

The Atlantic Monthly, Volume 07, No. 43, May, 1861 Creator eBook

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Contents

The Atlantic Monthly, Volume 07, No. 43, May, 1861 Creator eBook.....	1
Contents.....	2
Table of Contents.....	9
Page 1.....	10
Page 2.....	12
Page 3.....	14
Page 4.....	16
Page 5.....	18
Page 6.....	19
Page 7.....	20
Page 8.....	21
Page 9.....	23
Page 10.....	25
Page 11.....	27
Page 12.....	28
Page 13.....	29
Page 14.....	31
Page 15.....	33
Page 16.....	34
Page 17.....	35
Page 18.....	36
Page 19.....	37
Page 20.....	38
Page 21.....	39
Page 22.....	40



[Page 23..... 41](#)

[Page 24..... 42](#)

[Page 25..... 43](#)

[Page 26..... 44](#)

[Page 27..... 45](#)

[Page 28..... 46](#)

[Page 29..... 47](#)

[Page 30..... 48](#)

[Page 31..... 49](#)

[Page 32..... 50](#)

[Page 33..... 51](#)

[Page 34..... 52](#)

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

[Page 36..... 54](#)

[Page 37..... 55](#)

[Page 38..... 57](#)

[Page 39..... 58](#)

[Page 40..... 59](#)

[Page 41..... 60](#)

[Page 42..... 61](#)

[Page 43..... 62](#)

[Page 44..... 63](#)

[Page 45..... 64](#)

[Page 46..... 65](#)

[Page 47..... 66](#)

[Page 48..... 67](#)



[Page 49..... 68](#)

[Page 50..... 69](#)

[Page 51..... 70](#)

[Page 52..... 71](#)

[Page 53..... 72](#)

[Page 54..... 73](#)

[Page 55..... 74](#)

[Page 56..... 75](#)

[Page 57..... 76](#)

[Page 58..... 77](#)

[Page 59..... 78](#)

[Page 60..... 79](#)

[Page 61..... 80](#)

[Page 62..... 81](#)

[Page 63..... 83](#)

[Page 64..... 85](#)

[Page 65..... 87](#)

[Page 66..... 89](#)

[Page 67..... 91](#)

[Page 68..... 92](#)

[Page 69..... 94](#)

[Page 70..... 95](#)

[Page 71..... 96](#)

[Page 72..... 98](#)

[Page 73..... 99](#)

[Page 74..... 101](#)



[Page 75..... 103](#)

[Page 76..... 105](#)

[Page 77..... 107](#)

[Page 78..... 109](#)

[Page 79..... 111](#)

[Page 80..... 113](#)

[Page 81..... 115](#)

[Page 82..... 117](#)

[Page 83..... 119](#)

[Page 84..... 121](#)

[Page 85..... 122](#)

[Page 86..... 123](#)

[Page 87..... 124](#)

[Page 88..... 126](#)

[Page 89..... 127](#)

[Page 90..... 128](#)

[Page 91..... 130](#)

[Page 92..... 131](#)

[Page 93..... 132](#)

[Page 94..... 133](#)

[Page 95..... 134](#)

[Page 96..... 136](#)

[Page 97..... 137](#)

[Page 98..... 138](#)

[Page 99..... 140](#)

[Page 100..... 141](#)



[Page 101..... 143](#)

[Page 102..... 144](#)

[Page 103..... 146](#)

[Page 104..... 148](#)

[Page 105..... 150](#)

[Page 106..... 152](#)

[Page 107..... 153](#)

[Page 108..... 154](#)

[Page 109..... 155](#)

[Page 110..... 156](#)

[Page 111..... 157](#)

[Page 112..... 158](#)

[Page 113..... 159](#)

[Page 114..... 160](#)

[Page 115..... 162](#)

[Page 116..... 163](#)

[Page 117..... 164](#)

[Page 118..... 165](#)

[Page 119..... 166](#)

[Page 120..... 167](#)

[Page 121..... 168](#)

[Page 122..... 169](#)

[Page 123..... 170](#)

[Page 124..... 171](#)

[Page 125..... 173](#)

[Page 126..... 174](#)



[Page 127..... 175](#)

[Page 128..... 176](#)

[Page 129..... 178](#)

[Page 130..... 179](#)

[Page 131..... 180](#)

[Page 132..... 182](#)

[Page 133..... 184](#)

[Page 134..... 185](#)

[Page 135..... 186](#)

[Page 136..... 187](#)

[Page 137..... 188](#)

[Page 138..... 189](#)

[Page 139..... 191](#)

[Page 140..... 192](#)

[Page 141..... 194](#)

[Page 142..... 195](#)

[Page 143..... 196](#)

[Page 144..... 198](#)

[Page 145..... 199](#)

[Page 146..... 200](#)

[Page 147..... 201](#)

[Page 148..... 203](#)

[Page 149..... 204](#)

[Page 150..... 205](#)

[Page 151..... 206](#)

[Page 152..... 208](#)



[Page 153..... 210](#)

[Page 154..... 212](#)

[Page 155..... 213](#)

[Page 156..... 215](#)

[Page 157..... 217](#)

[Page 158..... 218](#)

[Page 159..... 219](#)

[Page 160..... 220](#)

[Page 161..... 221](#)

[Page 162..... 223](#)

[Page 163..... 224](#)

[Page 164..... 225](#)

[Page 165..... 227](#)

[Page 166..... 229](#)



Table of Contents

Section	Table of Contents	Page
Start of eBook		1
CHAPTER I.		1
CHAPTER II.		4
CHAPTER III.		8
CHAPTER IV.		11
REST AND MOTION.		17
LIGHTS OF THE ENGLISH LAKE DISTRICT.		38
SONNET		51
PINK AND BLUE.		61
POMEGRANATE-FLOWERS.		79
CONCERNING FUTURE YEARS		105
BROTHER JONATHAN'S LAMENT FOR SISTER CAROLINE.		128
THE NIGER, AND ITS EXPLORERS.		141
REVIEWS AND LITERARY NOTICES.		148
TAMBURINI		151
BENVENUTO		152
TAMBURINI.		152
RECENT AMERICAN PUBLICATIONS		164



Page 1

CHAPTER I.

The old town.

The setting sunbeams slant over the antique gateway of Sorrento, fusing into a golden bronze the brown freestone vestments of old Saint Antonio, who with his heavy stone mitre and upraised hands has for centuries kept watch thereupon.

A quiet time he has of it up there in the golden Italian air, in petrified act of blessing, while orange lichens and green mosses from year to year embroider quaint patterns on the seams of his sacerdotal vestments, and small tassels of grass volunteer to ornament the folds of his priestly drapery, and golden showers of blossoms from some more hardy plant fall from his ample sleeve-cuffs. Little birds perch and chitter and wipe their beaks unconcernedly, now on the tip of his nose and now on the point of his mitre, while the world below goes on its way pretty much as it did when the good saint was alive, and, in despair of the human brotherhood, took to preaching to the birds and the fishes.

Whoever passed beneath this old arched gateway, thus saint-guarded, in the year of our Lord's grace—, might have seen under its shadow, sitting opposite to a stand of golden oranges, the little Agnes.

A very pretty picture was she, reader.—with such a face as you sometimes see painted in those wayside shrines of sunny Italy, where the lamp burns pale at evening, and gillyflower and cyclamen are renewed with every morning.

She might have been fifteen or thereabouts, but was so small of stature that she seemed yet a child. Her black hair was parted in a white unbroken seam down to the high forehead, whose serious arch, like that of a cathedral-door, spoke of thought and prayer. Beneath the shadows of this brow lay brown, translucent eyes, into whose thoughtful depths one might look as pilgrims gaze into the waters of some saintly well, cool and pure down to the unblemished sand at the bottom. The small lips had a gentle compression which indicated a repressed strength of feeling; while the straight line of the nose, and the flexible, delicate nostril, were perfect as in those sculptured fragments of the antique which the soil of Italy so often gives forth to the day from the sepulchres of the past. The habitual pose of the head and face had the shy uplooking grace of a violet; and yet there was a grave tranquillity of expression, which gave a peculiar degree of character to the whole figure.

At the moment at which we have called your attention, the fair head is bent, the long eyelashes lie softly down on the pale, smooth cheek; for the Ave Maria bell is sounding from the Cathedral of Sorrento, and the child is busy with her beads.



By her side sits a woman of some threescore years, tall, stately, and squarely formed, with ample breadth of back and size of chest, like the robust dames of Sorrento. Her strong Roman nose, the firm, determined outline of her mouth, and a certain energy in every motion, speak the woman of will and purpose. There is a degree of vigor in the decision with which she lays down her spindle and bows her head, as a good Christian of those days would, at the swinging of the evening bell.

Page 2

But while the soul of the child in its morning freshness, free from pressure or conscience of earthly care, rose like an illuminated mist to heaven, the words the white-haired woman repeated were twined with threads of worldly prudence,—thoughts of how many oranges she had sold, with a rough guess at the probable amount for the day,—and her fingers wandered from her beads a moment to see if the last coin had been swept from the stand into her capacious pocket, and her eyes wandering after them suddenly made her aware of the fact that a handsome cavalier was standing in the gate, regarding her pretty grandchild with looks of undisguised admiration.

“Let him look!” she said to herself, with a grim clasp on her rosary;—“a fair face draws buyers, and our oranges must be turned into money; but he who does more than look has an affair with me;—so gaze away, my master, and take it out in buying oranges!—*Ave, Maria! ora pro nobis, nunc et,*” etc., etc.

A few moments, and the wave of prayer which had flowed down the quaint old shadowy street, bowing all heads as the wind bowed the scarlet tassels of neighboring clover-fields, was passed, and all the world resumed the work of earth just where they left off when the bell began.

“Good even to you, pretty maiden!” said the cavalier, approaching the stall of the orange-woman with the easy, confident air of one secure of a ready welcome, and bending down on the yet prayerful maiden the glances of a pair of piercing hazel eyes that looked out on each side of his aquiline nose with the keenness of a falcon’s.

“Good even to you, pretty one! We shall take you for a saint, and worship you in right earnest, if you raise not those eyelashes soon.”

“Sir! my lord!” said the girl,—a bright color flushing into her smooth brown cheeks, and her large dreamy eyes suddenly upraised with a flutter, as of a bird about to take flight.

“Agnes, bethink yourself!” said the white-haired dame;—“the gentleman asks the price of your oranges;—be alive, child!”

“Ah, my lord,” said the young girl, “here are a dozen fine ones.”

“Well, you shall give them me, pretty one,” said the young man, throwing a gold piece down on the stand with a careless ring.

“Here, Agnes, run to the stall of Raphael the poulterer for change,” said the adroit dame, picking up the gold.

“Nay, good mother, by your leave,” said the unabashed cavalier; “I make my change with youth and beauty thus!” And with the word he stooped down and kissed the fair forehead between the eyes.



“For shame, Sir!” said the elderly woman, raising her distaff,—her great glittering eyes flashing beneath her silver hair like tongues of lightning from a white cloud, “Have a care!—this child is named for blessed Saint Agnes, and is under her protection.”

“The saints must pray for us, when their beauty makes us forget ourselves,” said the young cavalier, with a smile. “Look me in the face, little one,” he added;—“say, wilt thou pray for me?”



Page 3

The maiden raised her large serious eyes, and surveyed the haughty, handsome face with that look of sober inquiry which one sometimes sees in young children, and the blush slowly faded from, her cheek, as a cloud fades after sunset.

“Yes, my lord,” she answered, with a grave simplicity,—“I will pray for you.”

“And hang this upon the shrine of Saint Agnes for my sake,” he added, drawing from his finger a diamond ring, which he dropped into her hand; and before mother or daughter could add another word or recover from their surprise, he had thrown the corner of his mantle over his shoulder and was off down the narrow street, humming the refrain of a gay song.

“You have struck a pretty dove with that bolt,” said another cavalier, who appeared to have been observing the proceeding, and now, stepping forward, joined him.

“Like enough,” said the first, carelessly.

“The old woman keeps her mewed up like a singing-bird,” said the second; “and if a fellow wants speech of her, it’s as much as his crown is worth; for Dame Elsie has a strong arm, and her distaff is known to be heavy.”

“Upon my word,” said the first cavalier, stopping and throwing a glance backward,—“where do they keep her?”

“Oh, in a sort of pigeon’s nest up above the Gorge; but one never sees her, except under the fire of her grandmother’s eyes. The little one is brought up for a saint, they say, and goes nowhere but to mass, confession, and the sacrament.”

“Humph!” said the other, “she looks like some choice old picture of Our Lady,—not a drop of human blood in her. When I kissed her forehead, she looked into my face as grave and innocent as a babe. One is tempted to try what one can do in such a case.”

“Beware the grandmother’s distaff!” said the other, laughing.

“I’ve seen old women before,” said the cavalier, as they turned down the street and were lost to view.

Meanwhile the grandmother and granddaughter were roused from the mute astonishment in which they were gazing after the young cavalier by a tittering behind them; and a pair of bright eyes looked out upon, them from beneath a bundle of long, crimson-headed clover, whose rich carmine tints were touched to brighter life by setting sunbeams.

There stood Giulietta, the head coquette of the Sorrento girls, with her broad shoulders, full chest, and great black eyes, rich and heavy as those of the silver-haired ox for



whose benefit she had been cutting clover. Her bronzed cheek was smooth as that of any statue, and showed a color like that of an open pomegranate; and the opulent, lazy abundance of her ample form, with her leisurely movements, spoke an easy and comfortable nature,—that is to say, when Giulietta was pleased; for it is to be remarked that there lurked certain sparkles deep down in her great eyes, which might, on occasion, blaze out into sheet-lightning, like her own beautiful skies, which, lovely as they are, can thunder and sulk with terrible earnestness when the fit takes them. At present, however, her face was running over with mischievous merriment, as she slyly pinched little Agnes by the ear.



Page 4

“So you know not yon gay cavalier, little sister?” she said, looking askance at her from under her long lashes.

“No, indeed! What has an honest girl to do with knowing gay cavaliers?” said Dame Elsie, bestirring herself with packing the remaining oranges into a basket, which she covered trimly with a heavy linen towel of her own weaving. “Girls never come to good who let their eyes go walking through the earth, and have the names of all the wild gallants on their tongues. Agnes knows no such nonsense,—blessed be her gracious patroness, with Our Lady and Saint Michael!”

“I hope there is no harm in knowing what is right before one’s eyes,” said Giulietta. “Anybody must be blind and deaf not to know the Lord Adrian. All the girls in Sorrento know him. They say he is even greater than he appears,—that he is brother to the King himself; at any rate, a handsomer and more gallant gentleman never wore spurs.”

“Let him keep to his own kind,” said Elsie. “Eagles make bad work in dovecots. No good comes of such gallants for us.”

“Nor any harm, that I ever heard of,” said Giulietta. “But let me see, pretty one,—what did he give you? Holy Mother! what a handsome ring!”

“It is to hang on the shrine of Saint Agnes,” said the younger girl, looking up with simplicity.

A loud laugh was the first answer to this communication. The scarlet clover-tops shook and quivered with the merriment.

“To hang on the shrine of Saint Agnes!” Giulietta repeated. “That is a little too good!”

“Go, go, you baggage!” said Elsie, wrathfully brandishing her spindle. “If ever you get a husband, I hope he’ll give you a good beating! You need it, I warrant! Always stopping on the bridge there, to have cracks with the young men! Little enough you know of saints, I dare say! So keep away from my child!—Come, Agnes,” she said, as she lifted the orange-basket on to her head; and, straightening her tall form, she seized the girl by the hand to lead her away.

CHAPTER II.

The dove-cot.

The old town of Sorrento is situated on an elevated plateau, which stretches into the sunny waters of the Mediterranean, guarded on all sides by a barrier of mountains which defend it from bleak winds and serve to it the purpose of walls to a garden. Here, groves of oranges and lemons,—with their almost fabulous coincidence of fruitage with



flowers, fill the air with perfume, which blends with that of roses and jessamines; and the fields are so starred and enamelled with flowers that they might have served as the type for those Elysian realms sung by ancient poets. The fervid air is fanned by continual sea-breezes, which give a delightful elasticity to the otherwise languid climate. Under all these cherishing influences, the human being develops a wealth and luxuriance of physical beauty unknown in less

Page 5

avored regions. In the region about Sorrento one may be said to have found the land where beauty is the rule and not the exception. The singularity there is not to see handsome points of physical proportion, but rather to see those who are without them. Scarce a man, woman, or child you meet who has not some personal advantage to be commended, while even striking beauty is common. Also, under these kindly skies, a native courtesy and gentleness of manner make themselves felt. It would seem as if humanity, rocked in this flowery cradle, and soothed by so many daily caresses and appliances of nursing Nature, grew up with all that is kindest on the outward,—not repressed and beat in, as under the inclement atmosphere and stormy skies of the North.

The town of Sorrento itself overhangs the sea, skirting along rocky shores, which, hollowed here and there into picturesque grottoes, and fledged with a wild plumage of brilliant flowers and trailing vines, descend in steep precipices to the water. Along the shelly beach, at the bottom, one can wander to look out on the loveliest prospect in the world. Vesuvius rises with its two peaks softly clouded in blue and purple mists, which blend with its ascending vapors,—Naples and the adjoining villages at its base gleaming in the distance like a fringe of pearls on a regal mantle. Nearer by, the picturesque rocky shores of the island of Capri seem to pulsate through the dreamy, shifting mists that veil its sides; and the sea shimmers and glitters like the neck of a peacock with an iridescent mingling of colors: the whole air is a glorifying medium, rich in prismatic hues of enchantment.

The town on three sides is severed from the main land by a gorge two hundred feet in depth and forty or fifty in breadth, crossed by a bridge resting on double arches, the construction of which dates back to the time of the ancient Romans. This bridge affords a favorite lounging-place for the inhabitants, and at evening a motley assemblage may be seen lolling over its moss-grown sides,—men with their picturesque knit caps of scarlet or brown falling gracefully on one shoulder, and women with their shining black hair and the enormous pearl earrings which are the pride and heirlooms of every family. The present traveller at Sorrento may remember standing on this bridge and looking down the gloomy depths of the gorge, to where a fair villa, with its groves of orange-trees and gardens, overhangs the tremendous depths below.

Hundreds of years since, where this villa now stands was the simple dwelling of the two women whose history we have begun to tell you. There you might have seen a small stone cottage with a two-arched arcade in front, gleaming brilliantly white out of the dusky foliage of an orange-orchard. The dwelling was wedged like a bird-box between two fragments of rock, and behind it the land rose rocky, high, and steep, so as to form a natural wall. A small ledge or terrace of cultivated land here hung in air,—below



Page 6

it, a precipice of two hundred feet down into the Gorge of Sorrento. A couple of dozen orange-trees, straight and tall, with healthy, shining bark, here shot up from the fine black volcanic soil, and made with their foliage a twilight shadow on the ground, so deep that no vegetation, save a fine velvet moss, could dispute their claim to its entire nutritious offices. These trees were the sole wealth of the women and the sole ornament of the garden; but, as they stood there, not only laden with golden fruit, but fragrant with pearly blossoms, they made the little rocky platform seem a perfect Garden of the Hesperides. The stone cottage, as we have said, had an open, whitewashed arcade in front, from which one could look down into the gloomy depths of the gorge, as into some mysterious underworld. Strange and weird it seemed, with its fathomless shadows and its wild grottoes, over which hung, silently waving, long pendants of ivy, while dusky gray aloes uplifted their horned heads from great rock-rifts, like elfin spirits struggling upward out of the shade. Nor was wanting the usual gentle poetry of flowers; for white iris leaned its fairy pavilion over the black void like a pale-cheeked princess from the window of some dark enchanted castle, and scarlet geranium and golden broom and crimson gladiolus waved and glowed in the shifting beams of the sunlight. Also there was in this little spot what forms the charm of Italian gardens always,—the sweet song and prattle of waters. A clear mountain-spring burst through the rock on one side of the little cottage, and fell with a lulling noise into a quaint moss-grown water-trough, which had been in former times the sarcophagus of some old Roman sepulchre. Its sides were richly sculptured with figures and leafy scrolls and arabesques, into which the sly-footed lichens with quiet growth had so insinuated themselves as in some places almost to obliterate the original design; while, round the place where the water fell, a veil of ferns and maiden's-hair, studded with tremulous silver drops, vibrated to its soothing murmur. The superfluous waters, drained off by a little channel on one side, were conducted through the rocky parapet of the garden, whence they trickled and tinkled from rock to rock, falling with a continual drip among the swaying ferns and pendent ivy-wreaths, till they reached the little stream at the bottom of the gorge. This parapet or garden-wall was formed of blocks or fragments of what had once been white marble, the probable remains of the ancient tomb from which the sarcophagus was taken. Here and there a marble acanthus-leaf, or the capital of an old column, or a fragment of sculpture jutted from under the mosses, ferns, and grasses with which prodigal Nature had filled every interstice and carpeted the whole. These sculptured fragments everywhere in Italy seem to whisper from the dust, of past life and death, of a cycle of human existence forever gone, over whose tomb the life of to-day is built.



Page 7

“Sit down and rest, my dove,” said Dame Elsie to her little charge, as they entered their little inclosure.

Here she saw for the first time, what she had not noticed in the heat and hurry of her ascent, that the girl was panting and her gentle bosom rising and falling in thick heart-beats, occasioned by the haste with which she had drawn her onward.

“Sit down, dearie, and I will get you a bit of supper.”

“Yes, grandmother, I will. I must tell my beads once for the soul of the handsome gentleman that kissed my forehead to-night.”

“How did you know that he was handsome, child?” said the old dame, with some sharpness in her voice.

“He bade me look on him, grandmother, and I saw it.”

“You must put such thoughts away, child,” said the old dame.

“Why must I?” said the girl, looking up with an eye as clear and unconscious as that of a three-year old child.

“If she does not think, why should I tell her?” said Dame Elsie, as she turned to go into the house, and left the child sitting on the mossy parapet that overlooked the gorge. Thence she could see far off, not only down the dim, sombre abyss, but out to the blue Mediterranean beyond, now calmly lying in swathing-bands of purple, gold, and orange, while the smoky cloud that overhung Vesuvius became silver and rose in the evening light.

There is always something of elevation and parity that seems to come over one from being in an elevated region. One feels morally as well as physically above the world, and from that clearer air able to look down on it calmly with disengaged freedom. Our little maiden, sat for a few moments gazing, her large brown eyes dilating with a tremulous lustre, as if tears were half of a mind to start in them, and her lips apart with a delicate earnestness, like one who is pursuing some pleasing inner thought. Suddenly rousing herself, she began by breaking the freshest orange-blossoms from the golden-fruited trees, and, kissing and pressing them to her bosom, she proceeded to remove the faded flowers of the morning from before a little rude shrine in the rock, where, in a sculptured niche, was a picture of the Madonna and Child, with a locked glass door in front of it. The picture was a happy transcript of one of the fairest creations of the religious school of Florence, done by one of those rustic copyists of whom Italy is full, who appear to possess the instinct of painting, and to whom we owe many of those sweet faces which sometimes look down on us by the way-side from rudest and homeliest shrines.



Page 8

The poor fellow by whom it had been painted was one to whom years before Dame Elsie had given food and shelter for many months during a lingering illness; and he had painted so much of his dying heart and hopes into it that it had a peculiar and vital vividness in its power of affecting the feelings. Agnes had been familiar with this picture from early infancy. No day of her life had the flowers failed to be freshly placed before it. It had seemed to smile down sympathy on her childish joys, and to cloud over with her childish sorrows. It was less a picture to her than a presence; and the whole air of the little orange-garden seemed to be made sacred by it. When she had arranged her flowers, she kneeled down and began to say prayers for the soul of the young gallant.

“Holy Jesus,” she said, “he is young, rich, handsome, and a king’s brother; and for all these things the Fiend may tempt him to forget his God and throw away his soul. Holy Mother, give him good counsel!”

“Come, child, to your supper,” said Dame Elsie. “I have milked the goats, and everything is ready.”

CHAPTER III.

The gorge.

After her light supper was over, Agnes took her distaff, wound with shining white flax, and went and seated herself in her favorite place, on the low parapet that overlooked the gorge.

This ravine, with its dizzy depths, its waving foliage, its dripping springs, and the low murmur of the little stream that pursued its way far down at the bottom, was one of those things which stimulated her impressible imagination, and filled her with a solemn and vague delight. The ancient Italian tradition made it the home of fauns and dryads, wild woodland creatures, intermediate links between vegetable life and that of sentient and reasoning humanity. The more earnest faith that came in with Christianity, if it had its brighter lights in an immortality of blessedness, had also its deeper shadows in the intenser perceptions it awakened of sin and evil, and of the mortal struggle by which the human spirit must avoid endless woe and rise to endless felicity. The myths with which the colored Italian air was filled in mediaeval ages no longer resembled those graceful, floating, cloud-like figures one sees in the ancient chambers of Pompeii,—the bubbles and rainbows of human fancy, rising aimless and buoyant, with a mere freshness of animal life, against a black background of utter and hopeless ignorance as to man’s past or future. They were rather expressed by solemn images of mournful, majestic angels and of triumphant saints, or fearful, warning presentations of loathsome fiends. Each lonesome gorge and sombre dell had tales no more of tricky fauns and dryads, but of those restless, wandering demons who, having lost their own immortality of

blessedness, constantly lie in wait to betray frail humanity, and cheat it of that glorious inheritance bought by the Great Redemption.



Page 9

The education of Agnes had been one which rendered her whole system peculiarly sensitive and impressible to all influences from the invisible and unseen. Of this education we shall speak more particularly hereafter. At present we see her sitting in the twilight on the moss-grown marble parapet, her distaff, with its silvery flax, lying idly in her hands, and her widening dark eyes gazing intently into the gloomy gorge below, from which arose the far-off complaining babble of the brook at the bottom and the shiver and sigh of evening winds through the trailing ivy. The white mist was slowly rising, wavering, undulating, and creeping its slow way up the sides of the gorge. Now it hid a tuft of foliage, and now it wreathed itself around a horned clump of aloes, and, streaming far down below it in the dimness, made it seem like the goblin robe of some strange, supernatural being.

The evening light had almost burned out in the sky: only a band of vivid red lay low in the horizon out to sea, and the round full moon was just rising like a great silver lamp, while Vesuvius with its smoky top began in the obscurity to show its faintly flickering fires. A vague agitation seemed to oppress the child; for she sighed deeply, and often repeated with fervor the Ave Maria.

At this moment there began to rise from the very depths of the gorge below her the sound of a rich tenor voice, with a slow, sad modulation, and seeming to pulsate upward through the filmy, shifting mists. It was one of those voices which seem fit to be the outpouring of some spirit denied all other gifts of expression, and rushing with passionate fervor through this one gate of utterance. So distinctly were the words spoken, that they seemed each one to rise as with a separate intelligence out of the mist, and to knock at the door of the heart.

Sad is my life, and lonely!
No hope for me,
Save thou, my love, my only,
I see!

Where art then, O my fairest?
Where art thou gone?
Dove of the rock, I languish
Alone!

They say thou art so saintly,
Who dare love thee?
Yet bend thine eyelids holy
On me!

Though heaven alone possess thee,
Thou dwell'st above,



Yet heaven, didst thou but know it,
Is love.

There was such an intense earnestness in these sounds, that large tears gathered in the wide, dark eyes, and fell one after another upon the sweet alyssum and maiden's-hair that grew in the crevices of the marble wall. She shivered and drew away from the parapet, and thought of stories she had heard the nuns tell of wandering spirits who sometimes in lonesome places pour forth such entrancing music as bewilders the brain of the unwary listener, and leads him to some fearful destruction.

"Agnes!" said the sharp voice of old Elsie, appearing at the door,— "here! where are you?"

"Here, grandmamma."

"Who's that singing this time o' night?"



Page 10

"I don't know, grandmamma."

Somehow the child felt as if that singing were strangely sacred to her,—a *rapport* between her and something vague and invisible, which might yet become dear.

"Is't down in the gorge?" said the old woman, coming with her heavy, decided step to the parapet, and looking over, her keen black eyes gleaming like dagger-blades into the mist. "If there's anybody there," she said, "let them go away, and not be troubling honest women with any of their caterwauling. Come, Agnes," she said, pulling the girl by the sleeve, "you must be tired, my lamb! and your evening-prayers are always so long, best be about them, girl, so that old grandmamma may put you to bed. What ails the girl? Been crying! Your hand is cold as a stone."

"Grandmamma, what if that might be a spirit?" she said. "Sister Rosa told me stories of singing spirits that have been in this very gorge."

"Likely enough," said Dame Elsie; "but what's that to us? Let 'em sing! —so long as we don't listen, where's the harm done? We will sprinkle holy water all round the parapet, and say the office of Saint Agnes, and let them sing till they are hoarse."

Such was the triumphant view which this energetic good woman took of the power of the means of grace which her church placed at her disposal.

Nevertheless, while Agnes was kneeling at her evening-prayers, the old dame consoled herself with a soliloquy, as with a brush she vigorously besprinkled the premises with holy water.

"Now, here's the plague of a girl! If she's handsome,—and nobody wants one that isn't,—why, then, it's a purgatory to look after her. This one is good enough,—none of your hussies, like Giuletta: but the better they are, the more sure to have fellows after them. A murrain on that cavalier,—king's brother, or what not!—it was he serenading, I'll be bound. I must tell Antonio, and have the girl married, for aught I see: and I don't want to give her to him either; he didn't bring her up. There's no peace for us mothers. Maybe I'll tell Father Francesco about it. That's the way poor little Isella was carried away. Singing is of the Devil, I believe; it always bewitches girls. I'd like to have poured some hot oil down the rocks: I'd have made him squeak in another tone, I reckon. Well, well! I hope I shall come in for a good seat in paradise for all the trouble I've had with her mother, and am like to have with her,—that's all!"

In an hour more, the large, round, sober moon was shining fixedly on the little mansion in the rocks, silvering the glossy darkness of the orange-leaves, while the scent of the blossoms arose like clouds about the cottage. The moonlight streamed through the unglazed casement, and made a square of light on the little bed where Agnes was sleeping, in which square her delicate face was framed, with its tremulous and spiritual

expression most resembling in its sweet plaintive purity some of the Madonna faces of Fra Angelico,—those tender wild-flowers of Italian religion and poetry.



Page 11

By her side lay her grandmother, with those sharp, hard, clearly cut features, so worn and bronzed by time, so lined with labor and care, as to resemble one of the Fates in the picture of Michel Angelo; and even in her sleep she held the delicate lily hand of the child in her own hard, brown one, with a strong and determined clasp.

While they sleep, we must tell something more of the story of the little Agnes,—of what she is, and what are the causes which have made her such.

CHAPTER IV.

Who and what.

Old Elsie was not born a peasant. Originally she was the wife of a steward in one of those great families of Rome whose state and traditions were princely. Elsie, as her figure and profile and all her words and movements indicated, was of a strong, shrewd, ambitious, and courageous character, and well disposed to turn to advantage every gift with which Nature had endowed her.

Providence made her a present of a daughter whose beauty was wonderful, even in a country where beauty is no uncommon accident. In addition to her beauty, the little Isella had quick intelligence, wit, grace, and spirit. As a child she became the pet and plaything of the Duchess whom Elsie served. This noble lady, pressed by the *ennui* which is always the moth and rust on the purple and gold of rank and wealth, had, as other noble ladies had in those days, and have now, sundry pets: greyhounds, white and delicate, that looked as if they were made of Sevres china; spaniels with long silky ears and fringy paws; apes and monkeys, that made at times sad devastations in her wardrobe; and a most charming little dwarf, that was ugly enough to frighten the very owls, and spiteful as he was ugly. She had, moreover, peacocks, and macaws, and parrots, and all sorts of singing-birds, and falcons of every breed, and horses, and hounds,—in short, there is no saying what she did not have. One day she took it into her head to add the little Isella to the number of her acquisitions. With the easy grace of aristocracy, she reached out her jewelled hand and took Elsie's one flower to add to her conservatory,—and Elsie was only too proud to have it so.

Her daughter was kept constantly about the person of the Duchess, and instructed in all the wisdom which would have been allowed her, had she been the Duchess's own daughter, which, to speak the truth, was in those days nothing very profound,—consisting of a little singing and instrumentation, a little embroidery and dancing, with the power of writing her own name and of reading a love-letter.



Page 12

All the world knows that the very idea of a pet is something to be spoiled for the amusement of the pet-owner; and Isella was spoiled in the most particular and circumstantial manner. She had suits of apparel for every day in the year, and jewels without end,—for the Duchess was never weary of trying the effect of her beauty in this and that costume; so that she sported through the great grand halls and down the long aisles of the garden much like a bright-winged hummingbird, or a damsel-fly all green and gold. She was a genuine child of Italy,—full of feeling, spirit, and genius,—alive in every nerve to the finger-tips; and under the tropical sunshine of her mistress's favor she grew as an Italian rose-bush does, throwing its branches freakishly over everything in a wild labyrinth of perfume, brightness, and thorns.

For a while her life was a triumph, and her mother triumphed with her at an humble distance. The Duchess had no daughter, and was devoted to her with the blind fatuity with which ladies of rank at times will invest themselves in a caprice. She arrogated to herself all the praises of her beauty and wit, allowed her to flirt and make conquests to her heart's content, and engaged to marry her to some handsome young officer of her train, when she had done being amused with her.

