grand old name of gentleman," alike in the essentials of manliness, tenderness, and purity, and in the external accomplishment of manners so winning and cordial that



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they charmed alike men, women, and children. He had the delicacy of organization which is essential to literary genius, but it stopped short of sickliness or irritability. He was sensitive to beauty in all its forms, but was never made unhappy or annoyed by the shadows in the picture of life. He had a happy power of escaping from everything that was distasteful, uncomfortable, and unlovely, and dwelling in regions of sunshine and bloom. His temperament was not impassioned; and this, though it may have impaired somewhat the force of his genius, contributed much to his enjoyment of life. Considering that he was an American born, and that his youth and early manhood were passed in a period of bitter and virulent political strife, it is remarkable how free his writings are from the elements of conflict and opposition. He never put any vinegar into his ink. He seems to have been absolutely without the capacity of hating any living thing. He was a literary artist; and the productions of his pen address themselves to the universal and unpartisan sympathies of mankind as much as paintings or statues. His "Rip Van Winkle" and "Legend of Sleepy Hollow" are pictures, in which we find combined the handling of Teniers, the refinement of Stothard, and the coloring of Gainsborough.

Fortunate in so many other things, Irving may also be pronounced fortunate in his biographer, whom he himself designated for the trust. His nephew has performed his labor of love in a manner which will satisfy all but those who read a book mainly for the purpose of finding fault with it. In his brief and tasteful preface he says: "In the delicate office of sifting, selecting, and arranging these different materials, extending through a period of nearly sixty years, it has been my aim to make the author, in every stage of his career, as far as possible, his own biographer, conscious that I shall in this way best fulfil the duty devolved upon me, and give to the world the truest picture of his life and character." To this purpose Mr. Pierre M. Irving has adhered with uniform consistency. He makes his uncle his own biographer. To borrow a happy illustration which we found in a newspaper a few days since, his own portion of the book is like the crystal of a watch, through which we see the hands upon the face as through transparent air. And luckily he found ample materials in his uncle's papers and records. Washington Irving was not bred to any profession, and had a fixed aversion, not characteristic of his countrymen, for regular business-occupation; his literary industry was fitful, and not continuous: but he seems to have been fond of the occupation of writing, and spent upon his diaries and in his correspondence a great many hours, which he could hardly have done, if he had been a lawyer, a doctor, or even a merchant, in active employment. His warm family-affections, too, his strong love for his brothers and sisters, from most of whom he was for many years separated, were a constant incitement to the writing of letters, those invisible wires that keep up the communication between parted hearts. For all these peculiarities of nature, for all these accidents of fortune, we have reason to be grateful, since from these his biographer has found ample materials for constructing the fabric of his life from the foundation.



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Many of Irving's letters, especially in the second volume, are long and elaborate productions, which read like chapters from a book of travels, or like essays, and yet do not on that account lose the peculiar charm which we demand in such productions. They are perfectly natural in tone and feeling, though evidently written with some care. They are not in the least artificial, and yet not careless or hasty. They have all that easy and graceful flow, that transparent narrative, that unconscious charm, which we find in his published writings; and we not unfrequently discern gleams and touches of that exquisite humor which was the best gift bestowed upon his mind. Brief as our notice is, we cannot refrain from quoting in illustration of our remark a few sentences from a letter to Thomas Moore, written in 1824:—

“I went a few evenings since to see Kenney's new piece, ‘The Alcaid.’ It went off lamely, and the Alcaid is rather a bore, and comes near to be generally thought so. Poor Kenney came to my room next evening, and I could not have believed that one night could have ruined a man so completely. I swear to you I thought at first it was a flimsy suit of clothes had left some bedside and walked into my room without waiting for the owner to get up, or that it was one of those frames on which clothiers stretch coats at their shop-doors, until I perceived *a thin face, sticking edgeways out of the collar of the coat like the axe in a bundle of fasces*. He was so thin, and pale, and nervous, and exhausted,—he made a dozen difficulties in getting over a spot in the carpet, and never would have accomplished it, if he had not lifted himself over by the points of his shirt-collar.”

The illustration we have italicized is rather wit than humor; but be it as it may, it is capital; and the whole paragraph has that quaint and grotesque exaggeration which reminds us of the village-tailor in “The Sketch-Book,” “who played on the clarionet, and seemed to have blown his face to a point,” or of Mud Sam, who “knew all the fish in the river by their Christian names.”

We think no one can read these volumes without having a higher impression of Washington Irving as a man. There was no inconsistency between the author and the man. The tenderness, the purity of feeling, the sensibility, which gave his works an entrance into so many hearts, had their source in his mind and character. It is a very truthful record that we have before us. The delineation is that of a man certainly not without touches of human infirmity, but as certainly largely endowed with virtues as well as with gifts and graces. It is very evident that it is a truthful biography, and that the hand of faithful affection has found nothing to suppress or conceal. When we have laid down the book, we feel that we know the man. And we can understand why it was that he was so loved. Enemies, it seems, he had, or at least ill-wishers; since we learn—and it is one of the indications

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of his soft and sensitive nature—that he was seriously annoyed by a persecutor who persistently inclosed and forwarded to him every scrap of unfavorable criticism he could find in the newspapers: but the feeling that inspired this piece of ill-nature must have been envy, and not hatred,—the bitterness which is awakened in some unhappy tempers by the success which they cannot themselves attain. No man less deserved to be hated than Irving, for no man was less willing himself to give heart-room to hatred.

We need hardly add that these volumes—of which the larger part is by Irving himself—are very entertaining, and that we read them from beginning to end with unflagging interest. Sketches of society and manners, personal anecdotes, descriptions of scenery, buildings, and works of art, give animation and variety to the narrative. The whole is suffused with a golden glow of cheerfulness, the effluence of a nature very happy, yet never needing the sting of riot or craving the flush of excess, and finding its happiness in those pure fountains that refresh, but not intoxicate.

The close of the second volume brings us down to the year 1832, and his cordial reception by his friends and countrymen after an absence of seventeen years; so that more good things are in store for us.