Now we must not wonder that a young head of fifteen should have been turned by this giddy elevation, nor that an old head of fifty should have thought all things were possible in the fortune of such a favorite. Nor must we wonder that the young coquette, rich in the laurels of a hundred conquests, should have turned her bright eyes on the son and heir, when he came home from the University of Bologna. Nor is it to be wondered at that this same son and heir, being a man as well as a duke's son, should have done as other men did,—fallen desperately in love with this dazzling, sparkling, piquant mixture of matter and spirit, which no university can prepare a young man to comprehend,—which always seemed to run from him, and yet always threw a Parthian shot behind her as she fled. Nor is it to be wondered at, if this same duke's son, after a week or two, did not know whether he was on his head or his heels, or whether the sun rose in the east or the south, or where he stood, or whither he was going.

In fact, the youthful pair very soon came into that dream-land where are no more any points of the compass, no more division of time, no more latitude and longitude, no more up and down, but only a general wandering among enchanted groves and singing nightingales.

It was entirely owing to old Elsie's watchful shrewdness and address that the lovers came into this paradise by the gate of marriage; for the young man was ready to offer anything at the feet of his divinity, as the old mother was not slow to perceive.

So they stood at the altar, for the time being a pair of as true lovers as Romeo and Juliet: but then, what has true love to do with the son of a hundred generations and heir to a Roman principality?



Page 13

Of course, the rose of love, having gone through all its stages of bud and blossom into full flower, must next begin to drop its leaves. Of course. Who ever heard of an immortal rose?

The time of discovery came. Isella was found to be a mother; and then the storm burst upon her and drabbled her in the dust as fearlessly as the summer-wind sweeps down and besmirches the lily it has all summer been wooing and flattering.

The Duchess was a very pious and moral lady, and of course threw her favorite out into the street as a vile weed, and virtuously ground her down under her jewelled high-heeled shoes.

She could have forgiven her any common frailty;—of course it was natural that the girl should have been seduced by the all-conquering charms of her son;—but aspire to *marriage* with their house!—pretend to be her son's *wife*! Since the time of Judas had such treachery ever been heard of?

Something was said of the propriety of walling up the culprit alive,—a mode of disposing of small family-matters somewhat *a la mode* in those times. But the Duchess acknowledged herself foolishly tender, and unable quite to allow this very obvious propriety in the case.

She contented herself with turning mother and daughter into the streets with every mark of ignominy, which was reduplicated by every one of her servants, lackeys, and court-companions, who, of course, had always known just how the thing must end.

As to the young Duke, he acted as a well-instructed young nobleman should, who understands the great difference there is between the tears of a duchess and those of low-born women. No sooner did he behold his conduct in the light of his mother's countenance than he turned his back on his low marriage with edifying penitence. He did not think it necessary to convince his mother of the real existence of a union whose very supposition made her so unhappy, and occasioned such an uncommonly disagreeable and tempestuous state of things in the well-bred circle where his birth called him to move. Being, however, a religious youth, he opened his mind to his family-confessor, by whose advice he sent a messenger with a large sum of money to Elsie, piously commending her and her daughter to the Divine protection. He also gave orders for an entire new suit of raiment for the Virgin Mary in the family-chapel, including a splendid set of diamonds, and promised unlimited candles to the altar of a neighboring convent. If all this could not atone for a youthful error, it was a pity. So he thought, as he drew on his riding-gloves and went off on a hunting-party, like a gallant and religious young nobleman.



Elsie, meanwhile, with her forlorn and disgraced daughter, found a temporary asylum in a neighboring mountain-village, where the poor, bedrabbled, broken-winged song-bird soon panted and fluttered her little life away.

When the once beautiful and gay Isella had been hidden in the grave, cold and lonely, there remained a little wailing infant, which Elsie gathered to her bosom.



Page 14

Grim, dauntless, and resolute, she resolved, for the sake of this hapless one, to look life in the face once more, and try the battle under other skies.

Taking the infant in her arms, she travelled with her far from the scene of her birth, and set all her energies at work to make for her a better destiny than that which had fallen to the lot of her unfortunate mother.

She set about to create her nature and order her fortunes with that sort of downright energy with which resolute people always attack the problem of a new human existence. This child *should be happy*; the rocks on which her mother was wrecked she should never strike upon,—they were all marked on Elsie's chart. Love had been the root of all poor Isella's troubles,—and Agnes never should know love, till taught it safely by a husband of Elsie's own choosing.

The first step of security was in naming her for the chaste Saint Agnes, and placing her girlhood under her special protection. Secondly, which was quite as much to the point, she brought her up laboriously in habits of incessant industry,—never suffering her to be out of her sight, or to have any connection or friendship, except such as could be carried on under the immediate supervision of her piercing black eyes. Every night she put her to bed as if she had been an infant, and, wakening her again in the morning, took her with her in all her daily toils,—of which, to do her justice, she performed all the hardest portion, leaving to the girl just enough to keep her hands employed and her head steady.

The peculiar circumstance which had led her to choose the old town of Sorrento for her residence, in preference to any of the beautiful villages which impearl that fertile plain, was the existence there of a flourishing convent dedicated to Saint Agnes, under whose protecting shadow her young charge might more securely spend the earlier years of her life.

With this view, having hired the domicile we have already described, she lost no time in making the favorable acquaintance of the sisterhood,—never coming to them empty-handed. The finest oranges of her garden, the whitest flax of her spinning, were always reserved as offerings at the shrine of the patroness whom she sought to propitiate for her grandchild.

In her earliest childhood the little Agnes was led toddling to the shrine by her zealous relative; and at the sight of her fair, sweet, awe-struck face, with its viny mantle of encircling curls, the torpid bosoms of the sisterhood throbbed with a strange, new pleasure, which they humbly hoped was not sinful,—as agreeable things, they found, generally were. They loved the echoes of her little feet down the damp, silent aisles of their chapel, and her small, sweet, slender voice, as she asked strange baby-questions, which, as usual with baby-questions, hit all the insoluble points of philosophy and theology exactly on the head.



The child became a special favorite with the Abbess, Sister Theresa, a tall, thin, bloodless, sad-eyed woman, who looked as if she might have been cut out of one of the glaciers of Monte Rosa, but in whose heart the little fair one had made herself a niche, pushing her way up through, as you may have seen a lovely blue-fringed gentian standing in a snow-drift of the Alps with its little ring of melted snow around it.



Page 15

Sister Theresa offered to take care of the child at any time when the grandmother wished to be about her labors; and so, during her early years, the little one was often domesticated for days together at the Convent. A perfect mythology of wonderful stories encircled her, which the good sisters were never tired of repeating to each other. They were the simplest sayings and doings of childhood,—handfuls of such wild-flowers as bespread the green turf of nursery-life everywhere, but miraculous blossoms in the eyes of these good women, whom Saint Agnes had unwittingly deprived of any power of making comparisons or ever having Christ's sweetest parable of the heavenly kingdom enacted in homes of their own.

Old Jocunda, the porteress, never failed to make a sensation with her one stock-story of how she found the child standing on her head and crying,—having been put into this reversed position in consequence of climbing up on a high stool to get her little fat hand into the vase of holy water, failing in which Christian attempt, her heels went up and her head down, greatly to her dismay.

"Nevertheless," said old Jocunda, gravely, "it showed an edifying turn in the child; and when I lifted the little thing up, it stopped crying the minute its little fingers touched the water, and it made a cross on its forehead as sensible as the oldest among us. Ah, sisters! there's grace there, or I'm mistaken."

All the signs of an incipient saint were, indeed, manifested in the little one. She never played the wild and noisy plays of common children, but busied herself in making altars and shrines, which she adorned with the prettiest flowers of the gardens, and at which she worked hour after hour in the quietest and happiest earnestness. Her dreams were a constant source of wonder and edification in the Convent, for they were all of angels and saints; and many a time, after hearing one, the sisterhood crossed themselves, and the Abbess said, "*Ex oribus parvulorum.*" Always sweet, dutiful, submissive, cradling herself every night with a lulling of sweet hymns and infant murmur of prayers, and found sleeping in her little white bed with her crucifix clasped to her bosom, it was no wonder that the Abbess thought her the special favorite of her divine patroness, and, like her, the subject of an early vocation to be the celestial bride of One fairer than the children of men, who should snatch her away from all earthly things, to be united to Him in a celestial paradise.

As the child grew older, she often sat at evening, with wide, wondering eyes, listening over and over again to the story of the fair Saint Agnes:—How she was a princess, living in her father's palace, of such exceeding beauty and grace that none saw her but to love her, yet of such sweetness and humility as passed all comparison; and how, when a heathen prince would have espoused her to his son, she said, "Away from me, tempter! for I am betrothed to



Page 16

a lover who is greater and fairer than any earthly suitor,—he is so fair that the sun and moon are ravished by his beauty, so mighty that the angels of heaven are his servants”; how she bore meekly with persecutions and threatenings and death for the sake of this unearthly love; and when she had poured out her blood, how she came to her mourning friends in ecstatic vision, all white and glistening, with a fair lamb by her side, and bade them weep not for her, because she was reigning with Him whom on earth she had preferred to all other lovers. There was also the legend of the fair Cecilia, the lovely musician whom angels had rapt away to their choirs; the story of that queenly saint, Catharine, who passed through the courts of heaven, and saw the angels crowned with roses and lilies, and the Virgin on her throne, who gave her the wedding-ring that espoused her to be the bride of the King Eternal.

Fed with such legends, it could not be but that a child with a sensitive, nervous organization and vivid imagination should have grown up with an unworldly and spiritual character, and that a poetic mist should have enveloped all her outward perceptions similar to that palpitating veil of blue and lilac vapor that enshrouds the Italian landscape.

Nor is it to be marvelled at, if the results of this system of education went far beyond what the good old grandmother intended. For, though a stanch good Christian, after the manner of those times, yet she had not the slightest mind to see her grand-daughter a nun; on the contrary, she was working day and night to add to her dowry, and had in her eye a reputable middle-aged blacksmith, who was a man of substance and prudence, to be the husband and keeper of her precious treasure. In a home thus established she hoped to enthrone herself, and provide for the rearing of a generation of stout-limbed girls and boys who should grow up to make a flourishing household in the land. This subject she had not yet broached to her grand-daughter, though daily preparing to do so,—deferring it, it must be told, from a sort of jealous, yearning craving to have wholly to herself the child for whom she had lived so many years.

Antonio, the blacksmith to whom this honor was destined, was one of those broad-backed, full-chested, long-limbed fellows one shall often see around Sorrento, with great, kind, black eyes like those of an ox, and all the attributes of a healthy, kindly, animal nature. Contentedly he hammered away at his business; and certainly, had not Dame Elsie of her own providence elected him to be the husband of her fair grand-daughter, he would never have thought of the matter himself; but, opening the black eyes aforementioned upon the girl, he perceived that she was fair, and also received an inner light through Dame Elsie as to the amount of her dowry; and, putting these matters together, conceived a kindness for the maiden, and awaited with tranquillity the time when he should be allowed to commence his wooing.



Page 17

REST AND MOTION.

Motion and Rest are the two feet upon which existence goes. All action and all definite power result from the intimacy and consent of these opposite principles. If, therefore, one would construct any serviceable mechanism, he must incorporate into it, and commonly in a manifold way, a somewhat passive, a somewhat contrary, and, as it were, inimical to action, though action be the sole aim and use of his contrivance. Thus, the human body is penetrated by the passive and powerless skeleton, which is a mere weight upon the muscles, a part of the burden that, nevertheless, it enables them to bear. The lever of Archimedes would push the planet aside, provided only it were supplied with its indispensable complement, a fulcrum, or fixity: without this it will not push a pin. The block of the pulley must have its permanent attachment; the wheel of the locomotive engine requires beneath it the fixed rail; the foot of the pedestrian, solid earth; the wing of the bird rests upon the relatively stable air to support his body, and upon his body to gain power over the air. Nor is it alone of operations mechanical that the law holds good: it is universal; and its application to pure mental action may be shown without difficulty. A single act of the mind is represented by the formation of a simple sentence. The process consists, first, in the mind's *fixing upon and resting in* an object, which thereby becomes the subject of the sentence; and, secondly, in predication, which is movement, represented by the verb. The reader will easily supply himself with instances and illustrations of this, and need not, therefore, be detained.

In the economy of animal and vegetable existence, as in all that Nature makes, we observe the same inevitable association. Here is perpetual fixity of form, perpetual flux of constituent,—the ideas of Nature never changing, the material realization of them never ceasing to change. A horse is a horse through all the ages; yet the horse of to-day is changed from the horse of yesterday.

If one of these principles seem to get the start, and to separate itself, the other quickly follows. No sooner, for example, does any person perform an initial deed, proceeding purely (let us suppose) from free will, than Nature in him begins to repose therein, and consequently inclines to its repetition for the mere reason that it has been once done. This is Habit, which makes action passive, and is the greatest of labor-saving inventions. Custom is the habit of society, holding the same relation to progressive genius. It is the sleeping partner in the great social firm; it is thought and force laid up and become fixed capital. Annihilate this,—as in the French Revolution was attempted,—and society is at once reduced to its bare immediate force, and must scratch the soil with its fingers.



Page 18

Sometimes these principles seem to be strictly hostile to each other and in no respect reciprocal, as where habit in the individual and custom in society oppose themselves bitterly to free will and advancing thought: yet even here the special warfare is but the material of a broader and more subtle alliance. An obstinate fixity in one's bosom often serves as a rock on which to break the shell of some hard inclosed faculty. Upon stepping-stones of our *slain* selves we mount to new altitudes. So do the antagonisms of these principles in the broader field of society equally conceal a fundamental reciprocation. By the opposition to his thought of inert and defiant custom, the thinker is compelled to interrogate his consciousness more deeply and sacredly; and being cut off from that sympathy which has its foundation in similarity of temperaments and traditions, he must fall back with simpler abandonment upon the pure idea, and must seek responses from that absolute nature of man which the men of his time are not human enough to afford him. This absolute nature, this divine identity in man, underrunning times, temperaments, individualities, is that which poet and prophet must address: yet to speak *to* it, they must speak *from* it; to be heard by the universal heart, they must use a universal language. But this marvellous vernacular can be known to him alone whose heart is universal, in whom even self-love is no longer selfish, but is a pure respect to his own being as it is Being. Well it is, therefore, that here and there one man should be so denied all petty and provincial claim to attention, that only by speaking to Man as Man, and in the sincerest vernacular of the human soul, he can find audience; for thus it shall become his need, for the sake of joy no less than of duty, to know himself purely as man, and to yield himself wholly to his immortal humanity. Thus does fixed custom force back the most moving souls, until they touch the springs of inspiration, and are indued with power: then, at once potent and pure, they gush into history, to be influences, to make epochs, and to prevail over that through whose agency they first obtained strength.

Thus, everywhere, through all realms, do the opposite principles of Rest and Motion depend upon and reciprocally empower each other. In every act, mechanical, mental, social, must both take part and consent together; and upon the perfection of this consent depends the quality of the action. Every progress is conditioned on a permanence; every permanence *lives* but in and through progress. Where all, and with equal and simultaneous impulse, strives to move, nothing can move, but chaos is come; where all refuses to move, and therefore stagnates, decay supervenes, which is motion, though a motion downward.

Having made this general statement, we proceed to say that there are two chief ways in which these universal opposites enter into reciprocation. The first and more obvious is the method of alternation, or of rest *from* motion; the other, that of continuous equality, which may be called a rest *in* motion. These two methods, however, are not mutually exclusive, but may at once occupy the same ground, and apply to the same objects,—as oxygen and nitrogen severally fill the same space, to the full capacity of each, as though the other were absent.



Page 19

Instances of the alternation, either total or approximative, of these principles are many and familiar. They may be seen in the systole and diastole of the heart; in the alternate activity and passivity of the lungs; in the feet of the pedestrian, one pausing while the other proceeds; in the waving wings of birds; in the undulation of the sea; in the creation and propagation of sound, and the propagation, at least, of light; in the alternate acceleration and retardation of the earth's motion in its orbit, and in the waving of its poles. In all vibrations and undulations there is a going and returning, between which must exist minute periods of repose; but in many instances the return is simply a relaxation or a subsidence, and belongs, therefore, to the department of rest. Discourse itself, it will be observed, has its pauses, seasons of repose thickly interspersed in the action of speech; and besides these has its accented and unaccented syllables, emphatic and unemphatic words,—illustrating thus in itself the law which it here affirms. History is full of the same thing; the tides of faith and feeling now ascend and now subside, through all the ages, in the soul of humanity; each new affirmation prepares the way for new doubt, each honest doubt in the end furthers and enlarges belief; the pendulum of destiny swings to and fro forever, and earth's minutest life and heaven's remotest star swing with it, rising but to fall, and falling that they may rise again. So does rhythm go to the very bottom of the world: the heart of Nature pulses, and the echoing shore and all music and the throbbing heart and swaying destinies of man but follow and proclaim the law of her inward life.

The universality and mutual relationship of these primal principles have, perhaps, been sufficiently set forth; and this may be the place to emphasize the second chief point,—that the perfection of this mutuality measures the degree of excellence in all objects and actions. It will everywhere appear, that, the more regular and symmetrical their relationship, the more beautiful and acceptable are its results. For example, sounds proceeding from vibrations wherein the strokes and pauses are in invariable relation are such sounds as we denominate *musical*. Accordingly all sounds are musical at a sufficient distance, since the most irregular undulations are, in a long journey through the air, wrought to an equality, and made subject to exact law,—as in this universe all irregularities are sure to be in the end. Thus, the thunder, which near at hand is a wild crash, or nearer yet a crazy crackle, is by distance deepened and refined into that marvellous bass which we all know. And doubtless the jars, the discords, and moral contradictions of time, however harsh and crazy at the outset, flow into exact undulation along the ether of eternity, and only as a pure proclamation of law attain to the ear of Heaven. Nay, whoso among men is able to plant his ear high enough above this rude clangor may, in like manner, so hear it, that it shall be to him melody, solace, fruition, a perpetual harvest of the heart's dearest wishes, a perpetual corroboration of that which faith affirms.



Page 20

We may therefore easily understand why musical sounds *are* musical, why they are acceptable and moving, while those affront the sense in which the minute repose are capricious, and, as it were, upon ill terms with the movements. The former appeal to what is most universal and cosmical within us,—to the pure Law, the deep Nature in our breasts; they fall in with the immortal rhythm of life itself, which the others encounter and impugn.

It will be seen also that verse differs from prose as musical sounds from ordinary tones; and having so deep a ground in Nature, rhythmical speech will be sure to continue, in spite of objection and protest, were it, if possible, many times more energetic than that of Mr. Carlyle. But always the best prose has a certain rhythmic emphasis and cadence: in Milton's grander passages there is a symphony of organs, the bellows of the mighty North (one might say) filling their pipes; Goldsmith's flute still breathes through his essays; and in the ampler prose of Bacon there is the swell of a summer ocean, and you can half fancy you hear the long soft surge falling on the shore. Also in all good writing, as in good reading, the pauses suffer no slight; they are treated handsomely; and each sentence rounds gratefully and clearly into rest. Sometimes, indeed, an attempt is made to react in an illegitimate way this force of firm pauses, as in exaggerated French style, wherein the writer seems never to stride or to run, but always to jump like a frog.

Again, as reciprocal opposites, our two principles should be of equal dignity and value. To concede, however, the equality of rest with motion must, for an American, be not easy; and it is therefore in point to assert and illustrate this in particular. What better method of doing so than that of taking some one large instance in Nature, if such can be found, and allowing this, after fair inspection, to stand for all others? And, as it happens, just what we require is quite at hand;—the alternation of Day and Night, of sleep and waking, is so broad, obvious, and familiar, and so mingled with our human interests, that its two terms are easily subjected to extended and clear comparison; while also it deserves discussion upon its own account, apart from its relation to the general subject.

Sleep is now popularly known to be coextensive with Life,—inseparable from vital existence of whatever grade. The rotation of the earth is accordingly implied, as was happily suggested by Paley, in the constitution of every animal and every plant. It is quite evident, therefore, that this necessity was not laid upon, man through some inadvertence of Nature; on the contrary, this arrangement must be such as to her seemed altogether suitable, and, if suitable, economical. Eager men, however, avaricious of performance, do not always regard it with entire complacency. Especially have the saints been apt to set up a controversy with Nature in this particular,



Page 21

submitting with infinite unwillingness to the law by which they deem themselves, as it were, defrauded of life and activity in so large measure. In form, to be sure, their accusation lies solely against themselves; they reproach themselves with sleeping beyond need, sleeping for the mere luxury and delight of it; but the venial self-deception is quite obvious,—nothing plainer than that it is their necessity itself which is repugnant to them, and that their wills are blamed for not sufficiently withstanding and thwarting it. Pious William Law, for example, is unable to disparage sleep enough for his content. “The poorest, dullest refreshment of the body,” he calls it,... “such a dull, stupid state of existence, that even among animals we despise them most which are most drowsy.” You should therefore, so he urges, “begin the day in the spirit of renouncing sleep.” Baxter, also,—at that moment a walking catalogue and epitome of all diseases,—thought himself guilty for all sleep he enjoyed beyond three hours a day. More’s Utopians were to rise at very early hours, and attend scientific lectures before breakfast.

Ambition and cupidity, which, in their way, are no whit less earnest and self-sacrificing than sanctity, equally look upon sleep as a wasteful concession to bodily wants, and equally incline to limit such concession to its mere minimum. Commonplaces accordingly are perpetually circulating in the newspapers, especially in such as pretend to a didactic tone, wherein all persons are exhorted to early rising, to resolute abridgment of the hours of sleep, and the like. That Sir Walter Raleigh slept but five hours in twenty-four; that John Hunter, Frederick the Great, and Alexander von Humboldt slept but four; that the Duke of Wellington made it an invariable rule to “turn out” whenever he felt inclined to turn over, and John Wesley to arise upon his first awaking: instances such as these appear on parade with the regularity of militia troops at muster; and the precept duly follows,—“Whoso would not be insignificant, let him go and do likewise.” “All great men have been early risers,” says my newspaper.

Of late, indeed, a better knowledge of the laws of health, or perhaps only a keener sense of its value and its instability, begins to supersede these rash inculcations; and paragraphs due to some discreet Dr. Hall make the rounds of the press, in which we are reminded that early rising, in order to prove a benefit, rather than a source of mischief, must be duly matched with early going to bed. The one, we are told, will by no means answer without the other. As yet, however, this is urged upon hygienic grounds alone; it is a mere concession to the body, a bald necessity that we hampered mortals lie under; which necessity we are quite at liberty to regret and accuse, though we cannot with safety resist it. Sleep is still admitted to be a waste of time, though one with which Nature alone is chargeable. And I own,



Page 22

not without reluctance, that the great authority of Plato can be pleaded for this low view of its functions. In the "Laws" he enjoins a due measure thereof, but for the sake of health alone, and adds, that the sleeper is, for the time, of no more value than the dead. Clearly, mankind would sustain some loss of good sense, were all the dullards and fat-wits taken away; and Sancho Panza, with his hearty, "Blessings on the man that invented sleep!" here ekes out the scant wisdom of sages. The talking world, however, of our day takes part with the Athenian against the Manchegan philosopher, and, while admitting the present necessity of sleep, does not rejoice in its original invention. If, accordingly, in a computation of the length of man's life, the hours passed in slumber are carefully deducted, and considered as forming no part of available time, not even the medical men dispute the justice of such procedure. They have but this to say:—"The stream of life is not strong enough to keep the mill of action always going; we must therefore periodically shut down the gate and allow the waters to accumulate; and he ever loses more than he gains who attempts any avoidance of this natural necessity."

As medical men, they are not required, perhaps, to say more; and we will be grateful to them for faithfully urging this,—especially when we consider, that, under the sage arrangements now existing, all that the physician does for the general promotion of health is done in defiance of his own interests. We, however, have further questions to ask. Why is not the life-stream more affluent? Sleep *is* needful,—but *wherefore*? The physician vindicates the sleeper; but the philosopher must vindicate Nature.

It is surely one step toward an elucidation of this matter to observe that the necessity here accused is not one arbitrarily laid upon us *by* Nature, but one existing *in* Nature herself, and appertaining to the very conception of existence. The elucidation, however, need not pause at this point. The assumption that sleep is a piece of waste, as being a mere restorative for the body, and not a service or furtherance to the mind,—this must be called in question and examined closely; for it is precisely in this assumption, as I deem, that the popular judgment goes astray. *Is* sleep any such arrest and detention of the mind? That it is a shutting of those outward gates by which impressions flow in upon the soul is sufficiently obvious; but who can assure us that it is equally a closing of those inward and skyward gates through which come the reinforcements of faculty, the strength that masters and uses impression? I persuade myself, on the contrary, that it is what Homer called it, *divine*,—able, indeed, to bring the blessing of a god; and that hours lawfully passed under the pressure of its heavenly palms are fruitful, not merely negatively, but positively, not only as recruiting exhausted powers, and enabling us to be awake again, but by direct contribution to the resources of the soul and the uses of life; that, in fine, one awakes farther on in *life*, as well as farther on in *time*, than he was at falling asleep. This deeper function of the night, what is it?

Page 23

Sleep is, first of all, a filter, or sieve. It strains off the impressions that engross, but not enrich us,—that superfluous *material* of experience which, either from glutting excess, or from sheer insignificance, cannot be spiritualized, made human, transmuted into experience itself. Every man in our day, according to the measure of his sensibility, and with some respect also to his position, is *mobbed* by impressions, and must fight as for his life, if he escape being taken utterly captive by them. It is our perpetual peril that our lives shall become so sentient as no longer to be reflective or artistic,—so beset and infested by the immediate as to lose all amplitude, all perspective, and to become mere puppets of the present, mere Chinese pictures, a huddle of foreground without horizon, or heaven, or even earthly depth and reach. It is easy to illustrate this miserable possibility. A man, for example, in the act of submitting to the extraction of a tooth, is, while the process lasts, one of the poorest poor creatures with whose existence the world might be taunted. His existence is but skin-deep, and contracted to a mere point at that: no vision and faculty divine, no thoughts that wander through eternity, now: a tooth, a jaw, and the iron of the dentist,—these constitute, for the time being, his universe. Only when this monopolizing, enslaving, sensualizing impression has gone by, may what had been a point of pained and quivering animality expand once more to the dimensions of a human soul. Kant, it is said, could withdraw his attention from the pain of gout by pure mental engagement, but found the effort dangerous to his brain, and accordingly was fain to submit, and be no more than a toe-joint, since evil fate would have it so. These extreme cases exemplify a process of impoverishment from which we all daily suffer. The external, the immediate, the idiots of the moment, telling tales that signify nothing, yet that so overcry the suggestion of our deeper life as by the sad and weary to be mistaken for the discourse of life itself,—these obtrude themselves upon us, and multiply and brag and brawl about us, until we have neither room for better guests, nor spirits for their entertainment. We are like schoolboys with eyes out at the windows, drawn by some rattle of drum and squeak of fife, who would study, were they but deaf. Reproach sleep as a waste, forsooth! It is this tyrannical attraction to the surface, that indeed robs us of time, and defrauds us of the uses of life. We cannot hear the gods for the buzzing of flies. We are driven to an idle industry,—the idlest of all things.



Page 24

And to this description of loss men are nowadays peculiarly exposed. The modern world is all battle-field; the smoke, the dust, the din fill every eye and ear; and the hill-top of Lucretius, where is it? The indispensable, terrible newspaper, with its late allies, the Titans and sprites of steam and electricity,—bringing to each retired nook, and thrusting in upon each otherwise peaceful household, the crimes, follies, fears, solitudes, doubts, problems of all kingdoms and peoples,—exasperates the former Scotch mist of impressions into a flooding rain, and almost threatens to swamp the brain of mankind. The incitement to thought is ever greater; but the possibility of thinking, especially of thinking in a deep, simple, central way, is ever less. Problems multiply, but how to attend to them is ever a still greater problem. Guests of the intellect and imagination accumulate until the master of the house is pushed out of doors, and hospitality ceases from the mere excess of its occasion. That must be a greater than Homer who should now do Homer's work. He, there in his sweet, deep-skied Ionia, privileged with an experience so simple and yet so salient and powerful, might well hope to act upon this victoriously by his spirit, might hope to transmute it, as indeed he did, into melodious and enduring human suggestion. Would it have been all the same, had he lived in our type-setting modern world, with its multitudinous knowledges, its aroused conscience, its spurred and yet thwarted sympathies, its new incitements to egotism also, and new tools and appliances for egotism to use,—placed, as it were, in the focus of a vast whispering-gallery, where all the sounds of heaven and earth came crowding, contending, incessant upon his ear? One sees at a glance how the serious thought and poetry of Greece cling to a few master facts, not being compelled to fight always with the many-headed monster of detail; and this suggests to me that our literature may fall short of Grecian amplitude, depth, and simplicity, not wholly from inferiority of power, but from complications appertaining to our position.

The problem of our time is, How to digest and assimilate the Newspaper? To complain of it, to desire its abolition, is an anachronism of the will: it is to complain that time proceeds, and that events follow each other in due sequence. It is hardly too bold to say that the newspaper *is* the modern world, as distinct from the antique and the mediaeval. It represents, by its advent, that epoch in human history wherein each man must begin, in proportion to his capability of sympathy and consideration, to collate his private thoughts, fortunes, interests with those of the human race at large. We are now in the crude openings of this epoch, fevered by its incidents and demands; and one of its tokens is a general exhaustion of the nervous system and failure of health, both here and in Europe,—those of most sensitive spirit, and least retired and sheltered from the impressions of the time, suffering most. All this will end, *must* end, victoriously. In the mean time can we not somewhat adjust ourselves to this new condition?

Page 25

One thing we can and must not fail to do: we can learn to understand and appreciate Rest. In particular, we should build up and reinforce the powers of the night to offset this new intensity of the day. Such, indeed, as the day now is has it ever been, though in a less degree: always it has cast upon men impressions significant, insignificant, and of an ill significance, promiscuously and in excess; and always sleep has been the filter of memory, the purifier of experience, providing a season that follows closely upon the impressions of the day, ere yet they are too deeply imbedded, in which our deeper life may pluck away the adhering burrs from its garments, and arise disburdened, clean, and free. I make no doubt that Death also performs, though in an ampler and more thorough way, the same functions. It opposes the tyranny of memory. For were our experience to go on forever accumulating, unwinnowed, undiminished, every man would sooner or later break down beneath it; every man would be crushed by his own traditions, becoming a grave to himself, and drawing the clods over his own head. To relieve us of these accidental accretions, to give us back to ourselves, is the use, in part, of that sleep which rounds each day, and of that other sleep—brief, but how deep!—which rounds each human life.

Accordingly, he who sleeps well need not die so soon,—even as in the order of Nature he will not. He has that other and rarer half of a good memory, namely, a good forgetting. For none remembers so ill as he that remembers all. “A great German scholar affirmed that he knew not what it was to forget.” Better have been born an idiot! An unwashed memory,—faugh! To us moderns and Americans, therefore, who need above all things to forget well,—our one imperative want being a simplification of experience,—to us, more than to all other men, is requisite, in large measure of benefit, the winnowing-fan of sleep, sleep with its choices and exclusions, if we would not need the offices of death too soon.

But a function of yet greater depth and moment remains to be indicated. Sleep enables the soul not only to shed away that which is foreign, but to adopt and assimilate whatever is properly its own. Dr. Edward Johnson, a man of considerable penetration, though not, perhaps, of a balanced judgment, has a dictum to the effect that the formation of blood goes on during our waking hours, but the composition of tissue during those of sleep. I know not upon what grounds of evidence this statement is made; but one persuades himself that it must be approximately true of the body, since it is undoubtedly so of the soul. Under the eye of the sun the fluid elements of character are supplied; but the final edification takes place beneath the stars. Awake, we think, feel, act; sleeping, we *become*. Day feeds our consciousness; night, out of those stores which action has accumulated, nourishes the vital unconsciousness, the pure unit



Page 26

of the man. During sleep, the valid and serviceable experience of the day is drawn inward, wrought upon by spiritual catalysis, transmitted into conviction, sentiment, character, life, and made part of that which is to attract and assimilate all subsequent experience. Who, accordingly, has not awaked to find some problem already solved with which he had vainly grappled on the preceding day? It is not merely that in the morning our invigorated powers work more efficiently, and enable us to reach this solution immediately *after* awaking. Often, indeed, this occurs; but there are also numerous instances—and such alone are in point—wherein the work is complete *before* one's awakening: not unfrequently it is by the energy itself of the new perception that the soft bonds of slumber are first broken; the soul hails its new dawn with so lusty a cheer, that its clarion reaches even to the ear of the body, and we are unconsciously murmuring the echoes of that joyous salute while yet the iris-hued fragments of our dreams linger about us. The poet in the morning, if true divine slumber have been vouchsafed him, finds his mind enriched with sweeter imaginations, the thinker with profounder principles and wider categories: neither begins the new day where he left the old, but each during his rest has silently, wondrously, advanced to fresh positions, commanding the world now from nobler summits, and beholding around him an horizon beyond that over which yesterday's sun rose and set. Milton gives us testimony very much in point:—

“My celestial patroness, who deigns
Her nightly visitation unimplored,
And dictates to me slumb'ring.”

Thus, in one important sense, is day the servant of night, action the minister of rest. I fancy, accordingly, that Marcus Antoninus may give Heraclitus credit for less than his full meaning in saying that “men asleep are then also laboring”; for he understands him to signify only that through such the universe is still accomplishing its ends. Perhaps he meant to indicate what has been here affirmed,—that in sleep one's personal destiny is still ripening, his true life proceeding.

But if, as the instance which has been under consideration suggests, these two principles are of equal dignity, it will follow that the ability to rest profoundly is of no less estimation than the ability to work powerfully. Indeed, is it not often the condition upon which great and sustained power of action depends? The medal must have two sides. “Danton,” says Carlyle, “was a great nature that could rest.” Were not the force and terror of his performance the obverse fact? I do not now mean, however true it would be, to say that without rest physical resources would fail, and action be enfeebled in consequence; I mean that the soul which wants the attitude of repose wants the condition of power. There is a petulant and meddlesome industry which proceeds from spiritual debility, and causes



Page 27

more; it is like the sleeplessness and tossing of exhausted nervous patients, which arises from weakness, and aggravates its occasion. As few things are equally wearisome, so few are equally wasteful, with a perpetual indistinct sputter of action, whereby nothing is done and nothing let alone. Half the world *breaks* out with action; its performance is cutaneous, of the nature of tetter. Hence is it that in the world, with such a noise of building, so few edifices are reared.

We require it as a pledge of the sanity of our condition, and consequent wholesomeness of our action, that we can withhold our hand, and leave the world in that of its Maker. No man is quite necessary to Omnipotence; grass grew before we were born, and doubtless will continue to grow when we are dead. If we act, let it be because our soul has somewhat to bring forth, and not because our fingers itch. We have in these days been emphatically instructed that all speech not rooted in silence, rooted, that is, in pure, vital, silent Nature, is poor and unworthy; but we should be aware that action equally requires this solemn and celestial perspective, this issue out of the never-trodden, noiseless realms of the soul. Only that which comes from a divine depth can attain to a divine height.

There is a courage of withholding and forbearing greater than any other courage; and before this Fate itself succumbs. Wellington won the Battle of Waterloo by heroically standing still; and every hour of that adventurous waiting was heaping up significance for the moment when at length he should cry, "Up, Guards, and at them!" What Cecil said of Raleigh, "He can toil terribly," has been styled "an electric touch"; but the "masterly inactivity" of Sir James Mackintosh, happily appropriated by Mr. Calhoun, carries an equal appeal to intuitive sense, and has already become proverbial. He is no sufficient hero who in the delays of Destiny, when his way is hedged up and his hope deferred, cannot reserve his strength and bide his time. The power of acting greatly includes that of greatly abstaining from action. The leader of an epoch in affairs should therefore be some Alfred, Bruce, Gustavus Vasa, Cromwell, Washington, Garibaldi, who can wait while the iron of opportunity heats at the forge of time; and then, in the moment of its white glow, can so smite as to shape it forever to the uses of mankind.

One should be able not only to wait, but to wait strenuously, sternly, immovably, rooted in his repose like a mountain oak in the soil; for it may easily happen that the necessity of refraining shall be most imperative precisely when, the external pressure toward action is most vehement. Amid the violent urgency of events, therefore, one should learn the art of the mariner, who, in time of storm lies to, with sails mostly furled, until milder gales permit him again to spread sail and stretch away. With us, as with him, even a fair wind may blow so fiercely that one cannot safely



Page 28

run before it. There are movements with whose direction we sympathize, which are yet so ungoverned that we lose our freedom and the use of our reason in committing ourselves to them. So the seaman who runs too long before the increasing gale has thereafter no election; go on he must, for there is death in pausing, though it be also death to proceed. Learn, therefore, to wait. Is there not many a one who never arrives at fruit, for no better reason than that he persists in plucking his own blossoms? Learn to wait. Take time, with the smith, to raise your arm, if you would deliver a telling blow.

Does it seem wasteful, this waiting? Let us, then, remind ourselves that excess and precipitation are more than wasteful,—they are directly destructive. The fire that blazes beyond bounds not warms the house, but burns it down, and only helps infinitesimally to warm the wide out-of-doors. Any live snail will out-travel a wrecked locomotive, and besides will leave no trail of slaughter on its track. Though despatch be the soul of business, yet he who outruns his own feet comes to the ground, and makes no despatch,—unless it be of himself. Hurry is the spouse of Flurry, and the father of Confusion. Extremes meet, and overaction steadfastly returns to the effect of non-action,—bringing, however, the seven devils of disaster in its company. The ocean storm which heaps the waves so high may, by a sufficient increase, blow them down again; and in no calm is the sea so level as in the extremest hurricane.

Persistent excess of outward performance works mischief in one of two directions,—either upon the body or on the soul. If one will not accommodate himself to this unreasonable quantity by abatement of quality,—if he be resolute to put love, faith, and imagination into his labor, and to be alive to the very top of his brain,—then the body enters a protest, and dyspepsia, palsy, phthisis, insanity, or somewhat of the kind, ensues. Commonly, however, the tragedy is different from this, and deeper. Commonly, in these cases, action loses height as it gains lateral surface; the superior faculties starve, being robbed of sustenance by this avarice of performance, and consequently of supply, on the part of the lower,—they sit at second table, and eat of remainder-crumbs. The delicate and divine sprites, that should bear the behests of the soul to the will and to the houses of thought in the brain her intuitions, are crowded out from the streets of the cerebral cities by the mob and trample of messengers bound upon baser errands; and thus is the soul deprived of service, and the man of inspiration. The man becomes, accordingly, a great merchant who values a cent, but does not value a human sentiment; or a lawyer who can convince a jury that white is black, but cannot convince himself that white is white, God God, and the sustaining faiths of great souls more than moonshine. So if the apple-tree will make too much wood, it can bear no fruit; during summer it is full of haughty thrift, but the autumn, which brings grace to so many a dwarfed bush and low shrub, shows it naked and in shame.



Page 29

How many mistake the crowing of the cock for the rising of the sun, albeit the cock often crows at midnight, or at the moon's rising, or only at the advent of a lantern and a tallow candle! And yet what a bloated, gluttonous devourer of hopes and labors is this same precipitation! All shores are strown with wrecks of barks that went too soon to sea. And if you launch even your well-built ship at half-tide, what will it do but strike bottom, and stick there? The perpetual tragedy of literary history, in especial, is this. What numbers of young men, gifted with great imitative quickness, who, having, by virtue of this, arrived at fine words and figures of speech, set off on their nimble rhetorical Pegasus, keep well out of the Muse's reach ever after! How many go conspicuously through life, snapping their smart percussion-caps upon empty barrels, because, forsooth, powder and ball do not come of themselves, and it takes time to load!

I know that there is a divine impatience, a rising of the waters of love and noble pain till they *must* overflow, with or without the hope of immediate apparent use, and no matter what swords and revenges impend. History records a few such defeats which are worth thousands of ordinary victories. Yet the rule is, that precipitation comes of levity. Eagerness is shallow. Haste is but half-earnest. If an apple is found to grow mellow and seemingly ripe much before its fellows on the same bough, you will probably discover, upon close inspection, that there is a worm in it.

To be sure, any time is too soon with those who dote upon Never. There are such as find Nature precipitate and God forward. They would have effect limp at untraversable distances behind cause; they would keep destiny carefully abed and feed it upon spoon-victual. They play duenna to the universe, and are perpetually on the *qui vive*, lest it escape, despite their care, into improprieties. The year is with them too fast by so much as it removes itself from the old almanac. The reason is that *they* are the old almanac. Or, more distinctly, they are at odds with universal law, and, knowing that to them it can come only as judgment and doom, they, not daring to denounce the law itself, fall to the trick of denouncing its agents as visionaries, and its effects as premature. The felon always finds the present an unseasonable day on which to be hanged: the sheriff takes another view of the matter.

But the error of these consists, not in realizing good purposes too slowly and patiently, but in failing effectually to purpose good at all. To those who truly are making it the business of their lives to accomplish worthy aims, this counsel cannot come amiss,— TAKE TIME. Take a year in which to thread a needle, rather than go dabbing at the texture with the naked thread. And observe, that there is an excellence and an efficacy of slowness, no less than of quickness. The armadillo is equally



Page 30

secure of his prey with the hawk or leopard; and Sir Charles Bell mentions a class of thieves in India, who, having, through extreme patience and command of nerve, acquired the power of motion imperceptibly slow, are the most formidable of all peculators, and almost defy precaution. And to leave these low instances, slowness produced by profoundness of feeling and fineness of perception constitutes that divine patience of genius without which genius does not exist. Mind lingers where appetite hurries on; it is only the Newtons who stay to meditate over the fall of an apple, too trivial for the attention of the clown. It is by this noble slowness that the highest minds faintly emulate that inconceivable deliberateness and delicacy of gradation with which solar systems are built and worlds habilitated.

Now haste and intemperance are the Satans that beset virtuous Americans. And these mischiefs are furthered by those who should guard others against them. The Rev. Dr. John Todd, in a work, not destitute of merit, entitled "The Student's Manual," urges those whom he addresses to study, while about it, with their utmost might, crowding into an hour as much work as it can possibly be made to contain; so, he says, they will increase the power of the brain. But this is advice not fit to be given to a horse, much less to candidates for the graces of scholarly manhood. I read that race-horses, during the intervals between their public contests, are permitted only occasionally and rarely to be driven at their extreme speed, but are assiduously made to *walk* several hours each day. By this constancy of *moderate* exercise they preserve health and suppleness of limb, without exhaustion of strength. And it appears, that, were such an animal never to be taken from the stable but to be pushed to the top of his speed, he would be sure to make still greater speed toward ruin. Why not be as wise for men as for horses?

And here I desire to lay stress upon one point, which American students will do well to consider gravely,—*It is a PURE, not a strained and excited, attention which has signal prosperity.* Distractions, tempests, and head-winds in the brain, by-ends, the sidelong eyes of vanity, the overleaping eyes of ambition, the bleared eyes of conceit,—these are they which thwart study and bring it to nought. Nor these only, but all impatience, all violent eagerness, all passionate and perturbed feeling, fill the brain with thick and hot blood, suited to the service of desire, unfit for the uses of thought. Intellect can be served only by the finest properties of the blood; and if there be any indocility of soul, any impurity of purpose, any coldness or carelessness, any prurience or crude and intemperate heat, then base spirits are sent down from the seat of the soul to summon the sanguineous forces; and these gather a crew after their own kind. Purity of attention, then, is the magic that the scholar may use; and let



Page 31

him know, that, the purer it is, the more temperate, tranquil, reposeful. Truth is not to be run down with fox-hounds; she is a divinity, and divinely must he draw nigh who will gain her presence. Go to, thou bluster-brain! Dost thou think to learn? Learn docility first, and the manners of the skies. And thou egotist, thinkest thou that these eyes of thine, smoky with the fires of diseased self-love, and thronged with deceiving wishes, shall perceive the essential and eternal? They shall see only silver and gold, houses and lands, reputes, supremacies, fames, and, as instrumental to these, the forms of logic and seemings of knowledge. If thou wilt discern the truth, desire IT, not its accidents and collateral effects. Rest in the pursuit of it, putting *simplicity of quest* in the place of either force or wile; and such quest cannot be unfruitful.

Let the student, then, shun an excited and spasmodic tension of brain, and he will gain more while expending less. It is not toil, it is morbid excitement, that kills; and morbid excitement in constant connection with high mental endeavor is, of all modes and associations of excitement, the most disastrous. Study as the grass grows, and your old age—and its laurels—shall be green.

Already, however, we are trenching upon that more intimate relationship of the great opposites under consideration which has been designated Rest *in* Motion. More intimate relationship, I say,—at any rate, more subtle, recondite, difficult of apprehension and exposition, and perhaps, by reason of this, more central and suggestive. An example of this in its physical aspect may be seen in the revolutions of the planets, and in all orbital or circular motion. For such, it will be at once perceived, is, in strictness of speech, *fixed and stationary* motion: it is, as Sir Isaac Newton demonstrated, an exact and equal obedience, in the same moment, to the law of fixity and the law of progression. Observe especially, that it is not, like merely retarded motion, a partial neutralization of each principle by the other, an imbecile Aristotelian compromise and half-way house between the two; but it is at once, and in virtue of the same fact, perfect Rest *and* perfect Motion. A revolving body is not hindered, but the same impulse which begot its movement causes this perpetually to return into itself.

Now the principles that are seen to govern the material universe are but a large-lettered display of those that rule in perfect humanity. Whatsoever makes distinguished order and admirableness in Nature makes the same in man; and never was there a fine deed that was not begot of the same impulse and ruled by the same laws to which solar systems are due. I desire, accordingly, here to take up and emphasize the statement previously made in a general way,—that the secret of perfection in all that appertains to man—in morals, manners, art, politics—must be sought in such a correspondence and reciprocation of these great opposites as the motions of the planets perfectly exemplify.



Page 32

It must not, indeed, be overlooked or unacknowledged, that the planets do not move in exact circles, but diverge slightly into ellipses. The fact is by no means without significance, and that of an important kind. Pure circular motion is the type of perfection in the universe as a *whole*, but each part of the whole will inevitably express its partiality, will acknowledge its special character, and upon the frankness of this confession its comeliness will in no small degree depend; nevertheless, no sooner does the eccentricity, or individuality, become so great as to suggest disloyalty to the idea of the whole, than ugliness ensues. Thus, comets are portents, shaking the faith of nations, not supporting it, like the stars. So among men. Nature is at pains to secure divergence, magnetic variation, putting into every personality and every powerful action some element of irregularity and imperfection; and her reason for doing so is, that irregularity appertains to the state of growth, and is the avenue of access to higher planes and broader sympathies; still, as the planets, though not moving in perfect circles, yet come faithfully round to the same places, and accomplish *the ends* of circular motion, so in man, the divergence must be special, not total, no act being the mere arc of a circle, and yet *revolution* being maintained. And to the beauty of characters and deeds, it is requisite that they should never seem even to imperil fealty to the universal idea. Revolution perfectly exact expresses only necessity, not voluntary fidelity; but departure, *still deferential to the law of the whole*, in evincing freedom elevates its obedience into fealty and noble faithfulness: by this measure of eccentricity, centricity is not only emphasized, but immeasurably exalted.

But having made this full and willing concession to the element of individuality in persons and of special character in actions, we are at liberty to resume the general thesis,—that orbital rest of movement furnishes the type of perfect excellence, and suggests accordingly the proper target of aspiration and culture.

In applying this law, we will take first a low instance, wherein the opposite principles stand apart, rather upon terms of outward covenant, or of mere mixture, than of mutual assimilation. *Man* is infinite; *men* are finite: the purest aspect of great laws never appears in collections and aggregations, yet the same laws rule here as in the soul, and such excellence as is possible issues from the same sources. As an instance, accordingly, of that ruder reciprocation which may obtain among multitudes, I name the Roman Legion.

Page 33

It is said that the success of the armies of Rome is not fully accounted for, until one takes into account the constitution of this military body. It united, in an incomparable degree, the different advantages of fixity and fluency. Moderate in size, yet large enough to give the effect of mass, open in texture, yet compact in form, it afforded to every man room for individual prowess, while it left no man to his individual strength. Each soldier leaned and rested upon the Legion, a body of six thousand men; yet around each was a space in which his movements might be almost as free, rapid, and individual as though he had possessed the entire field to himself. The Macedonian Phalanx was a marvel of mass, but it was mass not penetrated with mobility; it could move, indeed could be said to have an existence, only as a whole; its decomposed parts were but *debris*. The Phalanx, therefore, was terrible, the constituent parts of it imbecile; and the Battle of Cynocephalae finally demonstrated its inferiority, for the various possible exigencies of battle, to the conquering Legion. The brave rabble of Gauls and Goths, on the other hand, illustrated all that private valor, not reposing upon any vaster and more stable strength, has power to achieve; but these rushing torrents of prowess dashed themselves into vain spray upon the coordinated and reposing courage of Rome.

The same perpetual opposites must concur to produce the proper form and uses of the State,—though they here appear in a much more elevated form. Rest is here known as *Law*, motion as *Liberty*. In the true commonwealth, these, so far from being mutually destructive or antagonistic, incessantly beget and vivify each other; so that Law is the expression and guaranty of Freedom, while Freedom flows spontaneously into the forms of Justice. Neither of these can exist, neither can be properly *conceived of*, apart from its correlative opposite. Nor will any condition of mere truce, or of mere mechanical equilibrium, suffice. Nothing suffices but a reciprocation so active and total that each is constantly resolving itself into the other.

The notion of Rousseau, which is countenanced by much of the phraseology, to say the least, of the present day, was, indeed, quite contrary to this. He assumed freedom to exist only where law is not, that is, in the savage state, and to be surrendered, piece for piece, with every acknowledgment of social obligation. Seldom was ever so plausible a doctrine equally false. Law is properly *the public definition of freedom and the affirmation of its sacredness and inviolability as so defined*; and only in the presence of it, either express or implicit, does man become free. Duty and privilege are one and the same, however men may set up a false antagonism between them; and accordingly social obligation can subtract nothing from the privilege and prerogative of liberty. Consequently, the freedom which is defined as the negation of social



Page 34

duty and obligation is not true regal freedom, but is that worst and basest of all tyrannies, the tyranny of pure egotism, masked in the semblance of its divine contrary. That, be it observed, is the freest society, in which the noblest and most delicate human powers find room and secure respect,—wherein the loftiest and costliest spiritualities are most invited abroad by sympathetic attraction. Now among savages little obtains appreciation, save physical force and its immediate allies: the divine fledglings of the human soul, instead of being sweetly drawn and tempted forth, are savagely menaced, rudely repelled; whatsoever is finest in the man, together with the entire nature of woman, lies, in that low temperature, enchained and repressed, like seeds in a frozen soil. The harsh, perpetual contest with want and lawless rivalry, to which all uncivilized nations are doomed, permits only a few low powers, and those much the same in all,—lichens, mosses, rude grasses, and other coarse cryptogamous growths,—to develop themselves; since these alone can endure the severities of season and treatment to which all that would clothe the fields of the soul must remain exposed. Meanwhile the utmost of that wicked and calamitous suppression of faculty, which constitutes the essence and makes the tragedy of human slavery, is equally effected by the inevitable isolation and wakeful trampling and consequent barrenness of savage life. Liberty without law is not liberty; and the converse may be asserted with like confidence.

Where, then, the fixed term, State, or Law, and the progressive term, Person, or Freewill, are in relations of reciprocal support and mutual reproduction, there alone is freedom, there alone public order. We were able to command this truth from the height of our general proposition, and closer inspection shows those anticipations to have been correct.

But man is greater than men; and for the finest aspect of high laws, we must look to individual souls, not to masses.

What is the secret of noble manners? Orbital action, always returning into and compensating itself. The gentleman, in offering his respect to others, offers an equal, or rather the same, respect to himself; and his courtesies may flow without stint or jealous reckoning, because they feed their source, being not an expenditure, but a circulation. Submitting to the inward law of honor and the free sense of what befits a man,—to a law perpetually made and spontaneously executed in his own bosom, the instant flowering of his own soul,—he commands his own obedience, and he obeys his own commanding. Though throned above all nations, a king of kings, yet the faithful humble vassal of his own heart; though he serve, yet regal, doing imperial service; he escapes outward constraint by inward anticipation; and all that could he rightly named as his duty to others, he has, ere demand, already discovered, and engaged in, as part of his duty to himself. Now it is



Page 35

the expression of royal freedom in loyal service, of sovereignty in obedience, courage in concession, and strength in forbearance, which makes manners noble. Low may he bow, not with loss, but with access of dignity, who bows with an elevated and ascending heart: there is nothing loftier, nothing less allied to abject behavior, than this grand lowliness. The worm, because it is low, cannot be lowly; but man, uplifted in token of supremacy, may kneel in adoration, bend in courtesy, and stoop in condescension. Only a great pride, that is, a great and reverential repose in one's own being, renders possible a noble humility, which is a great and reverential acknowledgment of the being of others; this humility in turn sustains a higher self-reverence; this again resolves itself into a more majestic humility; and so run, in ever enhancing wave, the great circles of inward honor and outward grace. And without this self-sustaining return of the action into itself, each quality feeding itself from its correlative opposite, there can be no high behavior. This is the reason why qualities loftiest in kind and largest in measure are vulgarly mistaken, not for their friendly opposites, but for their mere contraries,—why a very profound sensibility, a sensibility, too, peculiarly of the spirit, not of nerve only, is sure to be named coldness, as Mr. Ruskin recently remarks,—why vast wealth of good pride, in its often meek acceptance of wrong, in its quiet ignoring of insult, in its silent superiority to provocation, passes with the superficial and petulant for poverty of pride and mere mean-spiritedness,—why a courage which is not partial, but *total*, coexisting, as it always does, with a noble peacefulness, with a noble inaptness for frivolous hazards, and a noble slowness to take offence, is, in its delays and forbearances, thought by the half-courageous to be no better than cowardice;—it is, as we have said, because great qualities revolve and repose in orbits of reciprocation with their opposites, which opposites are by coarse and ungentle eyes misdeemed to be contraries. Feeling transcendently deep and powerful is unimpassioned and far lower-voiced than indifference and unfeelingness, being wont to express itself, not by eloquent ebullition, but by extreme understatement, or even by total silence. Sir Walter Raleigh, when at length he found himself betrayed to death—and how basely betrayed!—by Sir Lewis Stukely, only said, “Sir Lewis, these actions will not turn to your credit.” The New Testament tells us of a betrayal yet more quietly received. These are instances of noble manners.

What actions are absolutely moral is determined by application of the same law,—those only which repose wholly in themselves, being to themselves at once motive and reward. “Miserable is he,” says the “Bhagavad Gita,” “whose motive to action lies, not in the action itself, but in its reward.” Duty purchased with covenant of special delights is not duty, but is the most pointed possible denial of it. The just man looks not beyond justice; the merciful reposes in acts of mercy; and he who would be bribed to equity and goodness is not only bad, but shameless. But of this no further words.



Page 36

Rest is sacred, celestial, and the appreciation of it and longing for it are mingled with the religious sentiment of all nations. I cannot remember the time when there was not to me a certain ineffable suggestion in the apostolic words, "There remaineth, therefore, a rest for the people of God." But the repose of the godlike must, as that of God himself, be *infinitely* removed from mere sluggish inactivity; since the conception of action is the conception of existence itself,—that is, of Being in the act of self-manifestation. Celestial rest is found in action so universal, so purely identical with the great circulations of Nature, that, like the circulation of the blood and the act of breathing, it is not a subtraction from vital resource, but is, on the contrary, part of the very fact of life and all its felicities. This does not exclude rhythmic or recreative rest; but the need of such rest detracts nothing from pleasure or perfection. In heaven also, if such figure of speech be allowable, may be that toil which shall render grateful the cessation from toil, and give sweetness to sleep; but right weariness has its own peculiar delight, no less than right exercise; and as the glories of sunset equal those of dawn, so with equal, though diverse pleasure, should noble and temperate labor take off its sandals for evening repose, and put them on to go forth "beneath the opening eyelids of the morn." Yet, allowing a place for this rhythm in the detail and close inspection even of heavenly life, it still holds true on the broad scale, that pure beauty and beatitude are found there only where life and character sweep in orbits of that complete expression which is at once divine labor and divine repose.

Observe, now, that this rest-motion, as being without waste or loss, is a *manifested immortality*, since that which wastes not ends not; and therefore it puts into every motion the very character and suggestion of immortal life. Yea, one deed rightly done, and the doer is in heaven, —is of the company of immortals. One deed so done that in it is *no* mortality; and in that deed the meaning of man's history,—the meaning, indeed, and the glory, of existence itself,—are declared. Easy, therefore, it is to see how any action may be invested with universal significance and the utmost conceivable charm. The smaller the realm and the humbler the act into which this amplitude and universality of spirit are carried, the more are they emphasized and set off; so that, without opportunity of unusual occasion, or singular opulence of natural power, a man's life may possess all that majesty which the imagination pictures in archangels and in gods. Indeed, it is but simple statement of fact to say, that he who rests *utterly* in his action shall belittle not only whatsoever history has recorded, but all which that poet of poets, Mankind, has ever dreamed or fabled of grace and greatness. He shall not peer about with curiosity to spy approbation, or

Page 37

with zeal to defy censure; he shall not know if there be a spectator in the world; his most public deed shall be done in a divine privacy, on which no eye intrudes,—his most private in the boundless publicities of Nature; his deed, when done, falls away from him, like autumn apples from their boughs, no longer his, but the world's and destiny's; neither the captive of yesterday nor the propitiator of to-morrow, he abides simply, majestically, like a god, in being and doing. Meanwhile, blame and praise whirl but as unrecognized cloudlets of gloom or glitter beneath his feet, enveloping and often blinding those who utter them, but to him never attaining.

It is not easy at present to suggest the real measure and significance of such manhood, because this age has debased its imagination, by the double trick, first, of confounding man with his body, and next, of considering the body, not as a symbol of truth, but only as an agent in the domain of matter,—comparing its size with the sum total of physical space, and its muscular power with the sum total of physical forces. Yet

“What know we greater than the soul?”

A man is no outlying province, nor does any province lie beyond him. East, West, North, South, and height and depth are contained in his bosom, the poles of his being reaching more widely, his zenith and nadir being more sublime and more profound. We are cheated by nearness and intimacy. Let us look at man with a telescope, and we shall find no star or constellation of sweep so grand, no nebulae or star-dust so provoking and suggestive to fancy. In truth, there are no words to say how either large or small, how significant or insignificant, men may be. Though solar and stellar systems amaze by their grandeur of scale, yet is true manhood the maximum of Nature; though microscopic and sub-microscopic protophyta amaze by their inconceivable littleness, yet is mock manhood Nature's minimum. The latter is the only negative quantity known to Nature; the former the only revelation of her entire heart.

In concluding, need I say that only the pure can repose in his action,—only he obtain deliverance by his deed, and after deliverance from it? The egotism, the baseness, the partialities that are in our performance are hooks and barbs by which it wounds and wearies us in the passage, and clings to us being past.

Law governs all; no favor is shown; the event is as it must be; only he who has no blinding partiality toward himself, who is whole and one with the whole, he who is Nature and Law and divine Necessity, can be blest with that blessedness which Nature is able to give only by her presence. There is a labor and a rest that are the same, one fact, one felicity; in this are power, beauty, immortality; by existence as a whole it is always perfectly exemplified; to man, as the eye of existence, it is also possible; but it is possible to him only as he is purely man,—only as he abandons himself to the divine



principles of his life: in other words, this Sabbath remaineth in very deed to no other than the people of God.



Page 38

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LIGHTS OF THE ENGLISH LAKE DISTRICT.

At the opening of the present century, the Lake District of Cumberland and Westmoreland was groaned over by some residents as fast losing its simplicity. The poet Gray had been the first to describe its natural features in an express manner; and his account of the views above Keswick and Grasmere was quoted, sixty years since, as evidence of the spoiling process which had gone on since the introduction of civilization from the South. Gray remarked on the absence of red roofs, gentlemen's houses, and garden-walls, and on the uniform character of the humble farmsteads and gray cottages under their sycamores in the vales. Wordsworth heard and spoke a good deal of the innovations which had modified the scene in the course of the thirty years which elapsed between Gray's visits (in 1767-69) and his own settlement in the Lake District; but he lived to say more, at the end of half a century, of the wider and deeper changes which time had wrought in the aspect of the country and the minds and manners of the people. According to his testimony, and that of Southey, the barbarism was of a somewhat gross character at the end of the last century; the magistrates were careless of the condition of the society in which they bore authority; the clergy were idle or worse,—“marrying and burying machines,” as Southey told Wilberforce; and the morality of the people, such as it was, was ascribed by Wordsworth, in those his days of liberalism in politics, to the state of republican equality in which they lived. Excellent, fussy Mr. Wilberforce thought, when he came for some weeks into the District, that the Devil had had quite time enough for sowing tares while the clergy were asleep; so he set to work to sow a better seed; and we find in his diary that he went into house after house “to talk religion to the people.” I do not know how he was received; but at this day the people are puzzled at that kind of domestic intervention, so unsuitable to their old-fashioned manners,—one old dame telling with wonder, some little time since, that a young lady had called and sung a hymn to her, but had given her nothing at the end for listening. The rough independence of the popular manners even now offends persons of a conventional habit of mind; and when poets and philosophers first came from southern parts to live here, the democratic tone of feeling and behavior was more striking than it is now or will ever be again.

Before the Lake poets began to give the public an interest in the District, some glimpses of it were opened by the well-known literary ladies of the last century who grouped themselves round their young favorite, Elizabeth Smith. I do not know whether her name and fame have reached America; but in my young days she was the English school-girls' subject of admiration and emulation. She had marvellous powers



Page 39

of acquisition, and she translated the Book of Job, and a good deal from the German, —introducing Klopstock to us at a time when we hardly knew the most conspicuous names in German literature. Elizabeth Smith was an accomplished girl in all ways. There is a damp, musty-looking house, with small windows and low ceilings, at Coniston, where she lived with her parents and sister, for some years before her death. We know, from Mrs. Elizabeth Hamilton's and the Bowdlers' letters, how Elizabeth and her sister lived in the beauty about them, rambling, sketching, and rowing their guests on the lake. In one of her rambles, Elizabeth sat too long under a heavy dew. She felt a sharp pain in her chest, which never left her, and died in rapid decline. Towards the last she was carried out daily from the close and narrow rooms at home, and laid in a tent pitched in a field just across the road, whence she could overlook the lake, and the range of mountains about its head. On that spot now stands Tent Lodge, the residence of Tennyson and his bride after their marriage. One of my neighbors, who first saw the Lake District in early childhood, has a solemn remembrance of the first impression. The tolling of the bell of Hawkeshead church was heard from afar; and it was tolling for the funeral of Elizabeth Smith. Her portrait is before me now,—the ingenuous, child-like face, with the large dark eyes which alone show that it is not the portrait of a child. It was through her that a large proportion of the last generation of readers first had any definite associations with Coniston.

Wordsworth had, however, been in that church many a time, above twenty years before, when at Hawkeshead school. He used to tell that his mother had praised him for going into the church, one week-day, to see a woman do penance in a white sheet. She considered it good for his morals. But when he declared himself disappointed that nobody had given him a penny for his attendance, as he had somehow expected, his mother told him he was served right for going to church from such an inducement. He spoke with gratitude of an usher at that school, who put him in the way of learning the Latin, which had been a sore trouble at his native Cockermouth, from unskilful teaching. Our interest in him at that school, however, is from his having there first conceived the idea of writing verse. His master set the boys, as a task, to write a poetical theme,—“The Summer Vacation”; and Master William chose to add to it “The Return to School.” He was then fourteen; and he was to be double that age before he returned to the District and took up his abode there.

He had meantime gone through his college course, as described in his Memoirs, and undergone strange conditions of opinion and feeling in Paris during the Revolution; had lived in Dorsetshire, with his faithful sister; had there first seen Coleridge, and had been so impressed by the mind and discourse of that wonderful young philosopher as to remove to Somersetshire to be near him; had seen Klopstock in Germany, and lived there for a time; and had passed through other changes of residence and places, when we find him again among the Lakes in 1779, still with his sister by his side, and their brother John, and Coleridge, who had never been in the District before.



Page 40

As they stood on the margin of Grasmere, the scene was more like what Gray saw than what is seen at this day. The churchyard was bare of the yews which now distinguish it,—for Sir George Beaumont had them planted at a later time; and where the group of kindred and friends—the Wordsworths and their relatives—now lie, the turf was level and untouched. The iron rails and indefensible monuments, which Wordsworth so reprobated half a century later, did not exist. The villas which stud the slopes, the great inns which bring a great public, were uncreated; and there was only the old Roman road where the Wishing-Gate is, or the short cut by the quarries to arrive by from the South, instead of the fine mail-road which now winds between the hills and the margin of the lake. John Wordsworth guided his brother and Coleridge through Grisedale, over a spur of Helvellyn, to see Ullswater; and Coleridge has left a characteristic testimony of the effect of the scenery upon him. It was “a day when light and darkness coexisted in contiguous masses, and the earth and sky were but one. Nature lived for us in all her wildest accidents.” He tells how his eyes were dim with tears, and how imagination and reality blended their objects and impressions. Wordsworth’s account of the same excursion is in as admirable contrast with Coleridge’s as their whole mode of life and expression was, from first to last. With the carelessness of the popular mind in such cases, the British public had already almost confounded the two men and their works, as it soon after mixed up Southey with both; whereas they were all as unlike each other as any three poets could well be.

Coleridge and Wordsworth were both contemplative, it is true, while Southey was not: but the remarkable thing about Coleridge was the exclusiveness of his contemplative tendencies, by which one set of faculties ran riot in his mind and life, making havoc among his powers, and a dismal wreck of his existence. The charm and marvel of his discourse upset all judgments during his life, and for as long as his voice remained in the ear of his enchanted hearers; but, apart from the spell, it is clear to all sober and trained thinkers that Coleridge wandered away from truth and reality in the midst of his vaticinations, as the *clairvoyant* does in the midst of his previsions, so as to mislead and bewilder, while inspiring and intoxicating the hearer or reader. He recorded, in regard to himself, that “history and particular facts lost all interest” in his mind after his first launch into metaphysics; and he remained through life incapable of discerning reality from inborn images. Wordsworth took alarm at the first experience of such a tendency in himself, and relates that he used to catch at the trees and palings by the roadside to satisfy himself of existences out of himself; but Coleridge encouraged this subjective exclusiveness, to the destruction of the balance of his mind and the *morale* of

Page 41

his nature. He was himself a wild poem; and he discoursed wild poems to us,—musical romances from Dreamland; but the luxury to himself and us was bought by injury to others which was altogether irreparable, and pardonable only on the ground that the balance of his mind was destroyed by a fatal intellectual, in addition to physical intemperance. In him we see an extreme case of a life of contemplation uncontrolled by will and unchecked by action. His faculty of will perished, and his prerogative of action died out. His contemplations must necessarily be worth just so much the less to us as his mental structure was deformed,—extravagantly developed in one direction, and dwarfed in another.

The singularity in Wordsworth's case, on the other hand, is that his contemplative tendencies not only coexisted with, but were implicated with, the most precise and vivid apprehension of small realities. There was no proportion in his mind; and vaticination and twaddle rolled off his eloquent tongue as chance would have it. At one time he would discourse like a seer, on the slightest instigation, by the hour together; and next, he would hold forth with equal solemnity, on the pettiest matter of domestic economy. I have known him take up some casual notice of a "beck" (brook) in the neighborhood, and discourse of brooks for two hours, till his hearers felt as if they were by the rivers of waters in heaven; and next, he would talk on and on, till stopped by some accident, on his doubt whether Mrs. Wordsworth gave a penny apiece or a half-penny apiece for trapped mice to a little girl who had undertaken to clear the house of them. It has been common to regret that he held the office of Stamp-Distributor in the District; but it was probably a great benefit to his mind as well as his fortunes. It was something that it gave him security and ease as to the maintenance of his family; but that is less important than its necessitating a certain amount of absence from home, and intercourse with men on business. He was no reader in mature life; and the concentration of his mind on his own views, and his own genius, and the interests of his home and neighborhood, caused some foibles, as it was; and it might have been almost fatal, but for some office which allowed him to gratify his love of out-door life at the same time that it led him into intercourse with men in another capacity than as listeners to himself, or peasants engrossed in their own small concerns.

Southey was not contemplative or speculative, and it could only have been because he lived at the Lakes and was Coleridge's brother-in-law that he was implicated with the two speculative poets at all. It has been carelessly reported by Lake tourists that Southey was not beloved among his neighbors, while Wordsworth was; and that therefore the latter was the better man, in a social sense. It should be remembered that Southey was a working man, and that the other two were not; and, moreover, it should never



Page 42

be for a moment forgotten that Southey worked double-tides to make up for Coleridge's idleness. While Coleridge was dreaming and discoursing, Southey was toiling to maintain Coleridge's wife and children. He had no time and no attention to spare for wandering about and making himself at home with the neighbors. This practice came naturally to Wordsworth; and a kind and valued neighbor he was to all the peasants round. Many a time I have seen him in the road, in Scotch bonnet and green spectacles, with a dozen children at his heels and holding his cloak, while he cut ash-sticks for them from the hedge, hearing all they had to say or talking to them. Southey, on the other hand, took his constitutional walk at a fixed hour, often reading as he went. Two families depended on him; and his duty of daily labor was not only distinctive, but exclusive. He was always at work at home, while Coleridge was doing nothing but talking, and Wordsworth was abroad, without thinking whether he was at work or play. Seen from the stand-point of conscience and of moral generosity, Southey's was the noblest life of the three; and Coleridge's was, of course, nought. I own, however, that, considering the tendency of the time to make literature a trade, or at least a profession, I cannot help feeling Wordsworth's to have been the most privileged life of them all. He had not work enough to do; and his mode of life encouraged an excess of egoism: but he bore all the necessary retribution of this in his latter years; and the whole career leaves an impression of an airy freedom and a natural course of contemplation, combined with social interest and action, more healthy than the existence of either the delinquent or the exemplary comrade with whom he was associated in the public view.

I have left my neighbors waiting long on the margin of Grasmere. That was before I was born; but I could almost fancy I had seen them there.

I observed that Wordsworth's report of their trip was very unlike Coleridge's. When his sister had left them, he wrote to her, describing scenes by brief precise touches which draw the picture that Coleridge blurs with grand phrases. Moreover, Wordsworth tells sister Dorothy that John will give him forty pounds to buy a bit of land by the lake, where they may build a cottage to live in henceforth. He says, also, that there is a small house vacant near the spot.—They took that house; and thus the Wordsworths became "Lakers." They entered that well-known cottage at Grasmere on the shortest day (St. Thomas's) of 1799. Many years afterwards, Dorothy wrote of the aspect of Grasmere on her arrival that winter evening,—the pale orange lights on the lake, and the reflection of the mountains and the island in the still waters. She had wandered about the world in an unsettled way; and now she had cast anchor for life,—not in that house, but within view of that valley.



Page 43

All readers of Wordsworth, on either side the Atlantic, believe that they know that cottage, (described in the fifth book of the “Excursion,”) with its little orchard, and the moss house, and the tiny terrace behind, with its fine view of the lake and the basin of mountains. There the brother and sister lived for some years in a very humble way, making their feast of the beauty about them. Wordsworth was fond of telling how they had meat only two or three times a week; and he was eager to impress on new-comers—on me among others—the prudence of warning visitors that they must make up their minds to the scantiest fare. He was as emphatic about this, laying his finger on one’s arm to enforce it, as about catching mice or educating the people. It was vain to say that one would rather not invite guests than fail to provide for them; he insisted that the expense would be awful, and assumed that his sister’s and his own example settled the matter. I suppose they were poor in those days; but it was not for long. A devoted sister Dorothy was. Too late it appeared that she had sacrificed herself to aid and indulge her brother. When her mind was gone, and she was dying by inches, Mrs. Wordsworth offered me the serious warning that she gave whenever occasion allowed, against overwalking. She told me that Dorothy had, not occasionally only, but often, walked forty miles in a day to give her brother her presence. To repair the ravages thus caused she took opium; and the effect on her exhausted frame was to overthrow her mind. This was when she was elderly. For a long course of years, she was a rich household blessing to all connected with her. She shared her brother’s peculiarity of investing trifles with solemnity, or rather, of treating all occasions alike (at least in writing) with pedantic elaboration; but she had the true poet’s, combined with the true woman’s nature; and the fortunate man had, in wife and sister, the two best friends of his life.

The Wordsworths were the originals of the Lake *coterie*, as we have seen. Born at Cockermouth, and a pupil at the Hawkeshead school, Wordsworth was looking homewards when he settled in the District. The others came in consequence. Coleridge brought his family to Greta Hall, near Keswick; and with them came Mrs. Lovell, one of the three Misses Fricker, of whom Coleridge and Southey had married two. Southey was invited to visit Greta Hall, the year after the Wordsworths settled at Grasmere; and thus they became acquainted. They had just met before, in the South; but they had yet to learn to know each other; and there was sufficient unlikeness between them to render this a work of some time and pains. It was not long before Southey, instead of Coleridge, was the lessee of Greta Hall; and soon after Coleridge took his departure, leaving his wife and children, and also the Lovells, a charge upon Southey, who had no more fortune than Coleridge, except in the inexhaustible wealth of a heart, a will,



Page 44

and a conscience. Wordsworth married in 1802; and then the two poets passed through their share of the experience of human life, a few miles apart, meeting occasionally on some mountain ridge or hidden dale, and in one another's houses, drawn closer by their common joys and sorrows, but never approximating in the quality of their genius, or in the stand-points from which they respectively looked out upon human affairs. They had children, loved them, and each lost some of them; and they felt tenderly for each other when each little grave was opened. Southey, the most amiable of men in domestic life, gentle, generous, serene, and playful, grew absolutely ferocious about politics, as his articles in the "Quarterly Review" showed all the world. Wordsworth, who had some of the irritability and pettishness, mildly described by himself as "gentle stirrings of the mind," which occasionally render great men ludicrously like children, and who was, moreover, highly conservative after his early democratic fever had passed off, grew more and more liberal with advancing years. I do not mean that he verged towards the Reformers,—but that he became more enlarged, tolerant, and generally sympathetic in his political views and temper. It thus happened that society at a distance took up a wholly wrong impression of the two men,—supposing Southey to be an ill-conditioned bigot, and Wordsworth a serene philosopher, far above being disturbed by troubles in daily life, or paying any attention to party-politics. He showed some of his ever-growing liberality, by the way, in speaking of this matter of temper. In old age, he said that the world certainly does get on in minor morals: that when he was young "everybody had a temper"; whereas now no such thing is allowed; amiability is the rule; and an imperfect temper is an offence and a misfortune of a distinctive character.

Among the letters which now and then arrived from strangers, in the early days of Wordsworth's fame, was one which might have come from Coleridge, if they had never met. It was full of admiration and sympathy, expressed as such feelings would be by a man whose analytical and speculative faculties predominated over all the rest. The writer was, indeed, in those days, marvellously like Coleridge,—subtile in analysis to excess, of gorgeous imagination, bewitching discourse, fine scholarship, with a magnificent power of promising and utter incapacity in performing, and with the same habit of intemperance in opium. By his own account, his "disease was to meditate too much and observe too little." I need hardly explain that this was De Quincey; and when I have said that, I need hardly explain further that advancing time and closer acquaintance made the likeness to Coleridge bear a smaller and smaller proportion to the whole character of the man.



Page 45

In return for his letter of admiration and sympathy, he received an invitation to the Grasmere valley. More than once he set forth to avail himself of it; but when within a few miles, the shyness under which in those days he suffered overpowered his purpose, and he turned back. After having achieved the meeting, however, he soon announced his intention of settling in the valley; and he did so, putting his wife and children eventually into the cottage which the Wordsworths had now outgrown and left. There was little in him to interest or attach a family of regular domestic habits, like the Wordsworths, given to active employment, sensible thrift, and neighborly sympathy. It was universally known that a great poem of Wordsworth's was reserved for posthumous publication, and kept under lock and key meantime. De Quincey had so remarkable a memory that he carried off by means of it the finest passage of the poem,—or that which the author considered so; and he published that passage in a magazine article, in which he gave a detailed account of the Wordsworths' household, connections, and friends, with an analysis of their characters and an exhibition of their faults. This was in 1838, a dozen years before the poet's death. The point of interest is,—How did the wronged family endure the wrong? They were quiet about it,—that is, sensible and dignified; but Wordsworth was more. A friend of his and mine was talking with him over the fire, just when De Quincey's disclosures were making the most noise, and mentioned the subject. Wordsworth begged to be spared hearing anything about them, saying that the man had long passed away from the family life and mind, and he did not wish to disturb himself about what could not be remedied. My friend acquiesced, saying, "Well, I will tell you only one thing that he says, and then we will talk of something else. He says your wife is too good for you." The old man's dim eyes lighted up instantly, and he started from his seat, and flung himself against the mantel-piece, with his back to the fire, as he cried with loud enthusiasm, "And that's *true!* *There* he is right!"

It was by his written disclosures only that De Quincey could do much mischief; for it was scarcely possible to be prejudiced by anything he could say. The whole man was grotesque; and it must have been a singular image that his neighbors in the valley preserved in their memory. A frail-looking, diminutive man, with narrow chest and round shoulders and features like those of a dying patient, walking with his hands behind him, his hat on the back of his head, and his broad lower lip projected, as if he had something on his tongue that wanted listening to,—such was his aspect; and if one joined company with him, the strangeness grew from moment to moment. His voice and its modulations were a perfect treat. As for what he had to say, it was everything from odd comment on a passing trifle, eloquent enunciation of some truth, or pregnant remark on some lofty subject,



Page 46

down to petty gossip, so delivered as to authorize a doubt whether it might not possibly be an awkward effort at observing something outside of himself, or at getting a grasp of something that he supposed actual. That he should have so supposed was his weakness, and the retribution for the peculiar intemperance which depraved his nature and alienated from their proper use powers which should have made him one of the first philosophers of his age. His singular organization was fatally deranged in its action before it could show its best quality, and his is one of the cases in which we cannot be wrong in attributing moral disease directly to physical disturbance; and it would no doubt have been dropped out of notice, if he had been able to abstain from comment on the characters and lives of other people. Justice to them compels us to accept and use the exposures he offers us of himself.

About the time of De Quincey's settlement at Grasmere, Wilson, the future CHRISTOPHER NORTH, bought the Elleray estate, on the banks of Windermere. He was then just of age,—supreme in all manly sports, physically a model man, and intellectually, brimming with philosophy and poetry. He came hither a rather spoiled child of fortune, perhaps; but he was soon sobered by a loss of property which sent him to his studies for the bar. Scott was an excellent friend to him at that time; and so strong and prophetic was Wilson's admiration of his patron, that he publicly gave him the name of "The Great Magician" before the first "Waverley Novel" was published. Within ten years from his getting a foothold on Windermere banks, he had raised periodical literature to a height unknown before in our time, by his contributions to "Blackwood's Magazine"; and he seemed to step naturally into the Moral Philosophy Chair in Edinburgh in 1820. Christopher North has perhaps conveyed to foreign, and untravelled English, readers as true a conception of our Lake scenery and its influences in one way as Wordsworth in another. The very spirit of the moorland, lake, brook, tarn, ghyll, and ridge breathes from his prose poetry: and well it might. He wandered alone for a week together beside the trout-streams and among the highest tarns. He spent whole days in his boat, coasting the bays of the lake, or floating in the centre, or lying reading in the shade of the trees on the islands. He led with a glorious pride the famous regatta on Windermere, when Canning was the guest of the Boltons at Storrs, and when Scott, Wordsworth, and Southey were of the company; and he liked almost as well steering the packet-boat from Waterhead to Bowness, till the steamer drove out the old-fashioned conveyance. He sat at the stern, immovable, with his hand on the rudder, looking beyond the company of journeymen-carpenters, fish- and butter-women, and tourists, with a gaze on the water-and-sky-line which never shifted. Sometimes a learned professor or a brother sportsman was with him; but he spoke no



Page 47

word, and kept his mouth peremptorily shut under his beard. It was a sight worth taking the voyage for; and it was worth going a long round to see him standing on the shore,—"reminding one of the first man, Adam," (as was said of him,) in his best estate,—the tall, broad frame, large head, marked features, and long hair; and the tread which shook the ground, and the voice which roused the echoes afar and made one's heart-strings vibrate within. These attributes made strangers turn to look at him on the road, and fixed all eyes on him in the ball-room at Ambleside, when any local object induced him to be a steward. Every old boatman and young angler, every hoary shepherd and primitive housewife in the uplands and dales, had an enthusiasm for him. He could enter into the solemnity of speculation with Wordsworth while floating at sunset on the lake; and not the less gamesomely could he collect a set of good fellows under the lamp at his supper-table, and take off Wordsworth's or Coleridge's monologues to the life. There was that between them which must always have precluded a close sympathy; and their faults were just what each could least allow for in another. Of Wilson's it is enough to say that Scott's injunction to him to "leave off sack, purge, and live cleanly," if he wished for the Moral Philosophy Chair, was precisely what was needed. It was still needed some time after, when, though a Professor of Moral Philosophy, he was seen, with poor Campbell, leaving a tavern one morning, in Edinburgh, haggard and red-eyed, hoarse and exhausted,—not only the feeble Campbell, but the mighty Wilson,—they having sat together twenty-four hours, discussing poetry and wine with all their united energies. This sort of thing was not to the taste of Wordsworth or Southey, any more than their special complacencies were venerable to the humor of Christopher North. Yet they could cordially admire one another; and when sorrows came over them, in dreary impartiality, they could feel reverently and deeply for each other. When Southey lost his idolized boy, Herbert, and had to watch over his insane wife, always his dearest friend, and all the dearer for her helpless and patient suffering under an impenetrable gloom,—when Wordsworth was bereaved of the daughter who made the brightness of his life in his old age,—and when Wilson was shaken to the centre by the loss of his wife, and mourned alone in the damp shades of Elleray, where he would allow not a twig to be cut from the trees she loved,—the sorrow of each moved them all. Elleray was a gloomy place then, and Wilson never surmounted the melancholy which beset him there; and he wisely parted with it some years before his death. The later depression in his case was in proportion to the earlier exhilaration. His love of Nature and of genial human intercourse had been too exuberant; and he became incapable of enjoyment from either, in his last years. He never recovered from an attack of pressure on the brain, and died paralyzed in the spring of 1854. He had before gone from among us with his joy; and then we heard that he had dropped out of life with his griefs; and our beautiful region, and the region of life, were so much the darker in a thousand eyes.



Page 48

While speaking of Elleray, we should pay a passing tribute of gratitude to an older worthy of that neighborhood,—the well-known Bishop of Llandaff, Richard Watson, who did more for the beauty of Windermere than any other person. There is nothing to praise in the damp old mansion at Calgarth, set down in low ground, and actually with its back to the lake, and its front windows commanding no view; but the woods are the glory of Bishop Watson. He was not a happy prelate, believing himself undervalued and neglected, and fretting his heart over his want of promotion; but he must have had many a blessed hour while planting those woods for which many generations will be grateful to him. Let the traveller remember him, when looking abroad from Miller Brow, near Bowness. Below lies the whole length of Windermere, from the white houses of Clappersgate, nestling under Loughrigg at the head, to the Beacon at the foot. The whole range of both shores, with their bays and coves and promontories, can be traced; and the green islands are clustered in the centre; and the whole gradation of edifices is seen, from Wray Castle, on its rising ground, to the tiny boat-houses, each on its creek. All these features are enhanced in beauty by the Calgarth woods, which cover the undulations of hill and margin beneath and around, rising and falling, spreading and contracting, with green meadows interposed, down to the white pebbly strand. To my eye, this view is unsurpassed by any in the District.

Bishop Watson's two daughters were living in the neighborhood till two years ago,—antique spinsters, presenting us with a most vivid specimen of the literary female life of the last century. They were excellent women, differing from the rest of society chiefly in their notion that superior people should show their superiority in all the acts of their lives,—that literary people should talk literature, and scientific people science, and so on; and they felt affronted, as if set down among common people, when an author talked about common things in a common way. They did their best to treat their friends to wit and polite letters; and they expected to be ministered to in the same fashion. This was rather embarrassing to visitors to whom it had never occurred to talk for any other purpose than to say what presented itself at the moment; but it is a privilege to have known those faithful sisters, and to have seen in them a good specimen of the literary society of the last century.

There is another spot in that neighborhood which strangers look up to with interest from the lake itself,—Dovenest, the abode of Mrs. Hemans for the short time of her residence at the Lakes. She saw it for the first time from the lake, as her published correspondence tells, and fell in love with it; and as it was vacant at the time, she went into it at once. Many of my readers will remember her description of the garden and the view from it, the terrace, the circular grass-plot



Page 49

with its one tall white rose-tree. "You cannot imagine," she wrote, in 1830, "how I delight in that fair, solitary, neglected-looking tree." The tree is not neglected now. Dovenest is inhabited by Mrs. Hemans's then young friend, the Rev. R.P. Graves; and it has recovered from the wildness and desolation of thirty years ago, while looking as secluded as ever among the woods on the side of Wansfell.

All this time, illustrious strangers were coming, year by year, to visit residents, or to live among the mountains for a few weeks. There was Wilberforce, spending part of a summer at Rayrigg, on the lake shore. One of his boys asked him, "Why should you not buy a house here? and then we could come every year." The reply was characteristic:—that it would be very delightful; but that the world is lying, in a manner, under the curse of God; that we have something else to do than to enjoy fine prospects; and that, though it may be allowable to taste the pleasure now and then, we ought to wait till the other life to enjoy ourselves. Such was the strait-lacing in which the good man was forever trying to compress his genial, buoyant, and grateful nature.—Scott came again and again; and Wordsworth and Southey met to do him honor. The tourist must remember the Swan Inn,—the white house beyond Grasmere, under the skirts of Helvellyn. There Scott went daily for a glass of something good, while Wordsworth's guest, and treated with the homely fare of the Grasmere cottage. One morning, his host, himself, and Southey went up to the Swan, to start thence with ponies for the ascent of Helvellyn. The innkeeper saw them coming, and accosted Scott with "Eh, Sir! ye're come early for your draught to-day!"—a disclosure which was not likely to embarrass his host at all. Wordsworth was probably the least-discomposed member of the party.—Charles Lamb and his sister once popped in unannounced on Coleridge at Keswick, and spent three weeks in the neighborhood. We can all fancy the little man on the top of Skiddaw, with his mind full as usual of quips and pranks, and struggling with the emotions of mountain-land, so new and strange to a Cockney, such as he truly described himself. His loving readers do not forget his statement of the comparative charms of Skiddaw and Fleet Street; and on the spot we quote his exclamations about the peak, and the keen air there, and the look over into Scotland, and down upon a sea of mountains which made him giddy. We are glad he came and enjoyed a day, which, as he said, would stand out like a mountain in his life; but we feel that he could never have followed his friends hither,—Coleridge and Wordsworth,—and have made himself at home. The warmth of a city and the hum of human voices all day long were necessary to his spirits. As to his passage at arms with Southey,—everybody's sympathies are with Lamb; and he only vexes us by his humility and gratitude at being pardoned by the aggressor, whom he had in fact humiliated in all eyes



Page 50

but his own. It was one of Southey's spurts of insolent bigotry; and Lamb's plea for tolerance and fair play was so sound as to make it a poor affectation in Southey to assume a pardoning air; but, if Lamb's kindly and sensitive nature could not sustain him in so virtuous an opposition, it is well that the two men did not meet on the top of Skiddaw.—Canning's visit to Storrs, on Windermere, was a great event in its day; and Lockhart tells us, in his "Life of Scott," what the regatta was like, when Wilson played Admiral, and the group of local poets, and Scott, were in the train of the statesman. Since that day, it has been a common thing for illustrious persons to appear in our valleys. Statesmen, churchmen, university-men, princes, peers, bishops, authors, artists, flock hither; and during the latter years of Wordsworth's life, the average number of strangers who called at Rydal Mount in the course of the season was eight hundred.

During the growth of the District from its wildness to this thronged state, a minor light of the region was kindling, flickering, failing, gleaming, and at last going out,—anxiously watched and tended, but to little purpose. The life of Hartley Coleridge has been published by his family; and there can, therefore, be no scruple in speaking of him here. The remembrance of him haunts us all,—almost as his ghost haunts his kind landlady. Long after his death, she used to "hear him at night laughing in his room," as he used to do when he lived there. A peculiar laugh it was, which broke out when fancies crossed him, whether he was alone or in company. Travellers used to look after him on the road, and guides and drivers were always willing to tell about him; and still his old friends almost expect to see Hartley at any turn,—the little figure, with the round face, marked by the blackest eyebrows and eyelashes, and by a smile and expression of great eccentricity. As we passed, he would make a full stop in the road, face about, take off his black-and-white straw hat, and bow down to the ground. The first glance in return was always to see whether he was sober. The Hutchinsons must remember him. He was one of the audience, when they held their concert under the sycamores in Mr. Harrison's grounds at Ambleside; and he thereupon wrote a sonnet,[A] doubtless well known in America. When I wanted his leave to publish that sonnet, in an account of "Frolics with the Hutchinsons," it was necessary to hunt him up, from public-house to public-house, early in the morning. It is because these things are universally known,—because he was seen staggering in the road, and spoken of by drivers and lax artisans as an alehouse comrade, that I speak of him here, in order that I may testify how he was beloved and cherished by the best people in his neighborhood. I can hardly speak of him myself as a personal acquaintance; for I could not venture on inviting him to my house. I saw what it was to others to be subject to day-long



Page 51

visits from him, when he would ask for wine, and talk from morning to night,—and a woman, solitary and busy, could not undertake that sort of hospitality; but I saw how forbearing his friends were, and why,—and I could sympathize in their regrets when he died. I met him in company occasionally, and never saw him sober; but I have heard from several common friends of the charm of his conversation, and the beauty of his gentle and affectionate nature. He was brought into the District when four years old; and it does not appear that he ever had a chance allowed him of growing into a sane man. Wordsworth used to say that Hartley's life's failure arose mainly from his having grown up "wild as the breeze,"—delivered over, without help or guardianship, to the vagaries of an imagination which overwhelmed all the rest of him. There was a strong constitutional likeness to his father, evident enough to all; but no pains seem to have been taken on any hand to guard him from the snare, or to invigorate his will, and aid him in self-discipline. The great catastrophe, the ruinous blow, which rendered him hopeless, is told in the Memoir; but there are particulars which help to account for it. Hartley had spent his school-days under a master as eccentric as he himself ever became. The Rev. John Dawes of Ambleside was one of the oddities that may be found in the remote places of modern England. He had no idea of restraint, for himself or his pupils; and when they arrived, punctually or not, for morning school, they sometimes found the door shut, and chalked with "Gone a-hunting," or "Gone a-fishing," or gone away somewhere or other. Then Hartley would sit down under the bridge, or in the shadow of the wood, or lie on the grass on the hill-side, and tell tales to his schoolfellows for hours. His mind was developed by the conversation of his father and his father's friends; and he himself had a great friendship with Professor Wilson, who always stood by him with a pitying love. He had this kind of discursive education, but no discipline; and when he went to college, he was at the mercy of any who courted his affection, intoxicated his imagination, and then led him into vice. His Memoir shows how he lost his fellowship at Oriel College, Oxford, at the end of his probationary year. He had been warned by the authorities against his sin of intemperance; and he bent his whole soul to get through that probationary year. For eleven months, and many days of the twelfth, he lived soberly and studied well. Then the old tempters agreed in London to go down to Oxford and get hold of Hartley. They went down on the top of the coach, got access to his room, made him drunk, and carried him with them to London; and he was not to be found when he should have passed. The story of his death is but too like this.

[Footnote A:

SONNET

TO TENNYSON, AFTER HEARING ABBY HUTCHINSON SING "THE MAY-QUEEN" AT AMBLESIDE.



Page 52

I would, my friend, indeed, thou hadst been here Last night, beneath the shadowy sycamore, To hear the lines, to me well known before, Embalmed in music so translucent clear. Each word of thine came singly to the ear, Yet all was blended in a flowing stream. It had the rich repose of summer dream, The light distinct of frosty atmosphere. Still have I loved thy verse, yet never knew How sweet it was, till woman's voice invested The pencilled outline with the living hue, And every note of feeling proved and tested. What might old Pindar be, if once again The harp and voice were trembling with his strain!

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His fellowship lost, he came, ruinously humbled, to live in this District, at first under compulsion to take pupils, whom, of course, he could not manage. On the death of his mother, an annuity was purchased for him, and paid quarterly, to keep him out of debt, if possible. He could not take care of money, and he was often hungry, and often begged the loan of a sixpence; and when the publicans made him welcome to what he pleased to have, in consideration of the company he brought together, to hear his wonderful talk, his wit, and his dreams, he was helpless in the snare. We must remember that he was a fine scholar, as well as a dreamer and a humorist; and there was no order of intellect, from the sage to the peasant, which could resist the charm of his discourse. He had taken his degree with high distinction at Oxford; and yet the old Westmoreland "statesman," who, offered whiskey and water, accepts the one and says the other can be had anywhere, would sit long to hear what Hartley had to tell of what he had seen or dreamed. At gentlemen's tables, it was a chance how he might talk,—sublimely, sweetly, or with a want of tact which made sad confusion. In the midst of the great black-frost at the close of 1848, he was at a small dinner-party at the house of a widow lady, about four miles from his lodgings. During dinner, some scandal was talked about some friends of his to whom he was warmly attached. He became excited on their behalf,—took Champagne before he had eaten enough, and, before the ladies left the table, was no longer master of himself. His host, a very young man, permitted some practical joking: brandy was ordered, and given to the unconscious Hartley; and by eleven o'clock he was clearly unfit to walk home alone. His hostess sent her footman with him, to see him home. The man took him through Ambleside, and then left him to find his way for the other two miles. The cold was as severe as any ever known in this climate; and it was six in the morning when his landlady heard some noise in the porch, and found Hartley stumbling in. She put him to bed, put hot bricks to his feet, and tried all the proper means; and in the middle of the day he insisted on getting up and going out. He called at the house of a friend, Dr. S——, near Ambleside. The kind physician scolded him for coming out, sent for a carriage, took him home, and put him to bed. He never rose again, but died on the 6th of January, 1849. The young host and the old hostess have followed him, after deeply deploring that unhappy day.



Page 53

It was sweet, as well as sorrowful, to see how he was mourned. Everybody, from his old landlady, who cared for him like a mother, to the infant-school children, missed Hartley Coleridge. I went to his funeral at Grasmere. The rapid Rotha rippled and dashed over the stones beside the churchyard; the yews rose dark from the faded grass of the graves; and in mighty contrast to both, Helvellyn stood, in wintry silence, and sheeted with spotless snow. Among the mourners Wordsworth was conspicuous, with his white hair and patriarchal aspect. He had no cause for painful emotions on his own account; for he had been a faithful friend to the doomed victim who was now beyond the reach of his tempters. While there was any hope that stern remonstrance might rouse the feeble will and strengthen the suffering conscience to relieve itself, such remonstrance was pressed; and when the case was past hope, Wordsworth's door was ever open to his old friend's son. Wordsworth could stand by that open grave without a misgiving about his own share in the scene which was here closing; and calm and simply grave he looked. He might mourn over the life; but he could scarcely grieve at the death. The grave was close behind the family group of the Wordsworth tombs. It shows, above the name and dates, a sculptured crown of thorns and Greek cross, with the legend, "By thy Cross and Passion, Good Lord, deliver me!"

One had come and gone meantime who was as express a contrast to Hartley Coleridge as could be imagined,—a man of energy, activity, stern self-discipline, and singular strength of will. Such a cast of character was an inexplicable puzzle to poor Hartley. He showed this by giving his impression of another person of the same general mode of life,—that A.B. was "a monomaniac about everything." It was to rest a hard-worked mind and body, and to satisfy a genuine need of his nature, that Dr. Arnold came here from Rugby with his family,—first, to lodgings for an occasional holiday, and afterwards to a house of his own, at Christmas and Midsummer, and with the intention of living permanently at Fox How, when he should give up his work at Rugby.

He was first at a house at the foot of Rydal Mount, at Christmas, 1831, "with the road on one side of the garden, and the Rotha on the other, which goes brawling away under our windows with its perpetual music. The higher mountains that bound our view are all snow-capped; but it is all snug, and warm, and green in the valley. Nowhere on earth have I ever seen a spot of more perfect and enjoyable beauty, with not a single object out of tune with it, look which way I will." He built Fox How, two or three years later, and at once began his course of hospitality by having lads of the sixth form as his guests,—not for purposes of study, but of recreation, and, yet more, to give them that element of education which consists in familiarity with the noblest natural scenery. The hue and cry which arose when he showed himself a reformer,



Page 54

in Church matters as in politics, followed him here, as we see by his letters; and it was not till his "Life and Correspondence" appeared that his neighbors here understood him. It has always been difficult, perhaps, for them to understand anything modern, or at all vivacious. Everybody respected Dr. Arnold for his energy and industry, his services to education, and his devotedness to human welfare; but they were afraid of his supposed opinions. Not the less heartily did he honor everything that was admirable in them; and when he was gone, they remembered his ways, and cherished every trace of him, in a manner which showed how they would have made much of him, if their own timid prejudices had not stood in the way. They point out to this day the spot where they saw him stand, without his hat, on Rotha bridge, watching the gush of the river under the wooded bank, or gazing into the basin of vapors within the *cul-de-sac* of Fairfield,—the same view which he looked on from his study, as he sat on his sofa, surrounded by books. The neighbors show the little pier at Waterhead whence he watched the morning or the evening light on the lake, the place where he bathed, and the tracks in the mountains which led to his favorite ridges. Everybody has read his "Life and Correspondence," and therefore knows what his mode of life was here, and how great was his enjoyment of it. We have all read of the mountain-trips in summer, and the skating on Rydal Lake in winter,—and how his train of children enjoyed everything with him, as far as they could. It was but for a few years; and the time never came for him to retire hither from Rugby. In June, 1842, he had completed his fourteenth year at Rugby, and was particularly in need, under some harassing cares, of the solace and repose which a few hours more would have brought him, when he was cut off by an illness of two hours. On the day when he was to have been returning to Fox How, some of his children were travelling thence to his funeral. His biographer tells us how strong was the consternation at Rugby, when the tidings spread on that Sunday morning, "Dr. Arnold is dead." Not slight was the emotion throughout this valley, when the news passed from house to house, the next day. As I write, I see the windows which were closed that day, and the trees round the house,—so grown up since he walked among them!—and the course of the Rotha, which winds and ripples at the foot of his garden. I never saw him, for I did not come here till two years after; but I have seen his widow pass on into her honored old age, and his children part off into their various homes, and their several callings in life,—to meet in the beloved house at Fox How, at Christmas, and at many another time.



Page 55

This leaves only Southey and the Wordsworths; and their ending was not far off. The old poet had seen almost too much of these endings. One day, when I found a stoppage in the road at the foot of Rydal Mount, from a sale of furniture, such as is common in this neighborhood every spring and autumn, I met Mr. Wordsworth,—not looking observant and amused, but in his blackest mood of melancholy, and evidently wanting to get out of the way. He said he did not like the sight: he had seen so many of these sales; he had seen Southey's, not long before; and these things reminded him how soon there must be a sale at Rydal Mount. It was remarked by a third person that this was rather a wilful way of being miserable; but I never saw a stronger love of life than there was in them all, even so late in their day as this. Mrs. Wordsworth, then past her three-score years and ten, observed to me that the worst of living here was that it made one so unwilling to go. It seems but lately that she said so; yet she nursed to their graves her daughter and her husband and his sister, and she herself became blind; so that it was not hard "to go," when the time came.

Southey's decline was painful to witness,—even as his beloved wife's had been to himself. He never got over her loss; and his mind was decidedly shaken before he made the second marriage which has been so much talked over. One most touching scene there was when he had become unconscious of all that was said and done around him. Mrs. Southey had been careless of her own interests about money when she married him, and had sought no protection for her own property. When there was manifestly no hope of her husband's mind ever recovering, his brother assembled the family and other witnesses, and showed them a kind of will which he had drawn up, by which Mrs. Southey's property was returned to herself, intact. He said they were all aware that their relative could not, in his condition, make a will, and that he was even unaware of what they were doing; but that it was right that they should, pledge themselves by some overt act to fulfil what would certainly have been his wish. The bowed head could not be raised, but the nerveless hand was guided to sign the instrument; and all present agreed to respect it as if it were a veritable will,—as of course they did. The decline was full of painful circumstances; and it must have been with a heart full of sorrow that Wordsworth walked over the hills to attend the funeral.

The next funeral was that of his own daughter Dora,—Mrs. Quillinan. A story has got about, as untrue as it is disagreeable, that Dora lost her health from her father's opposition to her marriage, and that Wordsworth's excessive grief after her death was owing to remorse. I can myself testify to her health having been very good for a considerable interval between that difficulty and her last illness; and this is enough, of itself, to dispose of the story. Her parents considered the marriage an imprudent one;

Page 56

but after securing sufficient time for consideration, they said that she must judge for herself; and there were fine qualities in Mr. Quillinan which could not but win their affection and substantial regard. His first wife, a friend of Dora Wordsworth's, was carried out of the house in which she had just been confined, from fire in the middle of the night; she died from the shock; and she died recommending her husband and her friend to marry. Such is the understood history of the case. After much delay they did marry, and lived near Rydal Mount, where Dora was, as always, the light of the house, as long as she could go to it. But, after a long and painful decline, she died in 1847. Her husband followed soon after Wordsworth's death. He lies in the family corner of Grasmere churchyard, between his two wives. This appeared to be the place reserved for Mrs. Wordsworth, so that Dora would lie between her parents. There seemed now to be no room left for the solitary survivor, and many wondered what would be done; but all had been thought of. Wordsworth's grave had been made deep enough for two; and there his widow now rests.

There was much vivid life in them, however clearly the end was approaching, when I first knew them in 1845. The day after my arrival at a friend's house, they called on me, excited by two kinds of interest. Wordsworth had been extremely gratified by hearing, through a book of mine, how his works were estimated by certain classes of readers in the United States; and he and Mrs. Wordsworth were eager to learn facts and opinions about mesmerism, by which I had just recovered from a long illness, and which they hoped might avail in the case of a daughter-in-law, then in a dying state abroad. After that day, I met them frequently, and was at their house, when I could go. On occasion of my first visit, I was struck by an incident which explained the ridicule we have all heard thrown on the old poet for a self-esteem which he was merely too simple to hide. Nothing could be easier than to make a quiz of what he said to me; but to me it seemed delightful. As he at once talked of his poems, I thought I might; and I observed that he might be interested in knowing which of his poems had been Dr. Channing's favorite. Seeing him really interested, I told him that I had not been many hours under Dr. Channing's roof before he brought me "The Happy Warrior," which, he said, moved him more than any other in the whole series. Wordsworth remarked,—and repeated the remark very earnestly,—that this was evidently applicable to the piece, "not as a poem, not as fulfilling the conditions of poetry, but as a chain of extremely valuable *thoughts*." Then he repeated emphatically,—"*a chain of extremely valuable thoughts!*" This was so true that it seemed as natural for him to say it as Dr. Channing, or any one else.



Page 57

It is indisputable that his mind and manners were hurt by the prominence which his life at the Lakes—a life very public, under the name of seclusion—gave, in his own eyes; to his own works and conversation; but he was less absorbed in his own objects, less solemn, less severed from ordinary men than is supposed, and has been given out by strangers, who, to the number of eight hundred in a year, have been received by him with a bow, asked to see the garden-terraces where he had meditated this and that work, and dismissed with another bow, and good wishes for their health and pleasure, —the host having, for the most part, not heard, or not attended to, the name of his visitor. I have seen him receive in that way a friend, a Commissioner of Education, whom I ventured to take with me, (a thing I very rarely did,) and in the evening have had a message asking if I knew how Mr. Wordsworth could obtain an interview with this very gentleman, who was said to be in the neighborhood. All this must be very bad for anybody; and so was the distinction of having early chosen this District for a home. When I first came, I told my friends here that I was alarmed for myself, when I saw the spirit of insolence which seemed to possess the cultivated residents, who really did virtually assume that the mountains and vales were somehow their property, or at least a privilege appropriate to superior people like themselves. Wordsworth's sonnets about the railway were a mild expression of his feelings in this direction; and Mrs. Wordsworth, in spite of her excellent sense, took up his song, and declared with unusual warmth that green fields, with daisies and buttercups, were as good for Lancashire operatives as our lakes and valleys. I proposed that the people should judge of this for themselves; but there was no end to ridicule of "the people from Birthwaite" (the end of the railway, five miles off). Some had been seen getting their dinner in the churchyard, and others inquiring how best to get up Loughrigg,—“evidently, quite puzzled, and not knowing where to go.” My reply, “that they would know next time,” was not at all sympathized in. The effect of this exclusive temper was pernicious in the neighborhood. A petition to Parliament against the railway was not brought to me, as it was well known that I would not sign it; but some little girls undertook my case; and the effect of their parroting of Mr. Wordsworth, about “ourselves” and “the common people” who intrude upon us, was as sad as it was absurd. The whole matter ended rather remarkably. When all were gone but Mrs. Wordsworth, and she was blind, a friend who was as a daughter to her remarked, one summer day, that there were some boys on the Mount in the garden. “Ah!” said Mrs. Wordsworth, “there is no end to those people;—boys from Birthwaite!—boys from Birthwaite!” It was the Prince of Wales, with a companion or two.



Page 58

The notion of Wordsworth's solemnity and sublimity, as something unremitting, was a total mistake. It probably arose from the want of proportion in his mind, as in his sister's, before referred to. But he relished the common business of life, and not only could take in, but originate a joke. I remember his quizzing a common friend of ours,—one much esteemed by us all,—who had a wonderful ability of falling asleep in an instant, when not talking. Mr. Wordsworth told me of the extreme eagerness of this gentleman, Mrs. Wordsworth, and himself, to see the view over Switzerland from the ridge of the Jura. Mrs. Wordsworth could not walk so fast as the gentlemen, and her husband let the friend go on by himself. When they arrived, a minute or two after him, they found him sitting on a stone in face of all Switzerland, fast asleep. When Mr. Wordsworth mimicked the sleep, with his head on one side, anybody could have told whom he was quizzing.—He and Mrs. Wordsworth, but too naturally impressed with the mischief of overwalking in the case of women, took up a wholly mistaken notion that I walked too much. One day I was returning from a circuit of ten miles with a guest, when we met the Wordsworths. They asked where we had been. “By Red Bank to Grasmere.” Whereupon Mr. Wordsworth laid his hand on my guest's arm, saying, “There, there! take care what you are about! don't let her lead you about! I can tell you, she has killed off half the gentlemen in the county!”—Mrs. Hemans tells us, that, before she had known him many hours, she was saying to him, “Dear me, Mr. Wordsworth! how can you be so giddy?”

His interest in common things never failed. It has been observed that he and Mrs. Wordsworth did incalculable good by the example they unconsciously set the neighborhood of respectable thrift. There are no really poor people at Rydal, because the great lady at the Hall, Lady Le Fleming, takes care that there shall be none,—at the expense of great moral mischief. But there is a prevalent recklessness, grossness, and mingled extravagance and discomfort in the family management, which, I am told, was far worse when the Wordsworths came than it is now. Going freely among the neighbors, and welcoming and helping them familiarly, the Wordsworths laid their own lives open to observation; and the mingled carefulness and comfort—the good thrift, in short—wrought as a powerful lesson all around. As for what I myself saw,—they took a practical interest in my small purchase of land for my abode; and Mr. Wordsworth often came to consult upon the plan and progress of the house. He used to lie on the grass, beside the young oaks, before the foundations were dug; and he referred me to Mrs. Wordsworth as the best possible authority about the placing of windows and beds. He climbed to the upper rooms before there was a staircase; and we had to set Mrs. Wordsworth as a watch over him, when there was a staircase, but no balustrade. When the garden was laid out,



Page 59

he planted a stone-pine (which is flourishing) under the terrace-wall, washed his hands in the watering-pot, and gave the place and me at once his blessing and some thrifty counsel. When I began farming, he told me an immense deal about his cow; and both of them came to see my first calf, and ascertain whether she had the proper marks of the handsome short-horn of the region. The distinctive impression which the family made on the minds of the people about them was that of practical ability; and it was thoroughly well conveyed by the remark of a man at Rydal, on hearing some talk of Mrs. Wordsworth, a few days after the poet's death: —“She's a gay [rare] clever body, who will carry on the business as well as any of 'em.”

Nothing could be more affecting than to watch the silent changes in Mrs. Wordsworth's spirits during the ten years which followed the death of her daughter. For many months her husband's gloom was terrible, in the evenings, or in dull weather. Neither of them could see to read much; and the poet was not one who ever pretended to restrain his emotions, or assume a cheerfulness which he did not feel. We all knew that the mother's heart was the bereaved one, however impressed the father's imagination might be by the picture of his own desolation; and we saw her mute about her own trial, and growing whiter in the face and smaller from month to month, while he put no restraint upon his tears and lamentations. The winter evenings were dreary; and in hot summer days the aged wife had to follow him, when he was missed for any time, lest he should be sitting in the sun without his hat. Often she found him asleep on the heated rock. His final illness was wearing and dreary to her; but there her part was clear, and she was adequate to it. “You are going to Dora,” she whispered to him, when the issue was no longer doubtful. She thought he did not hear or heed; but some hours after, when some one opened the curtain, he said, “Are you Dora?” Composed and cheerful in the prospect of his approaching rest, and absolutely without solicitude for herself, the wife was everything to him till the last moment; and when he was gone, the anxieties of the self-forgetting woman were over. She attended his funeral, and afterwards chose to fill her accustomed place among the guests who filled the house. She made tea that evening as usual; and the lightening of her spirits from that time forward was evident. It was a lovely April day, the 23d, (Shakspeare's birth—and death-day,) when her task of nursing closed. The news spread fast that the old poet was gone; and we all naturally turned our eyes up to the roof under which he lay. There, above and amidst the young green of the woods, the modest dwelling shone in the sunlight. The smoke went up thin and straight into the air; but the closed windows gave the place a look of death. There he was lying whom we should see no more.



Page 60

The poor sister remained for five years longer. Travellers, American and others, must remember having found the garden-gate locked at Rydal Mount, and perceiving the reason why, in seeing a little garden-chair, with an emaciated old lady in it, drawn by a nurse round and round the gravelled space before the house. That was Miss Wordsworth, taking her daily exercise. It was a great trouble, at times, that she could not be placed in some safe privacy; and Wordsworth's feudal loyalty was put to a severe test in the matter. It had been settled that a cottage should be built for his sister, in a field of his, beyond the garden. The plan was made, and the turf marked out, and the digging about to begin, when the great lady at the Hall, Lady Le Fleming, interfered with a prohibition. She assumed the feudal prerogative of determining what should or should not be built on all the lands over which the Le Flemings have borne sway; and her extraordinary determination was, that no dwelling should be built, except on the site of a former one! We could scarcely believe we had not been carried back into the Middle Ages, when we heard it; but the old poet, whom any sovereign in Europe would have been delighted to gratify, submitted with a good grace, and thenceforth robbed his sister's feet, and coaxed and humored her at home,—trusting his guests to put up with the inconveniences of her state, as he could not remove them from sight and hearing. After she was gone also, Mrs. Wordsworth, entirely blind, and above eighty years of age, seemed to have no cares, except when the errors and troubles of others touched her judgment or sympathy. She was well cared for by nieces and friends. Her plain common sense and cheerfulness appeared in one of the last things she said, a few hours before her death. She remarked on the character of the old hymns, practical and familiar, which people liked when she was young, and which answered some purposes better than the sublimer modern sort. She repeated part of a child's hymn,—very homely, about going straight to school, and taking care of the books, and learning the lesson well,—and broke off, saying, "There! if you want to hear the rest, ask the Bishop o' London. *He* knows it."

Then, all were gone; and there remained only the melancholy breaking up of the old home which had been interesting to the world for forty-six years. Mrs. Wordsworth died in January, 1859. In the May following, the sale took place which Wordsworth had gloomily foreseen so many years before. Everything of value was reserved, and the few articles desired by strangers were bought by commission; and thus the throng at the sale was composed of the ordinary elements. The spectacle was sufficiently painful to make it natural for old friends to stay away. Doors and windows stood wide. The sofa and tea-table where the wisest and best from all parts of the world had held converse were turned out to be examined and bid for. Anybody



Page 61

who chose passed the sacred threshold; the auctioneer's hammer was heard on the terrace; and the hospitable parlor and kitchen were crowded with people swallowing tea in the intervals of their business. One farmer rode six-and-thirty miles that morning to carry home something that had belonged to Wordsworth; and, in default of anything better, he took a patched old table-cover. There was a bed of anemones under the windows, at one end of the house; and a bed of anemones is a treasure in our climate. It was in full bloom in the morning; and before sunset, every blossom was gone, and the bed was trampled into ruin. It was dreary work! The two sons live at a distance; and the house is let to tenants of another name.

I perceive that I have not noticed the poet's laureateship. The truth is, the office never seemed to belong to him; and we forgot it, when not specially reminded of it. We did not like to think of him in court-dress, going through the ceremonies of levee or ball, in his old age. His white hair and dim eyes were better at home among the mountains.

There stand the mountains, from age to age; and there run the rivers, with their full and never-pausing tide, while those who came to live and grow wise beside them are all gone! One after another, they have lain down to their everlasting rest in the valleys where their step and their voices were as familiar as the points of the scenery. The region has changed much since they came as to a retreat. It was they who caused the change, for the most part; and it was not for them to complain of it; but the consequence is, that with them has passed away a peculiar phase of life in England. It is one which can neither be continued nor repeated. The Lake District is no longer a retreat; and any other retreat must have different characteristics, and be illumined by some different order of lights. The case being so, I have felt no scruple in asking the attention of my readers to a long story, and to full details of some of the latest Lights of the Lake District.

PINK AND BLUE.

Everybody knows that a *departing* guest has the most to say. The touch of the door-knob sends to his lips a thousand things which *must* be told. Is it strange, then, that old people, knowing they have "made out their visit," and feeling themselves brimful of wisdom and experience, should wish to speak from the fulness of their hearts to those whom they must so shortly leave?

Nobody thinks it strange. The world expects it, and, as a general thing, bears it patiently. Knowing how universal is this spirit of forbearance, I should, perhaps, have forever held my peace, lest I might abuse good-nature, had it not been for some circumstances which will be related a little farther on.



Page 62

My little place of business (I am the goldsmith of our village) has long been the daily resort of several of my particular cronies. They are men of good minds,—some of them quite literary; for we count, as belonging to our set, the lawyer, the schoolmaster, the doctor, men of business, men of no business, and sometimes even the minister. As may be supposed, our discussions take a wide range: I can give no better notion of *how wide* than to say that we discuss everything in the papers. Yesterday was a snow-storm, but the meeting was held just the same. It was in the afternoon. The schoolmaster came in late with a new magazine, from which he read, now and then, for the general edification.

“Ah!” said he, “if this be true, we can all write for the papers.”

“How’s that?” we asked.

“Why, it says here, that, if the true experience of any human heart were written, it would be worth more than the best tale ever invented.”

It was a terribly stormy day. The snow came whirling against the two windows of my shop, clinging to the outside, making it twilight within. I had given up work; for my eyes are not what they were, and I have to favor them. Nobody spoke for a while; all had been set to thinking. Those few words had sent us all back, back, back, thirty, forty, fifty years, to call up the past. We were gazing upon forms long since perished, listening to voices long ago hushed forever. Could those forms have been summoned before us, how crowded would have been my little shop! Could those voices have been heard, how terrible the discord, the cries of the wretched mingling with the shouts of the happy ones! There was a dead silence. The past was being questioned. Would it reply?

At last some one said,—

“Try it.”

“But,” said another, “it would fill a whole book.”

“Take up one branch, then; for instance, our—well, our courting-days. Let each one tell how he won his wife.”

“But shall we get any money by it?”

“To be sure we shall. Do you think people write for nothing? ‘*Worth more*’ are the very words used; ‘worth more’ *what?* Money, of course.”

“But what shall we do with all our money?”

“Buy a library for the use of us all. We will draw lots to see who shall write first; and if he succeeds, the others can follow in order.”



And thus we agreed.

I was rather sorry the lot fell upon me; for I was always bashful, and never thought much of myself but once. I think my bashfulness was mostly owing to my knowing myself to be not very good-looking. I believe that I am not considered a bad-looking old man; indeed, people who remember me at twenty-five say that I have grown handsome every year since.

I do not intend giving a description of myself at that age, but shall confine myself principally to what was suggested by my friend, as above mentioned,—namely, how I won my wife.



Page 63

It is astonishing how a man may be deluded. Knowing, as I did, just the facts in the case, regarding my face and figure, yet the last day of the year 1817 found me in the full belief that I was quite a good-looking and every way a desirable young man. This was the third article in my creed. The second was, that Eleanor Sherman loved me; and the first, that I loved her. It is curious how I became settled in the third article by means of the second.

I had spent hours before my looking-glass, trying to make it give in that I was good-looking. But never was a glass so set in its way. In vain I used my best arguments, pleaded before it hour after hour, re-brushed my hair, re-tied my cravat, smiled, bowed, and so forth, and so forth. "Ill-looking and awkward!" was my only response. At last it went so far as to intimate that I had, with all the rest, a *conceited* look. This was not to be borne, and I withdrew in disgust. The argument should be carried on in my own heart. Pure reasoning only was trustworthy. Philosophers assured us that our senses were not to be trusted. How easy and straightforward the mental process! "Eleanor loves me; therefore I cannot look ill!"

It was on the last day of the year I have mentioned, that, just having, for the fortieth time, arrived at the above conclusion, I prepared to go forth upon the most delightful of all possible errands. All day I had been dwelling upon it, wondering at what hour it would be most proper to go. At three o'clock, I arrayed myself in my Sunday-clothes. I gave a parting glance of triumph at my glass, and stepped briskly forth upon the crispy snow. I met people well wrapped up, with mouth and nose covered, and saw men leave working to thrash their hands. It must have been cold, therefore; but I felt none of it.

Her house was half a mile distant. 'T was on a high bank a little back from the road, of one story in front, and two at the sides. It was what was called a single house; the front showed only two windows, with a door near the corner. The sides were painted yellow, the front white, with a green door. There was an orchard behind, and two poplar-trees before it. The pathway up the bank was sprinkled with ashes. I had frequently been as far as the door with her, evenings when I waited upon her home; but I had never before approached the house by daylight,—that is, any nearer than the road. I had never *said* anything; it wasn't time; but I had given her several little things, and had tried to be her beau every way that I knew.

Before I began to notice her, I had never been about much with the young folks,—partly because I was bashful, and partly because I was so clumsy-looking. I was more in earnest, therefore, than if I had been in the habit of running after the girls. After I began to like her, I watched every motion,—at church, at evening meetings, at singing-school; and a glance from her eye seemed to fall right upon my heart. She had been very friendly and sociable with me, always thanked me very prettily for what little trifles I gave her, and never refused my company home. She would put her hand within my arm without a moment's hesitation, chatting all the while, never seeming in the least to

suspect the shiver of joy which shot through my whole frame from the little hand upon my coat-sleeve.



Page 64

I had long been pondering in my mind, in my walks by day and my lyings-down at night, what should be the next step, what *overt act* I might commit; for something told me it was not yet time to say anything.

What could have been more fortunate for my wishes, then, than the project set on foot by the young people, of a grand sleighing-party on New-Year's evening? They were mostly younger than myself, especially the girls. Eleanor was but seventeen, I was twenty-three. But I determined to join this party, and it was to invite Eleanor that I arrayed myself and set forth, as above mentioned. It was a bold step for a bashful man,—I mean now the *inviting* part.

I had thought over, coming along, just what words I should use; but, as I mounted the bank, I felt the words, ideas, and all, slipping out at the ends of my fingers. If it had been a thickly settled place, I should not have thought much about being watched; but, as there was only one house in sight, I was sure that not a motion was lost, that my proceedings would be duly reported, and discussed by the whole village. All these considerations rendered my situation upon the stone step at the front-door very peculiar.

I knew the family were in the back part of the house; for the shutters of the front-room were tightly closed, as, indeed, they always were, except on grand occasions. Nevertheless, knocking at the front-door seemed the right thing to do, and I did it. With a terrible choking in my throat, and wondering all the while *who* would come to open, I did it. I knocked three times. Nobody came. Peddlers, I had observed in like cases, opened the outside door and knocked at the inner. I tried this with no better result. I then ventured to open the inner door softly, and with feelings of awe I stood alone in the spare-room.

By the light which streamed in through the holes in the tops of the shutters I distinguished the green painted chairs backed up stiffly against the wall, the striped homespun carpet, andirons crossed in the fireplace, with shovel and tongs to match, the big Bible on the table under the glass, a *waxwork* on the high mahogany desk in the corner, and a few shells and other ornaments upon the mantelshelf.

The terrible order and gloom oppressed me. I felt that it was no slight thing to venture thus unbidden into the spare-room,—the room set apart from common uses, and opened only on great occasions: evening-meetings, weddings, or funerals. But, in the midst of all my tribulation, one other thought would come,—I don't exactly like to tell it, but then I believe I promised to keep nothing back;—well, then, if I must,—I thought that this spare-room was the place where Eleanor would make up the fire, when—when I was far enough along to come regularly every Sunday night. With that thought my courage revived. I heard voices in the next room, the pounding of a flat-iron, and a frequent step across the floor. I gave a loud rap. The door opened, and Eleanor herself appeared. She had on a spotted calico gown, with a string of gold beads around her neck. She held in her hand a piece of fan coral. I felt myself turning all colors,

stammered, hesitated, and believed in my heart that she would think me a fool. Very likely she did; for I really suppose that she never, till then, thought that I *meant anything*.



Page 65

She contrived, however, to pick out my meaning from the midst of the odd words and parts of sentences offered her, and replied that she would let me know that evening. As she did not invite me to the kitchen, the only thing left me to do was to say good-afternoon and depart. I don't know which were the queerest,—my feelings in going up or in coming down the bank.

When fairly in the road, happening to glance back at the house, I saw that one half of a shutter was open, and that a man was watching me. He drew back before I could recognize him. That evening was singing-school. That was why I went to invite Eleanor in the afternoon. I was afraid some other fellow would ask her before school was out.

When I got there, I found all the young folks gathered about the stove. Something was going on. I pressed in, and found Harry Harlow. He had been gone a year at sea, and had arrived that forenoon in the stage from Boston. They were all listening to his wonderful stories.

When school was over, I stepped up close to Eleanor and offered my arm. She drew back a little, and handed me a small package. Harry stepped up on the other side. She took his arm, and they went off slowly together. I stood still a moment to watch them. When they turned the corner, I went off alone. Confounded, wonder-struck, I plunged on through the snow-drifts, seeing, feeling, knowing nothing but the package in my hand. I found mother sitting by the fire. She and I lived together,—she and I, and that was all. I knew I should find her with her little round table drawn up to the fire, her work laid aside, and the Bible open. She never went to bed with me out.

I didn't want to tell her. I wouldn't for the world, if I could have had the opening of my package all to myself. She asked me if I had fastened the back-door. I sat down by the fire and slowly undid the string. A silver thimble fell on the bricks. There was also an artificial flower made of feathers, a copy of verses headed "To a Pair of Bright Eyes," cut from the county newspaper, a cherry-colored neck-ribbon, a smelling-bottle, and, at the bottom, a note. I knew well enough what was in the note.

"MR. ALLEN,—

"I must decline your invitation to the sleigh-ride; and I hope you will not be offended, if I ask you not to go about with me any more. I think you are a very good young man, and, as an acquaintance, I like you very much.

"Respectfully yours,

"ELEANOR SHERMAN.

"P.S.—With this note you will find the things you have given me."



I took the iron tongs which stood near, picked up the thimble and dropped it into the midst of the hot coals, then the flower, then the verses, then the ribbon, then the smelling-bottle, and would gladly have added myself.



Page 66

My mother and I were everything to each other. We two were all that remained of a large family. I had always confided in her; but still I was sorry that I had opened the package there. I might have taken it to my chamber. But then she would have known, she *must* have known from my manner, that something was wrong with me. I think, on the whole, I was glad to have her know the worst. I knew that my mother worshipped me; but she was not one of those who let their feelings be seen on common occasions. I gave her the note, and no more was needed. She tried to comfort me, as mothers will; but I would not be comforted. It was my first great heart-trouble, and I was weighed down beneath it. She drew me towards her, I leaned my head upon her shoulder, and was not ashamed that she knew of the hot tears upon my cheeks. At last I heard her murmuring softly,—

“Oh, what shall I do? He is all I have, and he is so miserable! How can I bear his sorrow?”

I think it was the recollection of these words which induced me afterwards to hide my feelings, that she might not suffer on my account.

The next day was clear and bright. The sleighing was perfect. I was miserable. I had not slept. I could not eat. I dared not go into the village to encounter the jokes which I was certain awaited me there. Early in the evening, just as the moon rose, I took my stand behind a clump of trees, half-way up a hill, where I knew the sleighs must pass.

There I stood, feeling neither cold nor weariness, waiting, watching, listening for the sleigh-bells. At last I heard them, first faintly, then louder and louder, until they reached the bottom of the hill. Slowly they came up, passing, one after another, by my hiding-place. There were ten sleighs in all. She and Harry were in the fourth. The moon shone full in their faces, and his looked just as I had often felt; but I had never dared to show it as Harry did. I felt sure that he would kiss her. A blue coverlet was wrapped around them, and he was tucking it in on her side. The hill was steep just there, so that they were obliged to move quite slowly. They were talking earnestly, and I heard my name. I was not sure at first; but afterwards I knew.

“I never thought of his being in earnest before. He is a great deal older than I, and I never thought that anybody so homely and awkward as he could suppose”—

“Jingle, jingle, jingle,” and that was all I heard. I held myself still, watched the sleighs disappear, one after another, over the brow of the hill, listened till the last note of the last bell was lost in the distance, then turned and ran.

I ran as if I had left my misery behind, and every step were taking me farther from it. But when I reached home, there it was, aching, aching in my heart, just the same as before. And there it stayed. Even now, I can hardly bear to think of those terrible days and nights. But for my mother’s sake I tried to seem cheerful, though I no longer went

about with the young folks. I applied myself closely to my business, sawed my mother's wood for exercise, learned to paint, and read novels and poetry for amusement.



Page 67

Thus time passed on. The little boys began to call themselves young men, and me an old *bach*; and into this character I contentedly settled down. My wild oats, of which I had had but scant measure, I considered sown. My sense of my own ill-looks became morbid. I hardly looked at a female except my mother, lest she'd think that I "*could suppose*." The old set were mostly married off. Eleanor married the young sailor. People spoke of her as being high-tempered, as being extravagant, spending in fine clothes the money he earned at the risk of his life. I don't know that it made any difference to my feelings. It might. At the time she turned me off, I think I should have married her, knowing she had those faults. But she removed to the city, and by degrees time and absence wore off the edge of my grief. My mother lost part of her little property, and I was obliged to exert myself that she might miss none of her accustomed comforts. She was a good mother, thoughtful and tender, sympathizing not only in my troubles, but in my every-day pursuits, my work, my books, my paintings.

When I was about thirty, Jane Wood came to live near us. Her mother and young sister came with her. They rented a small house just across the next field from us. Although ours, therefore, might have been considered an infected neighborhood, yet I never supposed myself in the slightest danger, because I had had the disease. Nevertheless, having an abiding sense of my own ugliness, I should not have ventured into the immediate presence of the Woods, *except* on works of necessity and mercy.

The younger sister was taken very ill with the typhus fever. It was customary, in our village, for the neighbors, in such cases, to be very helpful. Mother was with them day and night, and, when she could not go herself, used to send me to see if they wanted anything, for they had no men-folks.

I seldom saw Jane, and when I did, I never looked at her. I mean, I did not look her full in the face. It was to her mother that I made all my offers of assistance.

This habit of shunning the society of all young females, and particularly of the Wood girls, was by no means occasioned by any fears in regard to my own safety. Far from it. I considered myself as one set apart from all mankind,—set apart, and fenced in, by my own personal disadvantages. The thought of my caring for a girl, or of being cared for by a girl, never even occurred to me. "Taboo," so far as I was concerned, was written upon them all. The marriage state I saw from afar off. Beautiful and bright it looked in the distance, like the Promised Land to true believers. Some visions I beheld of its beautiful angels walking in shining robes; strains of its sweet melody were sometimes wafted across the distance; but I might never enter there. It was no land of promise to me. A gulf, dark and impassable, lay between. And beside all this, as I have already intimated, I considered myself out of danger. My life's lesson had been learned. I knew it by heart. What more could be expected of me?



Page 68

But, after all, we can't go right against our natures; and it is not the nature of man to look upon the youthful and the elderly female exactly in the same light. The feelings with which they are approached are essentially different, whether he who approaches be seventeen or seventy. Thus, in conversing with the old lady Wood, I was quite at my ease. When the invalid began to get well, I often carried her nice little messes, which my mother prepared, and was generally lucky enough to find Mrs. Wood,—for I always went in at the back-door. She asked me, one day, if I could lend Ellen something to read,—for she was then just about well enough to amuse herself with a book, but not strong enough to work. Now I always had (so my mother said) a kind and obliging way with me, and had, besides, a great pride in my library. I was delighted that anybody wanted to read my books, and hurried home to make a selection.

That very afternoon, I took over an armful. Nobody was in the kitchen; so I sat down to wait. The door of the little keeping-room was open, and I knew by their voices that some great discussion was going on. I tipped over a cricket to make them aware of my presence. The door was opened wide, and Mrs. Wood appeared.

“Now here is Mr. Allen,” she exclaimed. “Let us get his opinion.”

Then she took me in, where they were holding solemn council over a straw bonnet and various colored ribbons. She introduced me to Ellen, whom I had never before met. She was a merry-looking, black-eyed maiden, and the roses were already blooming out again upon her cheeks. She was very young,—not more than fifteen or sixteen.

“Now, Mr. Allen,” said Jane, (she was not so bashful to me as I was to her,) “let us have your opinion upon these trimmings. Remember, though, that pink and blue can't go together.”

She turned her face full upon me, and I looked straight into her eyes. I really believe it was the first time I had done so. They were beautifully blue, with long dark lashes. She had been a little excited by the discussion, and her cheeks were like two roses. A strange boldness came over me.

“How can I remember that,” I answered, “when I see in your face that pink and blue *do* go together?”

Never, till within a few years, could I account for this sudden boldness. I have now no doubt that I spoke by what spiritualists call “impression.” We were all surprised, and I most of all. Jane laughed, and looked pinker than before. She would as soon have expected a compliment from the town pump, and I felt it.

I knew nothing of bonnets, but I had studied painting, and was a judge of colors. I made a selection, and could see that they were again surprised at my good taste. I then offered my books, spoke of the different authors, turned to what I thought might



particularly please them, and, before I knew it, was all aglow with the unusual excitement of conversation. I saw that they were not without cultivation, and that they had a quick appreciation of literary merit.



Page 69

And thus an acquaintance commenced. I called often, for it seemed a pleasant thing to do. As my excuse, I took with me my books, papers, and all the new publications which reached me. I always thought they appeared very glad to see me.

Being strangers in the place, they saw but little company, and it seemed to be nothing more than my duty to call in now and then in a neighborly way. I talked quite easily; for among books I felt at home. They talked easily, too; for they (I say it in no ill-natured way) were women. They began to consider my frequent calling as a matter of course, and always smiled upon me when I entered. I felt that they congratulated themselves upon finding me out. They had penetrated the ice, and found open sea beyond. I speak of it in this way, because I afterwards overheard Ellen joking her sister about discovering the Northwest Passage to my heart.

This was in the fall of the year, when the evenings were getting quite long. They were fond of reading, but had not much time for it. I was fond of reading, and had many long evenings at my disposal. It followed, therefore, that I read aloud, while they worked. With the "Pink and Blue" just opposite, I read evening after evening. At first I used to look up frequently, to see how such and such a passage would strike her; but one evening Ellen asked me, in a laughing, half-saucy sort of way, why I didn't look at *her* sometimes to see how *she* liked things. This made me color up; and Jane colored up, too. After that I kept my eyes on my book; but I always knew when she stopped her work and raised her head at the interesting parts, and always hoped she didn't see the red flushes spreading over my face, and always wished, too, that she would look away,—for, somehow, my voice would not go on smoothly.

Those red flushes were to myself most mysterious. Nevertheless, they continued, and even appeared to be on the increase. At first, I felt them only while reading; then, upon entering the room; and at last they began to come before I got across the field. Still I felt no real uneasiness, but, on the contrary, was glad I could be of so much use to the family. Never before was the want of men-folks felt so little by a family of women-folks. I did errands, split kindling, dug "tracks," (*i. e.*, paths in the snow,) and glued broken furniture.

I always thought of Jane as "Pink and Blue." Sometimes I thought from her manner that she would a little rather I wouldn't come so often. I thought she didn't look up at me so pleasantly as she used to at first, and seemed a little stiff; but, as I had a majority in my favor, I continued my visits. I always had one good look at her when I said good-night; but it made the red come, so that I had to hurry out before she saw. It seemed to me that her cheeks then looked pinker than ever, and the two colors, pink and blue, seemed to mingle and float before my eyes all the way home. "Pink and blue," "pink and blue." How those two little words kept running in my head, and, I began to fear, in my heart too!—for no sooner would I close my eyes at night than those delicate pink cheeks and blue eyes would appear before me. They haunted my dreams, and were all ready to greet me at waking.



Page 70

I was completely puzzled. It reminded me of old times. Seemed just like being in love again. Could it be possible that I was liable to a second attack?

One night I took a new book and hurried across the field to the Woods', for I never was easy till I saw "Pink and Blue" face to face; and then,—why, then, I was not at all easy. I felt the red flushes coming long before I reached the house. As soon as I entered the room, I felt that she was missing. I must have looked blank; for Mrs. Wood began to explain immediately, that Jane was not well, and had gone to bed;—nothing serious; but she had thought it better for her not to sit up. I remained and read as usual, but, as it seemed to me, to bare walls. I had become so accustomed to reading with "Pink and Blue" just opposite, to watching for the dropping of her work and the raising of her eyes to my face, that I really seemed on this occasion to be reading to no purpose whatever. I went home earlier than usual, very sober and very full of thought. My mother noticed it, and inquired if they were well at Mrs. Wood's. So I told her about Jane.

That night my eyes were fully opened. I was in love. Yes, the old disease was upon me, and my last state was worse than my first,—just as much so as Jane was superior to Eleanor. The discovery threw me into the greatest distress. Hour after hour I walked the floor, in my own chamber, trying to reason the love from my heart,—but in vain; and at length, tossing myself on the bed, I almost cursed the hour in which I first saw the Woods. I called myself fool, dolt, idiot, for thus running my head a second time into the noose. It may seem strange, but the thought that she might possibly care for me never once occurred to my mind. Eleanor's words in the sleigh still rang in my ears: "I never thought that anybody so homely and awkward could suppose"—No, I must not "suppose." Once, in the midst of it all, I calmed down, took a light, and, very deliberately walking to the glass, took a complete view of my face and figure,—but with no other effect than to settle me more firmly in my wretchedness. Towards morning I grew calmer, and resolved to look composedly upon my condition, and decide what should be done.

While I was considering whether or not to continue my visits at the Woods', I fell asleep just where I had thrown myself, outside the bed, in overcoat and boots. I dreamed of seeing "Pink and Blue" carried off by some horrid monster,—which, upon examination, proved to be myself. The sun shining in my face woke me, and I remembered that I had decided upon nothing. The best thing seemed to be to snap off the acquaintance and quit the place. But then I could not leave my mother. No, I must keep where I was,—and if I kept where I was, I must keep on at the Woods',—and if I kept on at the Woods', I should keep on feeling just as I did, and perhaps—more so. I resolved, finally, to remain where I was, and to take no abrupt step, (which might cause remark,)



Page 71

but to break off my visits gradually. The first week, I could skip one night,—the next, two,—and so on,—using my own judgment about tapering off the acquaintance gradually and gracefully to an imperceptible point. The way appearing plain at last, how that *unloving* might be made easy, I assumed a cheerful air, and went down to breakfast. My mother looked up rather anxiously at my entrance; but her anxiety evidently vanished at sight of my face.

It did not seem to me quite right to forsake the Woods that morning; for some snow had fallen during the night, and I felt it incumbent upon me to dig somewhat about the doors. With my trousers tucked into my boots, I trod a new path across the field. It would have seemed strange not to go in; so I went in and warmed my feet at the kitchen-fire. Only Mrs. Wood was there; but I made no inquiries. Not knowing what to say, I rose to go; but, just at that minute, the mischievous Ellen came running out of the keeping-room and wanted to know where I was going. Why didn't I come in and see Jane? So I went in to see Jane, saying my prayers, as I went,—that is, praying that I might not grow foolish again. But I did. I don't believe any man could have helped it. She was reclining upon a couch which was drawn towards the fire. I sat down as far from that couch as the size of the room would allow. She looked pale and really ill, but raised her blue eyes when she said good-morning; and then—the hot flushes began to come. She looked red, too, and I thought she had a settled fever. I wanted to say something, but didn't know what. Some things seemed too warm, others too cold. At last I thought,—“Why, *anybody* can say to anybody, ‘How do you do?’” So I said,—

“Miss Wood, how do you do, this morning?”

She looked up, surprised; for I tried hard to stiffen my words, and had succeeded admirably.

“Not very unwell, I thank you, Sir,” she replied; but I knew she was worse than the night before. My situation grew unbearable, and I rose to go.

“Mr. Allen, what do you think about Jane?” said Ellen. “You know about sickness, don't you? Come, feel her pulse, and see if she will have a fever.” And she drew me towards the lounge.

My heart was in my throat, and my face was on fire. Jane flushed up, and I thought she was offended at my presumption. What could I do? Ellen held out to me the little soft hand; but I dared not touch it, unless I asked her first.

“Miss Wood,” I asked, “shall I mind Ellen?”

“Of course you will,” exclaimed Ellen. “Tell him yes, Jane.”



Then Jane smiled and said,—

“Yes, if he is willing.”

And I took her wrist in my thumb and finger. The pulse was quick and the skin dry and hot. I think I would have given a year's existence to clasp that hand between my own, and to stroke down her hair. I hardly knew how I didn't do it; and the fear that I should made me drop her arm in a hurry, as if it had burned my fingers. Ellen stared. I bade them good-morning abruptly, and left the room and the house. “This, then,” I thought, as I strode along towards the village, “is the beginning of the ending!”



Page 72

That evening, I felt in duty bound to go, as a neighbor, to inquire for the sick. I went, but found no one below. When Ellen came down, she said that Jane was quite ill. I remained in the keeping-room all the evening, mostly alone, asked if I could do anything for them, and obtained some commissions for the next day at the village.

Jane's illness, though long, was not dangerous,—at least, not to her. To me it was most perilous, particularly the convalescence; for then I could be of so much use to her! The days were long and spring-like. Wild flowers appeared. She liked them, and I managed that she should never be without a bunch of them. She liked paintings, and I brought over my own portfolio. She must have wondered at the number of violets and roses therein. The readings went on and seemed more delicious than ever. I owned a horse and chaise, and for a whole week debated whether it would be safe for me to take her to drive. But I didn't; for I should have been obliged to hand her in, to help her out, and to sit close beside her all alone. All that could never be done without my betraying myself. But she got well without any drives; and by the latter part of April, when the evenings had become very short, I thought it high time to begin to skip one. I began on Monday. I kept away all day, all the evening, and all the next day. Tuesday evening, just before dark, I took the path across the field. The two girls were at work making a flower-garden. "Pink and Blue" had a spade, and was actually spading up the ground. I caught it from her hand so quickly that she looked up almost frightened. Her face was flushed with exercise; but her blue eyes looked tired. How I reproached myself for not coming sooner! At dark, I went in with them. We took our accustomed seats, and I read. "Paradise regained" was what I kept thinking of. Once, when I moved my seat, that I might be directly opposite Jane, who was lying on the coach, I thought I saw Ellen and her mother exchange glances. I was suspected, then,—and with all the pains I had taken, too. This rather upset me; and what with my joy at being with Jane, my exertions to hide it, and my mortification at being discovered, my reading, I fear, was far from satisfactory.

The next morning I went early to the flower-garden, and, before anybody was stirring, had it all hoed and raked over, so that no more hard work could be done there. I didn't go in. Thursday night I went again, and again Saturday night. The next week I skipped two evenings, and the next, three, and flattered myself I was doing bravely. Jane never asked me why I came so seldom, but Ellen did frequently; and I always replied that I was very busy. Those were truly days of suffering. Nevertheless, having formed my resolution, I determined to abide by it. God only knew what it cost me. On the beautiful May mornings, and during the long "after tea," which always comes into country-life, I could watch them, watch her, from my window, while the planting, watering, and weeding went on in the flower-garden. I saw them go in at dark, saw the light appear in the keeping-room, and fancied them sitting at their work, wondering, perhaps, that nobody came to read to them.



Page 73

One day, when I had not been there for three days and nights, I received, while at work in my shop, a sudden summons from home. My mother, the little boy said, was very sick. I hurried home in great agitation. I could not bear the thought that sickness or death should reach my dear mother. Mrs. Wood met me at the door, to say that a physician had been sent for, but that my mother was relieved and there was no immediate danger. I hurried to her chamber and found—Jane by her bedside. For all my anxiety about my mother, I felt the hot flush spreading over my face. It seemed so good to see her taking care of my mother! In my agitation, I caught hold of her hand and spoke before I thought.

“Oh, Jane,” I whispered, “I am so glad you are here!”

Her face turned as red as fire. I thought she was angry at my boldness, or, perhaps, because I called her Jane.

“Excuse me,” said I. “I am so agitated about mother that I hardly know what I am about.”

When the doctor came, he gave hopes that my mother would recover; but she never did. She suffered little, but grew weaker and weaker every day. Jane was with her day and night; for my mother liked her about her bed better than anybody. Oh, what a strange two weeks were those! My mother was so much to me, how could I give her up? She was the only person on earth who cared for me, and she must die! Yet side by side in my heart with this great grief was the great joy of living, day after day, night after night, under the same roof with Jane. By necessity thrown constantly with her, feeling bound to see that she, too, did not get sick, with watching and weariness,—yet feeling myself obliged to measure my words, to keep up an unnatural stiffness, lest I should break down, and she know all my weakness!

At last all was over,—my mother was dead. It is of no use,—I never can put into words the frenzied state of my feelings at that time. I had not even the poor comfort of grieving like other people. I ground my teeth and almost cursed myself, when the feeling would come that sorrow for my mother’s death was mingled with regrets that there was no longer any excuse for my remaining in the same neighborhood with Jane. I reproached myself with having made my mother’s death-bed a place of happiness; for my conscience told me that those two weeks had been, in one sense, the happiest of my life.

By what I then experienced I knew that our connection must be broken off entirely. Half-way work had already been tried too long. Sitting by the dead body of my mother, gazing upon that face which, ever since I could remember, had reflected my own joys and sorrows, I resolved to decide once for all upon my future course. I was without a single tie. In all the wide world, not a person cared whether I lived or died. One part of

the wide world, then, was as good for me as another. There was but one little spot where I must not remain; all the



Page 74

rest was free to me. I took the map of the world. I was a little past thirty, healthy, and should probably, accidents excepted, live out the time allotted to man. I divided the land mapped out before me into fifteen portions. I would live two years in each; then, being an old man, I would gradually draw nearer to this forbidden "little spot," inquire what had become of the Woods, and settle down in the same little house, patiently to await my summons. My future life being thus all mapped out, I arose with calmness to perform various little duties which yet remained to be done before the funeral could take place.

Beautiful flowers were in the room; a few white ones were at my mother's breast. Jane brought them. She had done everything, and I had not even thanked her. How could I, in that stiff way I had adopted towards her?

My father was buried beneath an elm-tree, at the farthest corner of the garden. I had my mother laid by his side. When the funeral was over, Mrs. Wood and her daughters remained at the house to arrange matters somewhat, and to give directions to the young servant, who was now my only housekeeper. At one time I was left alone with Jane; the others were up stairs. Feeling that any emotion on my part might reasonably be attributed to my affliction, I resolved to thank her for her kindness. I rushed suddenly up to her, and, seizing her hand, pressed it between my own.

"I want to thank you, Jane," I began, "but—I cannot."

And I could not, for I trembled all over, and something choked me so that I could not speak more.

"Oh, don't, Mr. Allen!" she said; and the tone in which she uttered the words startled me.

It seemed as if they came from the very depths of her being. Feeling that I could not control myself, I rushed out and gained my own chamber. What passed there between myself and my great affliction can never be told.

In a week's time all was ready for my departure. I gave away part of the furniture to some poor relations of my father's. My mother's clothing and the silver spoons, which were marked with her maiden name, I locked up in a trunk, and asked Mrs. Wood to take care of it. She inquired where I was going, and I said I didn't know. I didn't, for I was not to decide until I reached Boston. I think she thought my mind was impaired by grief, and it was. I spent the last evening there. They knew I was to start the next forenoon in the stage, and they really seemed very sober. No reading was thought of. Jane had her knitting-work, and Mrs. Wood busied herself about her mending. The witchy little Ellen was quite serious. She sat in a low chair by the fire, sometimes stirring up the coals and sometimes the conversation. Jane appeared restless. I feared she was overwearyed with watching and her long attendance on my mother, for her face

was pale and she had a headache. She left the room several times. I felt uneasy while she was out; but no less so when she came back,—for there was a strange look about her eyes.



Page 75

At last I summoned all my courage and rose to depart.

“I will not say good-bye,” I said, in a strange, hollow voice; “I will only shake hands, and bid you good-night.”

I shook hands with them all,—Jane last. Her hand was as cold as clay. I dared not try to speak, but rushed abruptly from the house. Another long night of misery!

When I judged, from the sounds below stairs, that my little servant had breakfast ready, I went down and forced myself to eat; for I was feeling deathly faint, and knew I needed food. I gave directions for the disposition of some remaining articles, and for closing the house, then walked rapidly towards the public-house in the village, where my trunks had already been carried. I was very glad that I should not have to pass the Woods'. I saw the girls out in their garden just before I left, and took a last long look, but was sorry I did; it did me no good.

I was to go to Boston in the stage, and then take a vessel to New York, whence I might sail for any part of the world. When I arrived at the tavern, the Boston stage was just in, and the driver handed me a letter. It was from the mate of the vessel, saying that his sailing would be delayed two days, and requesting me to take a message from him to his family, who lived in a small village six miles back from what was called the stage-road. I went on horseback, performed my errand, dined with the family, and returned at dark to the inn. After supper, it occurred to me to go to the Woods' and surprise them. I wanted to see just what they were doing, and just how they looked,—just how *she* looked. But a moment's reflection convinced me that I had much better not. But be quiet I could not, and I strolled out of the back-door of the inn, and so into a wide field behind. There was a moon, but swift dark clouds were flying across it, causing alternate light and shadow. I strayed on through field and meadow, hardly knowing whither I went, yet with a half-consciousness that I should find myself at the end by my mother's grave. I felt, therefore, no surprise when I saw that I was approaching, through a field at the back of my garden, the old elm-tree. As I drew near the grave, the moon, appearing from behind a cloud, showed me the form of a woman leaning against the tree. She wore no bonnet,—nothing but a shawl thrown over her head. Her face was turned from me, but I knew those features, even in the indistinct moonlight, and my heart gave a sudden leap, as I pressed eagerly forward. She turned in affright, half screamed, half ran, then, recognizing me, remained still as a statue.

“Mr. Allen, you here? I thought you were gone,” she said, at last.

“Jane, you here?” said I. “You ought not; the night is damp; you will get sick.”

Nevertheless, I went on talking, told what had detained me, described my journey and visit, and inquired after her family, as if I had been a month absent. I never talked so easily before; for I knew she was not looking in my face, and forgot how my voice might

betray me. I spoke of my mother, of how much she was to me, of my utter loneliness, and even of my plans for the future.



Page 76

“But I am keeping you too long,” I exclaimed, at last; “this evening air is bad; you must go home.”

I walked along with her, up through the garden, and along the road towards her house. I did not offer my arm, for I dared not trust myself so near. The evening wind was cool, and I took off my hat to let it blow upon my forehead, for my head was hot and my brain in a whirl. We came to a stop at the gate, beneath an apple-tree, then in full bloom. I think now that my mind at that time was not—exactly sound. The severe mental discipline which I had forced upon myself, the long striving to subdue the strongest feelings of a man’s heart, together with my real heart-grief at my mother’s death, were enough, certainly, to craze any one. I was crazy; for I only meant to say “Good-bye,” but I said, “Good-bye, Jane; I would give the world to stay, but I must go.” I thought I was going to take her hand; but, instead of that, I took her face between my own two hands, and turned it up towards mine. First I kissed her cheeks. “That is for the pink,” I said. Then her eyes. “And that is for the blue. And now I go. You won’t care, will you, Jane, that I kissed you? I shall never trouble you any more; you know you will never see me again. Good-bye, Jane!”

I grasped her hand tightly and turned away. I thought I was off, but she did not let go my hand. I paused, as if to hear what she had to say. She had hitherto spoken but little; she had no need, for I had talked with all the rapidity of insanity. She tried to speak now, but her voice was husky, and she almost whispered.

“Why do you go?” she asked.

“Because I *must*, Jane,” I replied. “I *must* go.”

“And *why* must you go?” she asked.

“Oh, Jane, don’t ask me why I must go; you wouldn’t, if you knew”—

There I stopped. She spoke again. There was a strange tone in her voice, and I could feel that she was trembling all over.

“*Don’t* go, Henry.”

Never before had she called me Henry, and this, together with her strong emotion and the desire she expressed for me to stay, shot a bright thought of joy through my soul. It was the very first moment that I had entertained the possibility of her caring for me. I seemed another being. Strange thoughts flashed like lightning across my mind. My resolve was taken.

“Who cares whether I go or stay?” I asked.

“*I* care,” said she.



I took both her hands in mine, and, looking full in her face, said, in a low voice,—

“Jane, *how much* do you care?”

“A whole heart full,” she replied, in a voice as low and as earnest as my own.

She was leaning on the fence; I leaned back beside her, for I grew sick and faint, thinking of the great joy that might be coming.

“Jane,” said I, solemnly, “you wouldn’t *marry me*, would you?”

“Certainly not,” she replied. “How can I, when you have never asked me?”



Page 77

“Jane,” said I, and my voice sounded strange even to myself, “I hope you are not trifling;—you never would dare, did you know the state I am in, that I *have* been in for—oh, so long! But I can’t have hidden all my love. Can’t you see how my life almost is hanging upon your answer? Jane, do you love me, and will you be my wife?”

“Henry,” she replied, softly, but firmly, “I *do* love you. I have loved you a long, long time, and I shall be proud to be your wife, if—you think me worthy.”

It was more than I could bear. The sleepless nights, the days of almost entire fasting, together with all my troubles, had been too much for me. I was weak in body and in mind.

“Oh, Jane!” was all I could say. Then, leaning my head upon her shoulder, I cried like a child. It didn’t seem childish then.

“Oh, but, Henry, I won’t, then, if you feel so badly about it,” said she, half laughing. Then, changing her tone, she begged me to become calm. But in vain. The barriers were broken down, and the tide of emotion, long suppressed, must gush forth. She evidently came to this conclusion. She stood quiet and silent, and at last began timidly stroking my hair. I shall never forget the first touch of her hand upon my forehead. It soothed me, or else my emotion was spent; for, after a while, I became quite still.

“Oh, Jane,” I whispered, “my sorrow I could bear; but this strange happiness overwhelms me. Can it be true? Oh, it is a fearful thing to be so happy! How came you to love me, Jane? You are so beautiful, and I—I am so”——

“You are so good, Henry!” she exclaimed, earnestly,—“too good for me! You are a true-hearted, noble soul, worthy the love of any woman. If you weren’t so bashful,” she continued, in a lower tone, “I should not say so much; but—do you suppose nobody is happy but yourself? There is somebody who scarcely more than an hour ago was weeping bitter tears, feeling that the greatest joy of her life was gone forever. But now her joy has returned to her, her heart is glad, she trembles with happiness. Oh, Henry, ‘it is a fearful thing to be so happy!’”

I could not answer; so I drew her close up to me. She was mine now, and why should I not press her closely to my heart,—that heart so brimful of love for her? There was a little bench at the foot of the apple-tree, and there I made her sit down by me and answer the many eager questions I had to ask. I forgot all about the dampness and the evening air. She told how her mother had liked me from the first,—how they were informed, by some few acquaintances they had made in the village, of my early disappointment, and also of the peculiar state of mind into which I was thrown by those early troubles; but when she began to love me she couldn’t tell. She had often thought I cared for her,—mentioned the day when I found her at my mother’s bedside, also the

day of the funeral; but so well had I controlled my feelings that she was never sure until that night.



Page 78

“I trust you will not think me unmaidenly, Henry,” said she, looking timidly up in my face. “You won’t think worse of me, will you, for—for almost offering myself to you?”

There was but one answer to this, and I failed not to give it. ’Twas a very earnest answer, and she drew back a little. Her voice grew lower and lower, while she told how, at my shaking hands the night before, she almost fainted,—how she longed to say “Stay,” but dared not, for I was so stiff and cold: how could she say, “Don’t go, Mr. Allen; please stay and marry me”?—how she passed a wretched night and day, and walked out at evening to be alone,—how she felt that she could go nowhere but to my mother’s grave,—and, finally, how overwhelmed with joy she was when I came upon her so suddenly.

All this she told me, speaking softly and slowly, for which I was thankful; for I liked to feel the sweet words of healing, dropping one by one upon my heart.

In the midst of our talk, we heard the front-door of the house open.

“They are coming to look for me,” said Jane. “You will go in?”

Hand in hand we walked up the pathway. We met Ellen half-way down. She started with surprise at seeing me.

“Why, Mr. Allen!” she exclaimed, “I thought you a hundred miles off. Why, Jane, mother was afraid you had fallen down the well.”

She tripped gayly into the house.

“Mother!” she called out,—“you sent me for one, and I have brought you two.”

Jane and I walked in hand in hand; for I would not let her go. Her mother looked surprised, but well pleased.

“Mrs. Wood,” said I, “Jane has asked me to stay, and I am going to.”

Nothing more was needed; our faces told the rest.

“Now Heaven be praised,” she replied, “that we are still to have you with us! I could not help thinking, that, if you only knew how much we cared for you, you would not have been in such a hurry to leave us.” And she glanced significantly towards Jane.

The rest of the evening was spent in the most interesting explanations. I passed the night at the village inn, as I had intended,—passed it, not in sleep, but in planning and replanning, and in trying to persuade myself that “Pink and Blue” was my own to keep.



The next day I spent at the Woods'. It was the first really happy day of my life. In the afternoon, I took a long walk with Jane, through green lanes, and orchards white and fragrant with blossoms. In the evening, the family assembled, and we held sweet council together. It was decided unanimously, that, situated as I was, there was no reason for delaying the wedding,—that I should repossess myself of the furniture I had given away, by giving new in exchange, the old being dearer to both Jane and myself, —and, finally, that our wedding should be very quiet, and should take place as soon as Jane could be got ready. Through it all I sat like one in a dream, assenting to everything, for everything seemed very desirable.



Page 79

As soon as possible, I reopened my house, and established myself there with the same little servant. It took Jane about a month to get ready, and it took me some years to feel wholly my own happiness.

The old house is still standing; but after Mrs. Wood died, and Ellen was married, we moved into the village; for the railroad came very near us, cutting right through the path “across the field.” I had the bodies of my father and mother removed to the new cemetery.

My wife has been to me a lifelong blessing, my heart’s joy and comfort. They who have not tried it can never know how much love there is in a woman’s heart. The pink still lingers on her cheek, and her blue eye has that same expression which so bewitched me in my younger days. The spell has never been broken. I am an old man and she is an old woman, and, though I don’t do it before folks, lest they call us two old fools, yet, when I come in and find her all alone, I am free to own that I do hug and kiss her, and always mean to. If anybody is inclined to laugh, let him just come and see how beautiful she is.

Our sons are away now, and all our daughters are married but one. I’m glad they haven’t taken her,—she looks so much as her mother did when I first knew her. Her name is Jane Wood Allen. She goes in the village by the name of Jennie Allen; but I like Jane better,—Jane Wood.

That is a true account of “How I won my wife.”

POMEGRANATE-FLOWERS.

The street was narrow, close, and dark,
And flanked with antique masonry,
The shelving eaves left for an ark
But one long strip of summer sky.
But one long line to bless the eye—
The thin white cloud lay not so high,
Only some brown bird, skimming nigh,
From wings whence all the dew was dry
Shook down a dream of forest scents,
Of odorous blooms and sweet contents,
Upon the weary passers-by.

Ah, few but haggard brows had part
Below that street’s uneven crown,
And there the murmurs of the mart
Swarmed faint as hums of drowsy noon.



With voices chiming in quaint tune
From sun-soaked hulls long wharves adown,
The singing sailors rough and brown
Won far melodious renown,
Here, listening children ceasing play,
And mothers sad their well-a-way,
In this old breezy sea-board town.

Ablaze on distant banks she knew,
Spreading their bowls to catch the sun,
Magnificent Dutch tulips grew
With pompous color overrun.
By light and snow from heaven won
Their misty web azaleas spun;
Low lilies pale as any nun,
Their pensile bells rang one by one;
And spicing all the summer air
Gold honeysuckles everywhere
Their trumpets blew in unison.



Page 80

Than where blood-cored carnations stood
She fancied richer hues might be,
Scents rarer than the purple hood
Curled over in the fleur-de-lis.
Small skill in learned names had she,
Yet whatso wealth of land or sea
Had ever stored her memory,
She decked its varied imagery
Where, in the highest of the row
Upon a sill more white than snow,
She nourished a pomegranate-tree.

Some lover from a foreign clime,
Some roving gallant of the main,
Had brought it on a gay spring-time,
And told her of the nacar stain
The thing would wear when bloomed again.
Therefore all garden growths in vain
Their glowing ranks swept through her brain,
The plant was knit by subtile chain
To all the balm of Southern zones,
The incenses of Eastern thrones,
The tinkling hem of Aaron's train.

The almond shaking in the sun
On some high place ere day begin,
Where winds of myrrh and cinnamon
Between the tossing plumes have been,
It called before her, and its kin
The fragrant savage balaustine
Grown from the ruined ravelin
That tawny leopards couch them in;
But this, if rolling in from seas
It only caught the salt-fumed breeze,
Would have a grace they might not win.

And for the fruit that it should bring,
One globe she pictured, bright and near,
Crimson, and thoroughly perfuming
All airs that brush its shining sphere.
In its translucent atmosphere
Afrite and Princess reappear,—
Through painted panes the scattered spear
Of sunrise scarce so warm and clear,—



And pulped with such a golden juice,
Ambrosial, that one cannot choose
But find the thought most sumptuous cheer.

Of all fair women she was queen,
And all her beauty, late and soon,
O'ercame you like the mellow sheen
Of some serene autumnal noon.
Her presence like a sweetest tune
Accorded all your thoughts in one.
Than last year's alder-tufts in June
Browner, yet lustrous as a moon
Her eyes glowed on you, and her hair
With such an air as princes wear
She trimmed black-braided in a crown.

A perfect peace prepared her days,
Few were her wants and small her care,
No weary thoughts perplexed her ways,
She hardly knew if she were fair.

Bent lightly at her needle there
In that small room stair over stair,
All fancies blithe and debonair
She deftly wrought on fabrics rare,
All clustered moss, all drifting snow,
All trailing vines, all flowers that blow,
Her daedal fingers laid them bare.

Still at the slowly spreading leaves
She glanced up ever and anon,
If yet the shadow of the eaves
Had paled the dark gloss they put on.
But while her smile like sunlight shone,
The life danced to such blossom blown
That all the roses ever known,
Blanche of Provence, Noisette, or Yonne,
Wore no such tint as this pale streak
That damasked half the rounding cheek
Of each bud great to bursting grown.



Page 81

And when the perfect flower lay free,
Like some great moth whose gorgeous wings
Fan o'er the husk unconsciously,
Silken, in airy balancings,—
She saw all gay dishevellings
Of fairy flags, whose revellings
Illumine night's enchanted rings.
So royal red no blood of kings
She thought, and Summer in the room
Sealed her escutcheon on their bloom,
In the glad girl's imaginings.

Now, said she, in the heart of the woods
The sweet south-winds assert their power,
And blow apart the snowy snoods
Of trilliums in their thrice-green bower.
Now all the swamps are flushed with dower
Of viscid pink, where, hour by hour,
The bees swim amorous, and a shower
Reddens the stream where cardinals tower.
Far lost in fern of fragrant stir
Her fancies roam, for unto her
All Nature came in this one flower.

Sometimes she set it on the ledge
That it might not be quite forlorn
Of wind and sky, where o'er the edge,
Some gaudy petal, slowly borne,
Fluttered to earth in careless scorn,
Caught, for a fallen piece of morn
From kindling vapors loosely shorn,
By urchins ragged and wayworn,
Who saw, high on the stone embossed,
A laughing face, a hand that tossed
A prodigal spray just freshly torn.

What wizard hints across them fleet,—
These heirs of all the town's thick sin,
Swift gypsies of the tortuous street,
With childhood yet on cheek and chin!
What voices dropping through the din
An airy murmuring begin,—
These floating flakes, so fine and thin,
Were they and rock-laid earth akin?



Some woman of the gods was she,
The generous maiden in her glee?
And did whole forests grow within?

A tissue rare as the hoar-frost,
White as the mists spring dawns condemn,
The shadowy wrinkles round her lost,
She wrought with branch and anadem,
Through the fine meshes netting them,
Pomegranate-flower and leaf and stem.
Dropping it o'er her diadem
To float below her gold-stitched hem,
Some duchess through the court should sail
Hazed in the cloud of this white veil,
As when a rain-drop mists a gem.

Her tresses once when this was done,
—Vanished the skein, the needle bare,—
She dressed with wreaths vermilion
Bright as a trumpet's dazzling blare.
Nor knew that in Queen Dido's hair,
Loading the Carthaginian air,
Ancestral blossoms flamed as fair
As any ever hanging there.
While o'er her cheek their scarlet gleam
Shot down a vivid varying beam,
Like sunshine on a brown-bronzed pear.

And then the veil thrown over her,
The vapor of the snowy lace
Fell downward, as the gossamer
Tossed from the autumn winds' wild race
Falls round some garden-statue's grace.
Beneath, the blushes on her face
Fled with the Naiad's shifting chase
When flashing through a watery space.
And in the dusky mirror glanced
A splendid phantom, where there danced
All brilliances in paler trace.



Page 82

A spicery of sweet perfume,
As if from regions rankly green
And these rich hoards of bud and bloom,
Lay every waft of air between.
Out of some heaven's unfancied screen
The gorgeous vision seemed to lean.
The Oriental kings have seen
Less beauty in their dais-queen,
And any limner's pencil then
Had drawn the eternal love of men,
But twice Chance will not intervene.

For soon with scarce a loving sigh
She lifts it off half unaware,
While through the clinging folds held high,
Arachnean in a silver snare
Her rosy fingers nimbly fare,
Till gathered square with dainty care.
But still she leaves the flowery flare
—Such as Dame Venus' self might wear—
Where first she placed them, since they blow
More bounteous color hanging so,
And seem more native to the air.

Anon the mellow twilight came
With breath of quiet gently freed
From sunset's felt but unseen flame.
Then by her casement wheeled in speed
Strange films, and half the wings indeed
That steam in rainbows o'er the mead,
Now magnified in mystery, lead
Great revolutions to her heed.
And leaning out, the night o'erhead,
Wind-tossed in many a shining thread,
Hung one long scarf of glittering brede.

Then as it drew its streamers there,
And furled its sails to fill and flaunt
Along fresh firmaments of air
When ancient morn renewed his chant,—
She sighed in thinking on the plant
Drooping so languidly aslant;
Fancied some fierce noon's forest-haunt
Where wild red things loll forth and pant,



Their golden antlers wave, and still
Sigh for a shower that shall distil
The largess gracious nights do grant.

The oleanders in the South
Drape gray hills with their rose, she thought,
The yellow-tasselled broom through drouth
Bathing in half a heaven is caught.
Jasmine and myrtle flowers are sought
By winds that leave them fragrance-fraught.
To them the wild bee's path is taught,
The crystal spheres of rain are brought,
Beside them on some silent spray
The nightingales sing night away,
The darkness woos them in such sort.

But this, close shut beneath a roof,
Knows not the night, the tranquil spell,
The stillness of the wildwood ouphe,
The magic dropped on moor and fell.
No cool dew soothes its fiery shell,
Nor any star, a red sardel,
Swings painted there as in a well.
Dyed like a stream of muscadel
No white-skinned snake coils in its cup
To drink its soul of sweetness up,
A honeyed hermit in his cell.

No humming-bird in emerald coat,
Shedding the light, and bearing fain
His ebon spear, while at his throat
The ruby corselet sparkles plain,
On wings of misty speed astain
With amber lustres, hangs amain,
And tireless hums his happy strain;
Emperor of some primeval reign,
Over the ages sails to spill
The luscious juice of this, and thrill
Its very heart with blissful pain.



Page 83

As if the flowers had taken flight
Or as the crusted gems should shoot
From hidden hollows, or as the light
Had blossomed into prisms to flute
Its secret that before was mute,
Atoms where fire and tint dispute,
No humming-birds here hunt their fruit.
No burly bee with banded suit
Here dusts him, no full ray by stealth
Sifts through it stained with warmer wealth
Where fair fierce butterflies salute.

Nor night nor day brings to my tree,
She thought, the free air's choice extremes,
But yet it grows as joyfully
And floods my chamber with its beams,
So that some tropic land it seems
Where oranges with ruddy gleams,
And aloes, whose weird flowers the creams
Of long rich centuries one deems,
Wave through the softness of the gloom,—
And these may blush a deeper bloom
Because they gladden so my dreams.

The sudden street-lights in moresque
Broke through her tender murmuring,
And on her ceiling shades grotesque
Reeled in a bacchanalian swing.
Then all things swam, and like a ring
Of bubbles welling from a spring
Breaking in deepest coloring
Flower-spirits paid her minist'ring.
Sleep, fusing all her senses, soon
Fanned over her in drowsy rune
All night long a pomegranate wing.

* * * * *

THE PRAIRIE STATE.

On the head-waters of the Wabash, near Lake Erie, we first meet with those grassy plains to which the early French explorers of the West gave the name of Prairies. In Southern Michigan, they become more frequent; in the State of Indiana, still more so; and when we arrive in Illinois, we find ourselves in the Prairie State proper, three-



quarters of its territory being open meadow, or prairie. Southern Wisconsin is partly of this character, and, on crossing the Mississippi, most of the surface of both Iowa and Minnesota is also prairie.

Illinois, with little exception, is one vast prairie,—dotted, it is true, with groves, and intersected with belts of timber, but still one great open plain. This State, then, being the type of the prairie lands, a sketch of its history, political, physical, and agricultural, will tolerably well represent that of the whole prairie region.

The State of Illinois was originally part of Florida, and belonged to Spain, by the usual tenure of European title in the sixteenth century, when the King of France or Spain was endowed by His Holiness with half a continent; the rights of the occupants of the soil never for a moment being considered. So the Spaniard, in 1541, having planted his flag at the mouth of the Mississippi, became possessed of the whole of the vast region watered by its tributary streams, and Illinois and Wisconsin became Spanish colonies, and all their native inhabitants vassals of His Most Catholic Majesty. The settlement of the country was, however, never attempted by the Spaniards, who devoted themselves to their more lucrative colonies in South America.



Page 84

The French missionaries and fur-traders found their way from Canada into these parts at an early day; and in 1667 Robert de la Salle made his celebrated explorations, in which he took possession of the territory of Illinois in behalf of the French crown. And here we may remark, that the relations of the Jesuits and early explorers give a delightful picture of the native inhabitants of the prairies. Compared with their savage neighbors, the Illini seem to have been a favored people. The climate was mild, and the soil so fertile as to afford liberal returns even to their rude husbandry; the rivers and lakes abounded in fish and fowl; the groves swarmed with deer and turkeys,—bustards the French called them, after the large gallinaceous bird which they remembered on the plains of Normandy; and the vast expanse of the prairies was blackened by herds of wild cattle, or buffaloes. The influence of this fair and fertile land seems to have been felt by its inhabitants. They came to meet Father Marquette, offering the calumet, brilliant with many-colored plumes, with the gracious greeting,—“How beautiful is the sun, O Frenchman, when thou comest to us! Thou shalt enter in peace all our dwellings.” A very different reception from that offered by the stern savages of Jamestown and Plymouth to John Smith and Miles Standish! So, in peace and plenty, remained for many years this paradise in the prairies.

About the year 1700, Illinois was included in Louisiana, and came under the sway of Louis XIV., who, in 1712, presented to Anthony Crozat the whole territory of Louisiana, Illinois, and Wisconsin,—a truly royal gift!

The fortunate recipient, however, having spent vast sums upon the territory without any returns, surrendered his grant to the crown a few years afterwards; and a trading company, called the Company of the Indies, was got up by the famous John Law, on the basis of these lands. The history of that earliest of Western land-speculations is too well known to need repetition; suffice it to say, that it was conducted upon a scale of magnificence in comparison with which our modern imitations in 1836 and 1856 were feeble indeed. A monument of it stood not many years ago upon the banks of the Mississippi, in the ruins of Fort Chartres, which was built by Law when at the height of his fortune, at a cost of several millions of livres, and which toppled over into the river in a recent inundation.

In 1759 the French power in North America was broken forever by Wolfe, upon the Plains of Abraham; and in 1763, by the Treaty of Paris, all the French possessions upon this continent were ceded to England, and the territory of the Illinois became part of the British empire.

Pontiac, the famous Ottawa chief, after fighting bravely on the French side through the war, refused to be transferred with the territory; he repaired to Illinois, where he was killed by a Peoria Indian. His tribe, the Ottawas, with their allies, the Pottawattomies and Chippewas, in revenge, made war upon the Peorias and their confederates, the Kaskaskias and Cahoklas, in which contest these latter tribes were nearly exterminated.



Page 85

At this time, the French population of Illinois amounted to about three thousand persons, who were settled along the Mississippi and Illinois rivers, where their descendants remain to this day, preserving a well-defined national character in the midst of the great flood of Anglo-American immigration which rolls around them.

Illinois remained under British rule till the year 1778, when George Rogers Clarke, with four companies of Virginia rangers, marched from Williamsburg, a distance of thirteen hundred miles, through a hostile wilderness, captured the British posts of Kaskaskia and Cahokia, and annexed a territory larger than Great Britain to the new Republic. Many of Colonel Clarke's rangers, pleased with the beauty and fertility of the country, settled in Illinois; but the Indians were so numerous and hostile, that the settlers were obliged to live in fortified stations, or block-houses, and the population remained very scanty for many years.

In 1809 Illinois was made into a separate Territory, and Ninian Edwards appointed its first Governor.

During the War of 1812, Tecumseh, an Indian chief of remarkable ability, endeavored to form a coalition of all the tribes against the Americans, but with only partial success. He inflicted severe losses upon them, but was finally defeated and slain at the Battle of the Thames, leaving behind him the reputation of being the greatest hero and noblest patriot of his race.

In 1818, Illinois, then having a population of about forty-five thousand, was admitted into the Union. The State was formed out of that territory which by the Ordinance of 1787 was dedicated to freedom; but there was a strong party in the State who wished for the introduction of slavery, and in order to effect this it was necessary to call a convention to amend the Constitution. On this arose a desperate contest between the two principles, and it ended in the triumph of freedom. Among those opposed to the introduction of slavery were Morris Birkbeck, Governor Coles, David Blackwell, Judge Lockwood, and Daniel P. Cook. It was a fitting memorial of the latter, that the County of Cook, containing the great commercial city of Chicago, should bear his name. The names of the pro-slavery leaders we will leave to oblivion.

In 1824 the lead mines near Galena began to be worked to advantage, and thousands of persons from Southern Illinois and Missouri swarmed thither. The Illinoisans ran up the river in the spring, worked in the mines during the summer, and returned to their homes down the river in the autumn,—thus resembling in their migrations the fish so common in the Western waters, called the Sucker. It was also observed that great hordes of uncouth ruffians came up to the mines from Missouri, and it was therefore said that she had vomited forth all her worst population. Thenceforth the Missourians were called "Pukes," and the people of Illinois "Suckers."



Page 86

From 1818 to 1830, the commerce of the State made but small progress. At this time, there were one or two small steamboats upon the Illinois River, but most of the navigation was carried on in keel-boats. The village merchants were mere retailers; they purchased no produce, except a few skins and furs, and a little beeswax and honey. The farmers along the rivers did their own shipping,—building flat-boats, which, having loaded with corn, flour, and bacon, they would float down to New Orleans, which was the only market accessible to them. The voyage was long, tedious, and expensive, and when the farmer arrived, he found himself in a strange city, where all were combined against him, and often he was cheated out of his property,—returning on foot by a long and dangerous journey to a desolate farm, which had been neglected during his absence. Thus two crops were sometimes lost in taking one to market.

The manners and customs of the people were simple and primitive. The costume of the men was a raccoon-skin cap, linsey hunting-shirt, buck-skin leggings and moccasins, with a butcher-knife in the belt. The women wore cotton or woollen frocks, striped with blue dye and Turkey-red, and spun, woven, and made with their own hands; they went barefooted and bareheaded, except on Sundays, when they covered the head with a cotton handkerchief. It is told of a certain John Grammar, for many years a representative from Union County, and a man of some note in the State councils, though he could neither read nor write, that in 1816, when he was first elected, lacking the necessary apparel, he and his sons gathered a large quantity of hazel-nuts, which they took to the nearest town and sold for enough blue strouding to make a suit of clothes. The pattern proved to be scanty, and the women of the household could only get out a very bob-tailed coat and leggings. With these Mr. Grammar started for Kaskaskia, the seat of government, and these he continued to wear till the passage of an appropriation bill enabled him to buy a civilized pair of breeches.

The distinctions in manners and dress between the higher and lower classes were more marked than at present; for while John Grammar wore blue strouding, we are told that Governor Edwards dressed in fine broadcloth, white-topped boots, and a gold-laced cloak, and rode about the country in a fine carriage, driven by a negro.

In those days justice was administered without much parade or ceremony. The judges held their courts mostly in log houses or in the bar-rooms of taverns, fitted up with a temporary bench for the judge, and chairs for the lawyers and jurors. At the first Circuit Court in Washington County, held by Judge John Reynolds, the sheriff, on opening the court, went out into the yard, and said to the people, "Boys, come in; our John is going to hold court." The judges were unwilling to decide questions of law, preferring to submit everything to the jury, and seldom



Page 87

gave them instructions, if they could avoid it. A certain judge, being ambitious to show his learning, gave very pointed directions to the jury, but they could not agree on a verdict. The judge asked the cause of their difference, when the foreman answered with great simplicity,—“Why, Judge, this 'ere's the difficulty: the jury wants to know whether that 'ar what you told us, when we went out, was r'aly the law, or whether it was on'y jist your notion.”

In the spring of 1831, Black Hawk, a Sac chief, dissatisfied with the treaty by which his tribe had been removed across the Mississippi, recrossed the river at the head of three or four hundred warriors, and drove away the white settlers from his old lands near the mouth of the Rock River. This was considered an invasion of the State, and Governor Reynolds called for volunteers. Fifteen hundred men answered the summons, and the Indians were driven out. The next spring, however, Black Hawk returned with a larger force, and commenced hostilities by killing some settlers on Indian Creek, not far from Ottawa. A large force of volunteers was again called out, but in the first encounter the whites were beaten, which success encouraged the Sacs and Foxes so much that they spread themselves over the whole of the country between the Mississippi and the Lake, and kept up a desultory warfare for three or four months against the volunteer troops. About the middle of July, a body of volunteers under General Henry of Illinois pursued the Indians into Wisconsin, and by forced marches brought them to action near the Mississippi, before the United States troops, under General Atkinson, could come up. The Indians fought desperately, but were unable to stand long before the courage and superior numbers of the whites. They escaped across the river with the loss of nearly three hundred, killed in the action, or drowned in the retreat. The loss of the Illinois volunteers was about thirty, killed and wounded.

This defeat entirely broke the power of the Sacs and Foxes, and they sued for peace. Black Hawk, and some of his head men, were taken prisoners, and kept in confinement for several months, when, after a tour through the country, to show them the numbers and power of the whites, they were set at liberty on the west side of the Mississippi. In 1840 Black Hawk died, at the age of eighty years, on the banks of the great river which he loved so well.

After the Black-Hawk War, the Indian title being extinguished, and the country open to settlers, Northern Illinois attracted great attention, and increased wonderfully in wealth and population.

In 1830, the population of the State amounted to 157,445; in 1840, to 476,183; in 1850, to 851,470; in 1860, to 1,719,496.

* * * * *



Situated in the centre of the United States, the State of Illinois extends from 37 deg. to 42 deg. 30' N. latitude, and from 10 deg. 47' to 14 deg. 26' W. longitude from Washington. The State is 378 miles long from North to South, and 212 miles broad from East to West. Its area is computed at 55,408 square miles, or 35,459,200 acres, less than two millions of which are called swamp lands, the remaining thirty-three millions being tillable land of unsurpassed fertility.



Page 88

The State of Illinois forms the lower part of that slope which embraces the greater part of Indiana, and of which Lake Michigan, with its shores, forms the upper part. At the lowest part of this slope, and of the State, is the city of Cairo, situated about 350 feet above the level of the Gulf of Mexico, at the confluence of the Ohio and the Mississippi; hence, the highest place in Illinois being only 800 feet above the level of the sea, it will appear that the whole State, though containing several hilly sections, is a pretty level plain, being, with the exception of Delaware and Louisiana, the flattest country in the Union.

The State contains about twenty-five considerable streams, and brooks and rivulets innumerable. There are no large lakes within its borders, though it has some sixty miles of Lake Michigan for its boundary on the east. Small clear lakes and ponds abound, particularly in the northern portion of the State.

As to the quality of the soil, Illinois is divided as follows:—

First, the alluvial land on the margins of the rivers, and extending back from half a mile to six or eight miles. This soil is of extraordinary fertility, and, wherever it is elevated, makes the best farming land in the State. Where it is low, and exposed to inundations, it is very unsafe to attempt its cultivation. The most extensive tract of this kind is the so-called American Bottom, which received this name when it was the western boundary of the United States. It extends from the junction of the Kaskaskia and Mississippi, along the latter, to the mouth of the Missouri, containing about 288,000 acres.

Secondly, the table-land, fifty to a hundred feet higher than the alluvial; it consists principally of prairies, which, according to their respectively higher or lower situations, are either dry or marshy.

Thirdly, the hilly sections of the State, which, consisting alternately of wood and prairie, are not, on the whole, as fertile as either the alluvial or the table-land.

There are no mountains in Illinois; but in the southern as well as the northern part, there are a few hills. Near the banks of the principal rivers the ground is elevated into bluffs, on which may be still found the traces left by water, which was evidently once much higher than it now is; whence it is inferred, that, where the fertile plains of Illinois now extend, there must once have been a vast sheet of water, the mud deposited by which formed the soil, thus accounting for the great fertility of the prairies.

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Page 89

As we have said, the entire area of Illinois seems at one period to have been an ocean-bed, which has not since been disturbed by any considerable upheaval. The present irregularities of the surface are clearly traceable to the washing out and carrying away of the earth. The Illinois River has washed out a valley about two hundred and fifty feet deep, and from one and a half to six miles wide. The perfect regularity of the beds of mountain limestone, sandstone, and coal, as they are found protruding from the bluffs on each side of this valley, on the same levels, is pretty conclusive evidence that the valley itself owes its existence to the action of water. That the channels of the rivers have been gradually sunken, we may distinctly see by the shores of the Upper Mississippi, where are walls of rock, rising perpendicularly, which extend from Lake Pepin to below the mouth of the Wisconsin, as if they were walls built of equal height by the hand of man. Wherever the river describes a curve, walls may be found on the convex side of it.

The upper coal formation occupies three-fifths of the State, commencing at 41 deg. 12' North latitude, where, as also along the Mississippi, whose banks it touches between the places of its junction with the Illinois and Missouri rivers, it is enclosed by a narrow layer of calcareous coal. The shores of Lake Michigan, and that narrow strip of land, which, commencing near them, runs along the northern bank of the Illinois towards its southwestern bend, until it meets Rock River at its mouth, belong to the Devonian system. The residue of the northern part of the State consists of Silurian strata, which, containing the rich lead mines of Galena in the northwest corner of the State, rise at intervals into conical hills, giving the landscape a character different from that of the middle or southern portion. Scattered along the banks of rivers, and in the middle of prairies, are frequently found large masses of granite and other primitive rocks. Since the nearest beds of primitive rocks first appear in Minnesota and the northern part of Wisconsin, their presence here can be accounted for only by assuming that at the time this region was covered with water they were floated down from the North, enclosed and supported in masses of ice, which, melting, allowed the rocks to sink to the bottom. A still further proof of the presence of the ocean here in former times is to be found in the sea-shells which occur upon many of the higher knolls and bluffs west of the Mississippi in Iowa.

Illinois contains probably more coal than any other State in the Union. It is mined at a small depth below the surface, and crops out upon the banks of most of the streams in the middle of the State. These mines have been very imperfectly worked till within a few years; but it is found, that, as the work goes deeper, the quality of the coal improves, and in some of the later excavations is equal to the best coals of Ohio and Pennsylvania, and will undoubtedly prove a source of immense wealth to the State.



Page 90

The two northwestern counties of the State form a part of the richest and most extensive lead region in the world. During the year 1855, the product of these mines, shipped from the single port of Galena, was 430,365 pigs of lead, worth \$1,732,219.02.

Copper has been found in large quantities in the northern counties, and also in the southern portion of the State. Some of the zinc ores are found in great quantities at the lead mines near Galena, but have not yet been utilized. Silver has been found in St. Clair County, whence Silver Creek has derived its name. It is said that in early times the French sunk a shaft here, from which they obtained large quantities of the metal. Iron is found in many parts of the State, and the ores have been worked to considerable extent.

Among other valuable mineral products may be mentioned porcelain and potter's clay, fire clay, fuller's earth, limestone of many varieties, sandstone, marble, and salt springs.

* * * * *

Illinois has an average temperature, which, if compared with that of Europe, corresponds to that of Middle Germany; its winters are more severe than those of Copenhagen, and its summers as warm as those of Milan or Palermo. Compared with other States of the Union, Northern Illinois possesses a temperature similar to that of Southern New York, while the temperature of Southern Illinois will not differ much from that of Kentucky or Virginia. By observations of the thermometer during twenty years, in the southern part of the State, on the Mississippi, the mercury, once in that period, fell to-25 deg., and four times it rose above 100 deg., Fahrenheit.

The prevailing winds are either western or southeastern. The severest storms are those coming from the west, which traverse the entire space between the Rocky Mountains and the Atlantic coast in forty-eight hours.

There are on an average eighty-nine rainy days in the year; the quantity of rain falling amounts to forty-two inches,—the smallest amount being in January, and the largest in June. The average number of thunder-storms in a year is forty-nine; of clear days, one hundred and thirty-seven; of changeable days, one hundred and eighty-three; and of days without sunshine, forty-five.

* * * * *

The vegetation of the State forms the connecting link between the Flora of the Northeastern States and that of the Upper Mississippi,—exhibiting, besides the plants common to all the States lying between the Mississippi and the Atlantic Ocean, such as are, properly speaking, natives of the Western prairies, not being found east of the Alleghany Mountains. Immense grassy plains, interlaced with groves, which are found



also along the watercourses, cover two-thirds of the entire area of the State in the North, while the southern part is garnished with heavy timber.

No work which we have seen gives so good an account of the Flora of the prairies as the one by Frederick Gerhard, called "Illinois as it is." We have been indebted to this work for a good deal of valuable matter, and shall now make some further extracts from it.



Page 91

“Before we finally turn our backs on the last scattered houses of the village, we find both sides of the road lined with ugly worm-fences, which are overtopped by the various species of Helianthus, Thistles, Biennial Gaura, and the Illinoisian Bell-flower with cerulean blossoms, and other tall weeds. Here may also be found the coarse-haired *Asclepias tuberosa*, with fiery red umbels, the strong-scented *Monarda fistulosa*, and an umbelliferous plant, the grass-like, spiculated leaves of which recall to mind the Southern Agaves, the *Eryngo*. Among these children of Nature rises the civilized plant, the Indian Corn, with its stalks nearly twelve feet high.”

“Having now arrived at the end of the cultivated lands, we enter upon the dry prairies, extending up the bluffs, where we meet the small vermilion Sorrel (*Rumex acetosella*) and Mouse-ear, which, however, do not reside here as foreigners, but as natives, like many other plants that remind the European of his native country, as, for instance, the Dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*); a kind of Rose, (*Rosa lucida*,) with its sweet-scented blossoms, has a great predilection for this dry soil. With surprise we meet here also with many plants with hairy, greenish-gray leaves and stalk-covers, as, for instance, the *Onosmodium molle*, *Hieracium longipilum*, *Pycnanthemum pilosum*, *Chrysopsis villosa*, *Amorpha canescens*, *Tephrosia Virginiana*, *Lithospermum canescens*; between which the immigrated Mullein (*Verbascum thapsus*) may be found. The pebbly fragments of the entire slope, which during spring-time were sparingly covered with dwarfish herbs, such as the *Androsace occidentalis*, *Draba Caroliniana*, *Plantago Virginica*, *Scutellaria parvula*, are now crowded with plants of taller growth and variegated blossoms. *Rudbeckia hirta*, with its numerous radiating blossoms of a lively yellow, and the closely allied *Echinacea purpurea*, whose long purple rays hang down from a ruddy hemispherical disc, are the most remarkable among plants belonging to the genus *Compositae*, which blossom early in summer; in the latter part of summer follow innumerable plants of the different species, *Liatris*, *Vernonia*, *Aster*, *Solidago*, *Helianthus*, etc.”

“We approach a sinuous chasm of the bluffs, having better soil and underwood, which, thin at first, increases gradually in density. Low bushes, hardly a foot high, are formed by the American Thistle, (*Ceanothus Americanus*,) a plant whose leaves were used instead of tea, in Boston, during the Revolution. Next follow the Hazel-bush, (*Corylus Americana*,) the fiery-red *Castilleja coccinea*, and the yellow Canadian Louse-wort; the *Dipteracanthus strepens*, with great blue funnel-shaped blossoms, and the *Gerardia pedicularia*, are fond of such places; and where the bushes grow higher, and the *Rhus glabra*, *Zanthoxylum Americanum*, *Ptelea trifoliata*, *Staphylea trifolia*, together with *Ribes-Rubus*, *Pyrus*, *Cornus*, and *Cratoegus*, form an almost impenetrable thicket, surrounded and garlanded by the round-leaved, rough Bindweed, (*Smilax rotundifolia*,) and *Dioscorea villosa*, the Climbing Rose, (*Rosa setigera*,) *Celastrus scandens*, remarkable for its beautiful red fruits, *Clematis Virginiana*, *Polygonum*, *Convolvulus*, and other vines, these weedy herbs attempt to overtop the bushes.”



Page 92

“We now enter upon the illimitable prairie which lies before us, the fertile prairie, in whose undulating surface the moisture is retained; this waits for cultivation, and will soon be deprived of its flowery attire, and bear plain, but indispensable grain. Those who have not yet seen such a prairie should not imagine it like a cultivated meadow, but rather a heaving sea of tall herbs and plants, decking it with every variety of color.

“In the summer, the yellow of the large *Composite* will predominate, intermingled with the blue of the *Tradescantias*, the fiery red of the Lilies, (*Lilium Philadelphicum* and *Lilium Canadense*.) the purple of the Phlox, the white of the *Cacalia tuberosa*, *Melanthium Virginicum*, and the umbelliferous plants. In spring, small-sized plants bloom here, such as the Anemone, with its blue and white blossoms, the Palmated Violet, the Ranunculus, which are the first ornaments of the prairies in spring; then follow the Esculent Sea-Onion, *Pentaloplius longiflorus*, *Lithospermum hirtum*, *Cynthia Virginica*, and *Baptisia leucophaea*. As far as the eye reaches, no house nor tree can be seen; but where civilization has come, the farmer has planted small rows of the quickly growing Black Acacia, which affords shelter from the sun to his cattle and fuel for his hearth.”

“We now enter the level part of the forest, which has a rich black soil. Great sarmentous plants climb here up to the tops of the trees: wild Grapes, the climbing, poisonous Sumach, (*Rhus toxicodendron*.) and the vine-like Cinque-foil, which transforms withered, naked trunks into green columns, Bignonias, with their brilliant scarlet trumpet-flowers, are the most remarkable. The *Thuja occidentalis*, which may be met with in European gardens, stands in mournful solitude on the margins of pools; here and there an isolalod Cedar, (*Juniperus Virginiana*) and the low Box-tree, (*Taxus Canadensis*) are in Illinois the only representatives of the evergreens, forests of which first appear in the northern part of Wisconsin and Minnesota.”

“Flowers of the most brilliant hues bedeck the rivers' banks; above all, the *Lobelia cardinalis* and *Lobelia syphilitica*, of the deepest carmine and cerulean tinge, the yellow *Cassia Marilandica*, and the delicate *Rosa blanda*, a rose without thorns; also the *Scrophularia nodosa*.”

“On the marshy ground thrive the *Iris versicolor*, *Asclepias incarnata*, the Primrose-tree, Liver-wort, the tall *Physostegia Virginiana*, with rosy-red blossoms, and the *Helenium autumnale*, in which the yellow color predominates. In spring, the dark violet blossom of the *Amorpha fruticosa* diffuses its fragrance.”

“Entering a boat on the river, where we cannot touch the bottom with the oar, we perceive a little white flower waving to and fro, supported by long spiral halms between straight, grass-like leaves. This is the *Vallisneria spiralis*, a remarkable plant, which may be also met with in Southern Europe, especially in the Canal of Languedoc, and regarding the fructification of which different opinions prevail.”



Page 93

“Nearer to the land, we observe similar grass-like leaves, but with little yellow stellated flowers: these belong to the order of *Schollera graminea*. Other larger leaves belong to the Amphibious Polygon, and different species of the *Potamogeton*, the ears of whose blossoms rise curiously above the surface of the water. Clearing our way through a row of tall swamp weeds, *Zizania aquatica*, *Scirpus lacustris*, *Scirpus pungens*, among which the white flowers of *Sparganium ramosum* and *Sagittaria variabilis* are conspicuous, we steer into a large inlet entirely covered with the broad leaves of the *Nymphaea odorata* and the *Nelumbium luteum*, of which the former waves its beautiful flower on the surface of the river, while the latter, the queen, in fact, of the waters, proudly raises her magnificent crown upon a perpendicular footstalk. On the opposite bank, the evening breeze lifts the triangular leaves and rosy-red flowers of the Marsh-Mallow, overhung by Gray Willows and the Silver-leaved Maple and the Red Maple, on which a flock of white herons have alighted.”

In all the rivers and swamps of the Northwest grows the Wild Rice, (*Zizania aquatica*,) a plant which was formerly very important to the Indians as food, and now attracts vast flocks of waterfowl to feed upon it in the season. In autumn the squaws used to go in their canoes to these natural rice-fields, and, bending the tall stalks over the gunwale, beat out the heads of grain with their paddles into the canoe. It is mentioned among the dainties at Hiawatha's wedding-feast:—

“Haunch of deer, and hump of bison,
Yellow cakes of the Momdamin,
And the wild rice of the river.”

The Fruits of the forest are Strawberries, Blackberries, Raspberries, Gooseberries, in some barren spots Whortleberries, Mulberries, Grapes, Wild Plums and Cherries, Crab-Apples, the Persimmon, Pawpaw, Hickory-nuts, Hazel-nuts, and Walnuts.

The Timber-trees are,—of the Oaks, *Quercus alba*, *Quercus macrocarpa*, *Quercus tinctoria*, *Quercus imbricaria*,—Hard and Soft Maples,—and of the Hickories, *Carya alba*, *Carya tomentosa*, and *Carya amara*. Other useful timber-trees are the Ash, Cherry, several species of Elm, Linden, and Ironwood (*Carpinus Americana*).

Of Medicinal Plants, we find *Cassia Marilandica*, *Polygala Senega*, *Sanguinaria Canadensis*, *Lobelia inflata*, *Phytolacca decandra*, *Podophyllum peltatum*, *Sassafras officinale*.

Various species of the Vine are native here, and the improved varieties succeed admirably in the southern counties.

Page 94

The early travellers in this region mention the great herds of wild cattle which roamed over the prairies in those times, but the last Buffalo on the east side of the Mississippi was killed in 1832; and now the hunter who would see this noble game must travel some hundreds of miles west, to the head-waters of the Kansas or the Platte. The Elk, which was once so common in Illinois, has also receded before the white man, and the Deer is fast following his congener. On the great prairies south of Chicago, where, fifteen years ago, one might find twenty deer in a day's tramp, not one is now to be seen. Two species of Hare occur here, and several Tree Squirrels, the Red, Black, Gray, Mottled, and the Flying; besides these, there are two or three which live under ground. The Beaver is nearly or quite extinct, but the Otter remains, and the Musk-Rat abounds on all the river-banks and marshes.

Of carnivorous animals, we have the Panther and Black Bear in the wooded portions of the State, though rare; the Lynx, the Gray and Black Wolf, and the Prairie Wolf; the Skunk, the Badger, the Woodchuck, the Raccoon, and, in the southern part of the State, the Opossum.

Mr. Lapham of Wisconsin has published a list of the birds of that State, which will also answer for Northern Illinois. He enumerates two hundred and ninety species, which, we think, is below the number which visit the central parts of Illinois. From the central position of this State, most of the birds of the United States are found here at one season or another. For instance, among the rapacious birds, we have the three Eagles which visit America, the White-Headed, the Washington, and the Golden or Royal Eagle. Of Hawks and Falcons, fourteen or fifteen species, among which are the beautiful Swallow-tailed Hawk, and that noble falcon, the Peregrine. Ten or twelve Owls, among which, as a rare visitor, we find the Great Gray Owl, (*Syrnium cinereum*,) and the Snowy Owl, which is quite common in the winter season on the prairies, preying upon grouse and hares. Of the Vultures, we have two, as summer visitors, the Turkey-Buzzard and the Black Vulture.

Of omnivorous birds, sixteen or eighteen species, among which is the Raven, which here takes the place of the Crow, the two species not being able to live together, as the stronger robber drives away the weaker. Of the insectivorous birds, some sixty or seventy species are found here, among which is the Mocking-Bird, in the middle and southern districts. Thirty-five to forty species of granivorous birds, among which we occasionally find in winter that rare Arctic bird, the Evening Grosbeak. Of the *Zygodachyli*, fourteen species, among which is found the Paquet, in the southern part of the State. *Tenuirostres*, five species. Of the Kingfishers, one species. Swallows and Goat-suckers, nine species. Of the Pigeons, two, the Turtle-Dove and the Passenger Pigeon, of which the latter visit us twice a year, in immense flocks.

Page 95

Of the gallinaceous birds, the Turkey, which is found in the heavy timber in the river bottoms; the Quail, which has become very abundant all over the State, within twenty years, following, it would seem, the march of civilization and settlement; the Ruffed Grouse, abundant in the timber, but never seen on the prairie; the Pinnated Grouse, or Prairie Hen, always found on the open plains. These birds increased very much in number after the settlement of the State, owing probably to the increase of food for them, and the decrease of their natural enemies, the prairie wolves; but since the building of railroads, so many are killed to supply the demands of New York and other Eastern cities, that they are now decreasing very rapidly, and in a very few years the sportsman will have to cross the Mississippi to find a pack of grouse. The Sharp-tailed Grouse, an occasional visitor in winter from Wisconsin, is found in the timbered country.

Of wading birds, from forty to fifty species, among which the Sand-Hill Crane is very abundant, and the Great White or Whooping Crane very rare, although supposed by some authors to be the same bird in different stages of plumage.

Of the lobe-footed birds, seven species, of which is the rare and beautiful Wilson's Phalarope, which breeds in the wet prairies near Chicago.

Of web-footed birds, about forty species, among which are two Swans and five Geese. Among the Ducks, the Canvas-Back is found; but, owing to the want of its favorite food in the Chesapeake, the *Vallisneria*, it is, in our waters, a very ordinary duck, as an article of food.

The waters of Illinois abound with fish, of which class we enumerate,—

Species Species

Percidae, 3	Pomotis, 2
Labrax, 3	Cottus, 2
Lucioperca, 2	Corvina, 1
Huro, 1	Pimelodus, 5
Centrarchus, 3	Leuciscus, 6
Hydrargea, 2	Corregomus, 3
Esox, 3	Amia, 1
Hyodon, 1	Lepidosteus, 3
Lota, 2	Accipenser, 3

Of these, the Perch, White, Black, and Rock Bass, the Pike-Perch, the Catfish, the Pike and Muskalonge, the Whitefish, the Lake Trout, and the Sturgeon are valuable fishes for the table.



Of the class of Reptiles, we have among the Lizards the Mud-Devil, (*Menopoma Alleghaniensis*,) which grows in the sluggish streams to the length of two feet; also *Triton dorsalis*, *Necturus lateralis*, *Ambystoma punctata*.

Of the Snakes, we find three venomous species, the Rattlesnake, the Massasauga, and the Copper-Head. The largest serpents are the Black Snake, five feet long, and the Milk Snake, from five to six feet in length.

Among the Turtles is *Emys picta*, *Chelonura serpentina*, and *Cistuda clausa*.

Of the Frogs, we have *Rana sylvatica*, *Rana palustris*, and *Rana pipiens*, nearly two feet long, and loud-voiced in proportion,—a Bull-Frog, indeed!



Page 96

Various theories and speculations have been formed as to the origin of the prairies. One of them, is, that the forests which formerly occupied these plains were swept away at some remote period by fire; and that the annual fires set by the Indians have continued this state of things. Another theory is, that the violent winds which sweep over them have prevented the growth of trees; a third, that want of rain forbids their growth; a fourth, that the agency of water has produced the effect; and lastly, a learned professor at the last meeting of the Scientific Convention put forth his theory, which was, that the real cause of the absence of trees from the prairies is the mechanical condition of the soil, which is, he thinks, too fine,—a coarse, rocky soil being, in his estimation, a necessary condition of the growth of trees.

Most of these theories seem to be inconsistent with the plain facts of the case. First, we know that these prairies existed in their present condition when the first white man visited them, two hundred years ago; and also that similar treeless plains exist in South America and Central Africa, and have so existed ever since those countries were known. We are told by travellers in those regions, that the natives have the same custom of annually burning the dry grass and herbage for the same reason that our Indians did it, and that the early white settlers kept up the custom,—namely, to promote the growth of young and tender feed for the wild animals which the former hunted and the cattle which the latter live by grazing.

Another fact, well known to all settlers in the prairie, is, that it is only necessary to keep out the fires by fences or ditches, and a thick growth of trees will spring up on the prairies. Many fine groves now exist all over Illinois, where nothing grew twenty years ago but the wild grasses and weeds; and we have it on record, that locust-seed, sown on the prairie near Quincy, in four years produced trees with a diameter of trunk of four to six inches, and in seven years had become large enough for posts and rails. So with fruit-trees, which nowhere flourish with more strength and vigor than in this soil,—too much so, indeed, since they are apt to run to wood rather than fruit. Moreover, the soil in the groves and on the river bottoms, where trees naturally grow, is the same, chemically and mechanically, as that of the open prairie; the same winds sweep over both, and the same rain falls upon both; so that it would seem that the absence of trees cannot be attributed wholly to fire, water, wind, or soil, but is owing to a combination of two or more of those agencies.

But from whatever cause the prairies originated, they have no doubt been perpetuated by the fires which annually sweep over their surface. Where the soil is too wet to sustain a heavy growth of grass, there is no prairie. Timber is found along the streams, almost invariably,—and, where the banks are high and dry, will usually be found on the east bank of those streams whose course is north and south. This is caused by the fact that the prevailing winds are from the west, and bring the fire with them till it reaches the stream, which forms a barrier and protects the vegetation on the other side.



Page 97

If any State in the Union is adapted to agriculture, and the various branches of rural economy, such as stock-raising, wool-growing, or fruit-culture, it must surely be Illinois, where the fertile natural meadows invite the plough, without the tedious process of clearing off timber, which, in many parts of the country, makes it the labor of a lifetime to bring a farm under good cultivation. Here, the farmer who is satisfied with such crops as fifty bushels of corn to the acre, eighteen of wheat, or one hundred of potatoes, has nothing to do but to plough, sow, and reap; no manure, and but little attention, being necessary to secure a yield like this. Hence a man of very small means can soon become independent on the prairies. If, however, one is ambitious of raising good crops, and doing the best he can with his land, let him manure liberally and cultivate diligently; nowhere will land pay for good treatment better than here.

Mr. J. Ambrose Wight, of Chicago, the able editor of the "Prairie Farmer," writes as follows:—

"From an acquaintance with Illinois lands and Illinois farmers, of eighteen years, during thirteen of which I have been editor of the 'Prairie Farmer,' I am prepared to give the following as the rates of produce which may be had per acre, with ordinary culture:—

Winter Wheat, 15 to 25 Bushels.
Spring " 10 to 20 "
Corn, 40 to 70 "
Oats, 40 to 60 "
Potatoes, 100 to 200 "
Grass, Timothy and Clover, 1-1/2 to 3 Tons.

"*Ordinary culture*, on prairie lands, is not what is meant by the term in the Eastern or Middle States. It means here, no manure, and commonly but once, or at most twice, ploughing, on perfectly smooth land, with long furrows, and no stones or obstructions; where two acres per day is no hard job for one team. It is often but very poor culture, with shallow ploughing, and without attention to weeds. I have known crops, not unfrequently, far greater than these, with but little variation in their treatment: say, 40 to 50 bushels of winter wheat, 60 to 80 of oats, and 100 of Indian corn, or 300 of potatoes. *Good culture*, which means rotation, deep ploughing, farms well stocked, and some manure applied at intervals of from three to five years, would, in good seasons, very often approach these latter figures."

We will now give the results of a very detailed account of the management of a farm of 240 acres, in Kane County, Illinois, an average farm as to soil and situation, but probably much above the average in cultivation,—at least, we should judge so from the intelligent and business-like manner in which the account is kept; every crop having a separate account kept with it in Dr. and Cr., to show the net profit or loss of each.



Page 98

23 acres of Wheat,	30	bushels per acre,	net profit	\$453.00
17-1/2 " " on Corn ground,	22-1/2	" " " "	" "	278.50
9-1/2 " Spring Wheat,	24	" " " "	" "	159.70
2-1/2 " Winter Rye,	22-7/12	" " " "	" "	10.25
5-1/2 " Barley,	33-1/4	" " " "	" "	32.55
12 " Oats,	87-1/2	" " " "	" "	174.50
28-1/2 " Corn,	60	" " " "	" "	638.73
1 " Potatoes,	150	" " " "	" "	27.50
103 Sheep, average weight of fleece, 3-1/2 lbs.,			"	177.83
15 head of Cattle and one Colt			"	103.00
1500 lbs. Pork			"	35.00
Fruit, Honey, Bees, and Poultry			"	73.75
21 acres Timothy Seed, 4 bushels per acre,			"	123.00

				\$2287.31

A farm of this size, so situated, with the proper buildings and stock, may, at the present price of land, be supposed to represent a capital of \$15,000—on which sum the above account gives an interest of over 15 per cent. Is there any other part of the country where the same interest can be realized on farming capital?

But this farm of 240 acres is a mere retail affair to many farms in the State. We will give some examples on a larger scale.

“Winstead Davis came to Jonesboro’, Illinois, from Tennessee, thirty years ago, without means of any kind; now owns many thousand acres of land, and has under cultivation, this year, from 2500 to 3000 acres.”

“W. Willard, native of Vermont, commenced penniless; now owns more than 10,000 acres of land, and cultivates 2000.”

“Jesse Funk, near Bloomington, Illinois, began the world thirty years ago, at rail-splitting, at twenty-five cents the hundred. He bought land, and raised cattle; kept increasing his lands and herds, till he now owns 7000 acres of land, and sells over 840,000 worth of cattle and hogs annually.

“Isaac Funk, brother of the above, began in the same way, at the same time. He has gone ahead of Jesse; for *he* owns 27,000 acres of land, has 4000 in cultivation, and his last year’s sales of cattle amounted to \$65,000.”

It is evident that the brothers Funk are men of administrative talent; they would have made a figure in Wall Street, could have filled cabinet office at Washington, or, perhaps, could even have “kept a hotel.”

These are but specimens of the large-acred men of Illinois. Hundreds of others there are, who farm on nearly the same scale.



Page 99

The great difficulty in carrying on farming operations on a large scale in Illinois has always been the scarcity of labor. Land is cheap and plenty, but labor scarce and dear: exactly the reverse of what obtains in England, where land is dear and labor cheap. It must be evident that a different kind of farming would be found here from that in use in older countries. There, the best policy is to cultivate a few acres well; here, it has been found more profitable to skim over a large surface. But within a few years the introduction of labor-saving machines has changed the conditions of farming, and has rendered it possible to give good cultivation to large tracts of land with few men. Many of the crops are now put in by machines, cultivated by machines, and harvested by machine. If, as seems probable, the steam-plough of Fawkes shall become a success, the revolution in farming will be complete. Already some of the large farmers employ wind or steam power in various ways to do the heavy work, such as cutting and grinding food for cattle and hogs, pumping water, *etc.*

Although the soil and climate of Illinois are well adapted to fruit-culture, yet, from various causes, it has not, till lately, been much attended to. The early settlers of Southern and Middle Illinois were mostly of the Virginia race, Hoosiers,—who are a people of few wants. If they have hog-meat and hominy, whiskey and tobacco, they are content; they will not trouble themselves to plant fruit-trees. The early settlers in the North were, generally, very poor men; they could not afford to buy fruit-trees, for the produce of which they must wait several years. Wheat, corn, and hogs were the articles which could be soonest converted into money, and those they raised. Then the early attempts at raising fruit were not very successful. The trees were brought from the East, and were either spoiled by the way, or were unsuited to this region. But the great difficulty has been the want of drainage. Fruit-trees cannot be healthy with wet feet for several months of the year, and this they are exposed to on these level lands. With proper tile-draining, so that the soil shall be dry and mellow early in the spring, we think that the apple, the pear, the plum, and the cherry will succeed on the prairies anywhere in Illinois. The peach and the grape flourish in the southern part of the State, already, with very little care; in St. Clair County, the culture of the latter has been carried on by the Germans for many years, and the average yield of Catawba wine has been two hundred gallons per acre. The strawberry grows wild all over the State, both in the timber and the prairie; and the cultivated varieties give very fine crops. All the smaller fruits do well here, and the melon family find in this soil their true home; they are raised by the acre, and sold by the wagon-load, in the neighborhood of Chicago.

Stock-raising is undoubtedly the most profitable kind of farming on the prairies, which are so admirably adapted to this species of rural economy, and Illinois is already at the head of the cattle-breeding States. There were shipped from Chicago in 1860, 104,122 head of live cattle, and 114,007 barrels of beef.



Page 100

The Durham breed seems to be preferred by the best stock-farmers, and they pay great attention to the purity of the race. A herd of one hundred head of cattle raised near Urbana, and averaging 1965 pounds each, took the premium at the World's Fair in New York. Although the Durhams are remarkable for their large size and early maturity, yet other breeds are favorites with many farmers,—such as the Devons, the Herefords, and the Holsteins, the first particularly,—for working cattle, and for the quality of their beef. There is a sweetness about the beef fattened upon these prairies which is not found elsewhere, and is noticed by all travellers who have eaten of that meat at the best Chicago hotels.

In fact, Illinois is the paradise of cattle, and there is no sight more beautiful, in its way, than one of those vast natural meadows in June, dotted with the red and white cattle, standing belly-deep in rich grass and gay-colored flowers, and almost too fat and lazy to whisk away the flies. Even in winter they look comfortable, in their sheltered barn-yard, surrounded by huge stacks of hay or long ranges of corn-cribs, chewing the cud of contentment, and untroubled with any thought of the inevitable journey to Brighton.

Where corn is so plenty as it is in Illinois, of course hogs will be plenty also. During the year 1860, two hundred and seventy-five thousand porkers rode into Chicago by railroad, eighty-five thousand of which pursued their journey, still living, to Eastern cities, —the balance remaining behind to be converted into lard, bacon, and salt pork.

The wholesale way of making beef and pork is this. All summer the cattle are allowed to run on the prairie, and the hogs in the timber on the river bottoms. In the autumn, when the corn is ripe, the cattle are turned into one of those great fields, several hundred acres in extent, to gather the crop; and after they have done, the hogs come in to pick up what the cattle have left.

Sheep do well on the prairies, particularly in the southern part of the State, where the flocks require little or no shelter in winter. The prairie wolves formerly destroyed many sheep; but since the introduction of strychnine for poisoning those voracious animals, the sheep have been very little troubled.

Horses and mules are raised extensively, and in the northern counties, where the Morgans and other good breeds have been introduced, the horses are as good as in any State of the Union. Theory would predict this result, since the horse is found always to come to his greatest perfection in level countries,—as, for instance, the deserts of Arabia, and the *llanos* of South America.

There are two articles in daily and indispensable use, for which the Northern States have hitherto been dependent on the Southern: Sugar and Cotton. With regard to the first, the introduction of the Chinese Sugar-Cane has demonstrated that every farmer in the State can raise his own sweetening. The experience of several years has proved

that the *Sorghum* is a hardier plant than corn, and that it will be a sure crop as far North as latitude 42 deg. or 43 deg..



Page 101

An acre of good prairie will produce 18 tons of the cane, and each ton gives 60 gallons of juice, which is reduced, by boiling, to 10 gallons of syrup. This gives 180 gallons of syrup to the acre, worth from 40 to 50 cents a gallon,—say 40 cents, which will give 72 dollars for the product of an acre of land; from which the expenses of cultivation being deducted, with rent of land, *etc.*, say 36 dollars, there will remain a net profit of 36 dollars to the acre, besides the seed, and the fodder which comes from a third part of the stalk, which is cut off before sending the remainder to the mill. This is found to be the most nutritious food that can be used for cattle and horses, and very valuable for milch cows. These results have been obtained from Mr. Luce, of Plainfield, Will County, who has lately built a steam-mill for making the syrup from the cane which is raised by the farmers in that vicinity. In this first year, he manufactured 12,500 gallons of syrup, which sells readily at fifty cents a gallon. A quantity of it was refined at the Chicago Sugar-Refinery, and the result was a very agreeable syrup, free from the peculiar flavor which the home-made Sorghum-syrup usually has. As yet, no experiments on a large scale have been made to obtain crystallized sugar from the juice of this cane, it having been, so far, used more economically in the shape of syrup. That it can be done, however, is proved by the success of several persons who have tried it in a small way. In the County of Vermilion, it is estimated that three hundred thousand gallons of syrup were made in 1860.

As to Cotton, since the building of the Illinois Central Railroad has opened the southern part of the State to the world, and let in the light upon that darkened Egypt, it is found that those people have been raising their own cotton for many years, from the seed which they brought with them into the State from Virginia and North Carolina. The plant has become acclimated, and now ripens its seed in latitude 39 deg. and 40 deg.. Perhaps the culture may be carried still farther, so that cotton may be raised all over the State. The heat of our summers is tropical, but they are too short. If, however, the cotton-plant, like Indian corn and the tomato, can be gradually induced to mature itself in four or five months, the consequences of such a change can hardly be estimated.

But whether or not it be possible to raise cotton and sugar profitably in Illinois, that she is the great bread- and meat-producing State no one can doubt; and in 1861 it happens that Cotton is King no longer, but must yield his sceptre to Corn.

The breadstuffs exported from the Northwest to Europe and to the Cotton States will this year probably amount to more money than the whole foreign export of cotton,—the crop which to some persons represents all that the world contains of value.

Page 102

Probable export of Cotton in 1861, three-fourths
of the crop of 4,000,000 bales, 3,000,000 bales,
at \$45 \$135,000,000
Estimated export of Breadstuffs
to Europe \$100,000,000
Estimated export of Breadstuffs
to Southern States \$45,000,000

\$145,000,000

We are feeding Europe and the Cotton States, who pay us in gold; we feed the Northern States, who pay us in goods; we are feeding our starving brothers in Kansas, who have paid us beforehand, by their heroic devotion to the cause of freedom. Let us hope that their troubles are nearly over, and that, having passed through more hardships than have fallen to the lot of any American community, they may soon enter upon a career of prosperity as signal as have been their misfortunes, so that the prairies of Kansas may, in their turn, assist in feeding the world.

Nothing has done so much for the rapid growth of Illinois as her canal and railroads.

As early as 1833 several railroad charters were granted by the legislature; but the stock was not taken, and nothing was done until the year 1836, when a vast system of internal improvements was projected, intended “to be commensurate with the wants of the people,”—that is, there was to be a railroad to run by every man’s door. About thirteen hundred miles of railroads were planned, a canal was to be built from Chicago to the Illinois River at Peru, and several rivers were to be made navigable. The cost of all this it was supposed would be about eight millions of dollars, and the money was to be raised by loan. In order that all might have the benefit of this system, it was provided that two hundred thousand dollars should be distributed among those counties where none of these improvements were made. To cap the climax of folly, it was provided that the work should commence on all these roads simultaneously, at each end, and from the crossings of all the rivers.

As no previous survey or estimate had been made, either of the routes, the cost of the works, or the amount of business to be done on them, it is not surprising that the State of Illinois soon found herself with a heavy debt, and nothing to show for it, except a few detached pieces of railroad embankments and excavations, a half-finished canal, and a railroad from the Illinois River to Springfield, which cost one million of dollars, and when finished would not pay for operating it.

The State staggered on for some ten years under this load of debt, which, as she could not pay the interest upon it, had increased in 1845 to some fourteen millions. The project of repudiating the debt was frequently brought forward by unscrupulous

politicians; but to the honor of the people of Illinois be it remembered, that even in the darkest times this dishonest scheme found but few friends.



Page 103

In 1845, the holders of the canal bonds advanced the sum of \$1,700,000 for the purpose of finishing the canal; and subsequently, William B. Ogden and a few other citizens of Chicago, having obtained possession of an old railroad-charter for a road from that city to Galena, got a few thousand dollars of stock subscribed in those cities, and commenced the work. The difficulties were very great, from the scarcity of money and the want of confidence in the success of the enterprise. In most of the villages along the proposed line there was a strong opposition to having a railroad built at all, as the people thought it would be the ruin of their towns. Even in Chicago, croakers were not wanting to predict that the railroad would monopolize all the trade of the place.

In the face of all these obstacles, the road was built to the Des Plaines River, twelve miles,—in a very cheap way, to be sure; as a second-hand strap-rail was used, and half-worn cars were picked up from Eastern roads.

These twelve miles of road between the Des Plaines and Chicago had always been the terror of travellers. It was a low, wet prairie, without drainage, and in the spring and autumn almost impassable. At such seasons one might trace the road by the broken wagons and dead horses that lay strewn along it.

To be able to have their loads of grain carried over this dreadful place for three or four cents a bushel was to the farmers of the Rock River and Fox River valleys—who, having hauled their wheat from forty to eighty miles to this Slough of Despond, frequently could get it no farther—a privilege which they soon began to appreciate. The road had all it could do, at once. It was a success. There was now no difficulty in getting the stock taken up, and before long it was finished to Fox River. It paid from fifteen to twenty per cent to the stockholders, and the people along the line soon became its warmest friends,—and no wonder, since it doubled the value of every man's farm on the line. The next year the road was extended to Rock River, and then to Galena, one hundred and eighty-five miles.

This road was the pioneer of the twenty-eight hundred and fifty miles of railroads which now cross the State in every direction, and which have hastened the settlement of the prairies at least fifty years.

Among these lines of railway, the most important, and one of the longest in America, is the Illinois Central, which is seven hundred and four miles in length, and traverses the State from South to North, namely:—

1. The main line, from Cairo to La Salla 308 miles
2. The Galena Branch, from La Salle to Dunleith 146 "
3. The Chicago Branch, from Chicago to Centralia 250 "



This great work was accomplished in the short space of four years and nine months, by the help of a grant of two and a half millions of acres of land lying along the line. The company have adopted the policy of selling these lands on long credit to actual settlers; and since the completion of the road, in 1856, they have sold over a million of acres, for fifteen millions of dollars, in secured notes, bearing interest. The remaining lands will probably realize as much more, so that the seven hundred and four miles of railroad will actually cost the corporators nothing.

Page 104

There are eleven trunk and twenty branch and extension lines, which centre in Chicago, the earnings of nineteen of which, for the year 1859, were fifteen millions of dollars. As that, however, was a year of great depression in business, with a short crop through the Northwest, we think, in view of the large crop of 1860, and the consequent revival of business, that the earnings of these nineteen lines will not be less this year than twenty-two millions of dollars.

In the early settlement of the State, twenty-five or thirty years ago, the pioneers being necessarily very liable to want of good shelter, to bad food and impure water, suffered much from bilious and intermittent fevers. As the country has become settled, the land brought under cultivation, and the habits of the people improved, these diseases have in a great measure disappeared. Other forms of disease have, however, taken their place, pulmonary affections and fevers of the typhoid type being more prevalent than formerly; but as most of the immigrants into Northern Illinois are from Western New York and New England, where this latter class of diseases prevails, the people are much less alarmed by them than they used to be by the bilious diseases, though the latter were really less dangerous. The coughs, colds, and consumptions are old acquaintances, and through familiarity have lost their terrors.

The census of 1850 gives the following comparative view of the annual percentage of deaths in several States:—

Massachusetts, . .	1.95 per cent.
Rhode Island, . .	1.52 "
New York, . . .	1.47 "
Ohio,	1.44 "
Illinois,	1.36 "
Missouri, . . .	1.80 "
Louisiana, . . .	2.31 "
Texas, . . .	1.43 "

This table shows that Illinois stands in point of health among the very highest of the States.

Having sketched the history and traced the material development of the Prairie State to the present time, we will close this article with a few words as to its politics and policy.

As we have seen, the early settlers of Illinois were from Virginia and Kentucky, and brought with them the habits, customs, and ideas of Slaveholders; and though by the sagacity and virtue of a few leading men the institution of Slavery was kept out, yet for many years the Democratic Party, always the ally and servant of the Slave-Power, was in the ascendant. Until 1858, the Legislature and the Executive have always been Democratic, and the Democratic candidate for the Presidency, from Jackson down to Buchanan, was sure of the electoral vote of Illinois. But the growth of the northern half



of the State has of late years been far outstripping that of the southern portion, and the former now has the majority. We have now a Republican Legislature and a Republican Governor, and, by the new apportionment soon to be made, the Republican Party will be much more largely in the ascendant,—so much so, indeed, that there is no probability of another Democratic Senator being chosen from Illinois in the next twenty years, Mr. Douglas will be the last of his race.



Page 105

The people of Northern Illinois, who are in future to direct the policy of the State, are mostly from Western New York and New England.

“Coelum, non animum mutant.”

They bring with them their unconquered prejudices in favor of freedom; their great commercial city is as strongly anti-slavery as Worcester or Syracuse, and has been for years an unsafe spot for a slave-hunter. Their interests and their sympathies are all with the Northern States. What idle babble, then, is this theory of a third Confederacy, to be constructed out of the middle Atlantic States and the Northwest!

If, as one of our orators says, New England is the brain of this country, then the Northwest is its bone and muscle, ready to cultivate its wide prairies and feed the world, —or, if need be, to use the same strength in crushing treason, and in preserving the Territories for free settlers.

CONCERNING FUTURE YEARS

Does it ever come across you, my friend, with something of a start, that things cannot always go on in your lot as they are going now? Does not a sudden thought sometimes flash upon you, a hasty, vivid glimpse, of what you will be long hereafter, if you are spared in this world? Our common way is too much to think that things will always go on as they are going. Not that we clearly think so: not that we ever put that opinion in a definite shape, and avow to ourselves that we hold it: but we live very much under that vague, general impression. We can hardly help it. When a man of middle age inherits a pretty country-seat, and makes up his mind that he cannot yet afford to give up business and go to live there, but concludes that in six or eight years he will be able with justice to his children to do so, do you think he brings plainly before him the changes which must be wrought on himself and those around him by these years? I do not speak of the greatest change of all, which may come to any of us so very soon: I do not think of what may be done by unlooked-for accident: I think merely of what must be done by the passing on of time. I think of possible changes in taste and feeling, of possible loss of liking for that mode of life. I think of lungs that will play less freely, and of limbs that will suggest shortened walks, and dissuade from climbing hills. I think how the children will have outgrown daisy-chains, or even got beyond the season of climbing trees. The middle-aged man enjoys the prospect of the time when he shall go to his country house; and the vague, undefined belief surrounds him, like an atmosphere, that he and his children, his views and likings, will be then just such as they are now. He cannot bring it home to him at how many points change will be cutting into him, and hedging him in, and paring him down. And we all live very much under that vague impression. Yet it is in many ways good for us to feel that we are going on, —passing from the things which surround us,—advancing into the undefined future, into the unknown land. And I think that sometimes we all have vivid flashes of such a

conviction. I dare say, my friend, you have seen an old man, frail, soured, and shabby, and you have thought, with a start, Perhaps *there* is Myself of Future Years.



Page 106

We human beings can stand a great deal. There is great margin allowed by our constitution, physical and moral. I suppose there is no doubt that a man may daily for years eat what is unwholesome, breathe air which is bad, or go through a round of life which is not the best or the right one for either body or mind, and yet be little the worse. And so men pass through great trials and through long years, and yet are not altered so very much. The other day, walking along the street, I saw a man whom I had not seen for ten years. I knew that since I saw him last he had gone through very heavy troubles, and that these had sat very heavily upon him. I remembered how he had lost that friend who was the dearest to him of all human beings, and I knew how broken down he had been for many months after that great sorrow came. Yet there he was, walking along, an unnoticed unit, just like any one else; and he was looking wonderfully well. No doubt he seemed pale, worn, and anxious: but he was very well and carefully dressed; he was walking with a brisk, active step; and I dare say is feeling pretty well reconciled to being what he is, and to the circumstances amid which he is living. Still, one felt that somehow a tremendous change had passed over him. I felt sorry for him, and all the more that he did not seem to feel sorry for himself. It made me sad to think that some day I should be like him; that perhaps in the eyes of my juniors I look like him already, careworn and aging. I dare say in his feeling there was no such sense of falling off. Perhaps he was tolerably content. He was walking so fast, and looking so sharp, that I am sure he had no desponding feeling at the time. Despondency goes with slow movements and with vague looks. The sense of having materially fallen off is destructive to the eagle-eye. Yes, he was tolerably content. We can go down-hill cheerfully, save at the points where it is sharply brought home to us that we are going down-hill. Lately I sat at dinner opposite an old lady who had the remains of striking beauty. I remember how much she interested me. Her hair was false, her teeth were false, her complexion was shrivelled, her form had lost the round symmetry of earlier years, and was angular and stiff; yet how cheerful and lively she was! She had gone far down-hill physically; but either she did not feel her decadence, or she had grown quite reconciled to it. Her daughter, a blooming matron, was there, happy, wealthy, good; yet not apparently a whit more reconciled to life than the aged grandam. It was pleasing, and yet it was sad, to see how well we can make up our mind to what is inevitable. And such a sight brings up to one a glimpse of Future Years. The cloud seems to part before one, and through the rift you discern your earthly track far away, and a jaded pilgrim plodding along it with weary step; and though the pilgrim does not look like you, yet you know the pilgrim is yourself.



Page 107

This cannot always go on. To what is it all tending? I am not thinking now of an outlook so grave, that this is not the place to discuss it. But I am thinking how everything is going on. In this world there is no standing still. And everything that belongs entirely to this world, its interests and occupations, is going on towards a conclusion. It will all come to an end. It cannot go on forever. I cannot always be writing sermons as I do now, and going on in this regular course of life. I cannot always be writing essays. The day will come when I shall have no more to say, or when the readers of the Magazine will no longer have patience to listen to me in that kind fashion in which they have listened so long. I foresee it plainly, this evening,—even while writing my first essay for the “Atlantic Monthly,”—the time when the reader shall open the familiar cover, and glance at the table of contents, and exclaim indignantly, “Here is that tiresome person again: why will he not cease to weary us?” I write in sober sadness, my friend: I do not intend any jest. If you do not know that what I have written is certainly true, you have not lived very long. You have not learned the sorrowful lesson, that all worldly occupations and interests are wearing to their close. You cannot keep up the old thing, however much you may wish to do so. You know how vain anniversaries for the most part are. You meet with certain old friends, to try to revive the old days; but the spirit of the old time will not come over you. It is not a spirit that can be raised at will. It cannot go on forever, that walking down to church on Sundays, and ascending those pulpit-steps; it will change to feeling, though I humbly trust it may be long before it shall change in fact. Don't you all sometimes feel something like that? Don't you sometimes look about you and say to yourself, That furniture will wear out: those window-curtains are getting sadly faded; they will not last a lifetime? Those carpets must be replaced some day; and the old patterns which looked at you with a kindly, familiar expression, through these long years, must be among the old familiar faces that are gone. These are little things, indeed, but they are among the vague recollections that bewilder our memory; they are among the things which come up in the strange, confused remembrance of the dying man in the last days of life. There is an old fir-tree, a twisted, strange-looking fir-tree, which will be among my last recollections, I know, as it was among my first. It was always before my eyes, when I was three, four, five years old: I see the pyramidal top, rising over a mass of shrubbery; I see it always against a sunset-sky; always in the subdued twilight in which we seem to see things in distant years. These old friends will die, you think; who will take their place? You will be an old gentleman, a frail old gentleman, wondered at by younger men, and telling them long stories about the days when Lincoln was President, like those



Page 108

which weary you now about the War of 1812. It will not be the same world then. Your children will not be always children. Enjoy their fresh youth while it lasts, for it will not last long. Do not skim over the present too fast, through a constant habit of onward-looking. Many men of an anxious turn are so eagerly concerned in providing for the future, that they hardly remark the blessings of the present. Yet it is only because the future will some day be present, that it deserves any thought at all. And many men, instead of heartily enjoying present blessings while they are present, train themselves to a habit of regarding these things as merely the foundation on which they are to build some vague fabric of they know not what. I have known a clergyman, who was very fond of music, and in whose church the music was very fine, who seemed incapable of enjoying its solemn beauty as a thing to be enjoyed while passing, but who persisted in regarding each beautiful strain merely as a promising indication of what his choir would come at some future time to be. It is a very bad habit, and one which grows, unless repressed. You, my reader, when you see your children racing on the green, train yourself to regard all that as a happy end in itself. Do not grow to think merely that those sturdy young limbs promise to be stout and serviceable when they are those of a grown-up man; and rejoice in the smooth little forehead with its curly hair, without any forethought of how it is to look some day when overshadowed (as it is sure to be) by the great wig of the Lord Chancellor. Good advice: let us all try to take it. Let all happy things be not merely regarded as means, but enjoyed as ends. Yet it is in the make of our nature to be ever onward-looking; and we cannot help it. When you get the first number for the year of the magazine which you take in, you instinctively think of it as the first portion of a new volume; and you are conscious of a certain, though alight, restlessness in the thought of a thing incomplete, and of a wish that you had the volume completed. And sometimes, thus looking onward into the future, you worry yourself with little thoughts and cares. There is that old dog: you have had him for many years; he is growing stiff and frail; what are you to do when he dies? When he is gone, the new dog you get will never be like him; he may be, indeed, a far handsomer and more amiable animal, but he will not be your old companion; he will not be surrounded with all those old associations, not merely with your own by-past life, but with the lives, the faces, and the voices of those who have left you, which invest with a certain sacredness even that humble, but faithful friend. He will not have been the companion of your youthful walks, when you went at a pace which now you cannot attain. He will just be a common dog; and who that has reached your years cares for *that*? The other, indeed, was a dog too; but that was merely the substratum on which was accumulated



Page 109

a host of recollections: it is *Auld Lang Syne* that walks into your study, when your shaggy friend of ten summers comes stiffly in, and after many querulous turnings lays himself down on the rug before the fire. Do you not feel the like when you look at many little matters, and then look into the Future Years? That harness,—how will you replace it? It will be a pang to throw it by; and it will be a considerable expense, too, to get a new suit. Then you think how long harness may continue to be serviceable. I once saw, on a pair of horses drawing a stage-coach among the hills, a set of harness which was thirty-five years old. It had been very costly and grand when new; it had belonged for some of its earliest years to a certain wealthy nobleman. The nobleman had been for many years in his grave, but there was his harness still. It was tremendously patched, and the blinkers were of extraordinary aspect; but it was quite serviceable. There is comfort for you, poor country parsons! How thoroughly I understand your feeling about such little things! I know how you sometimes look at your phaeton or your dog-cart; and even while the morocco is fresh, and the wheels still are running with their first tires, how you think you see it after it has grown shabby and old-fashioned. Yes, you remember, not without a dull kind of pang, that it is wearing out. You have a neighbor, perhaps, a few miles off, whose conveyance, through the wear of many years, has become remarkably seedy; and every time you meet it you think that there you see your own, as it will some day be. Every dog has his day: but the day of the rational dog is overclouded in a fashion unknown to his inferior fellow-creature; it is overclouded by the anticipation of the coming day which will not be his. You remember how that great, though morbid man, John Poster, could not heartily enjoy the summer weather, for thinking how every sunny day that shone upon him was a downward step towards the winter gloom. Each indication that the season was progressing, even though progressing as yet only to greater beauty, filled him with great grief. “I have seen a fearful sight to-day,” he would say,—“I have seen a buttercup.” And we know, of course, that in his case there was nothing like affectation; it was only that, unhappily for himself, the bent of his mind was so onward-looking, that he saw only a premonition of the snows of December in the roses of June. It would be a blessing, if we could quite discard the tendency. And while your trap runs smoothly and noiselessly, while the leather is fresh and the paint unscratched, do not worry yourself with visions of the day when it will rattle and creak, and when you will make it wait for you at the corner of back-streets when you drive into town. Do not vex yourself by fancying that you will never have heart to send off the old carriage, nor by wondering where you shall find the money to buy a new one.



Page 110

Have you ever read the “Life of Mansie Wauch, Tailor in Dalkeith,” by that pleasing poet and most amiable man, the late David Macbeth Moir? I have been looking into it lately; and I have regretted much that the Lowland Scotch dialect is so imperfectly understood in England, and that even where so far understood its raciness is so little felt; for great as is the popularity of that work, it is much less known than it deserves to be. Only a Scotchman can thoroughly appreciate it. It is curious, and yet it is not curious, to find the pathos and the polish of one of the most touching and elegant of poets in the man who has with such irresistible humor, sometimes approaching to the farcical, delineated humble Scotch life. One passage in the book always struck me very much. We have in it the poet as well as the humorist and it is a perfect example of what I have been trying to describe in the pages which you have read. I mean the passage in which Mansie tells us of a sudden glimpse which, in circumstances of mortal terror, he once had of the future. On a certain “awful night” the tailor was awakened by cries of alarm, and, looking out, he saw the next house to his own was on fire from cellar to garret. The earnings of poor Mansie’s whole life were laid out on his stock in trade and his furniture, and it appeared likely that these would be at once destroyed.

“Then,” says he, “the darkness of the latter days came over my spirit like a vision before the prophet Isaiah; and I could see nothing in the years to come but beggary and starvation,—myself a fallen-back old man, with an out-at-the-elbows coat, a greasy hat, and a bald brow, hirpling over a staff, requeeshing an awmous; Nanse a broken-hearted beggar-wife, torn down to tatters, and weeping like Rachel when she thought on better days; and poor wee Benjie going from door to door with a meal-pock on his back.”

Ah, there is exquisite pathos *there*, as well as humor; but the thing for which I have quoted that sentence is its startling truthfulness. You have all done what Mansie Wauch did, I know. Every one has his own way of doing it, and it is his own especial picture which each sees; but there has appeared to us, as to Mansie, (I must recur to my old figure,) as it were a sudden rift in the clouds that conceal the future, and we have seen the way, far ahead,—the dusty way,—and an aged pilgrim pacing slowly along it; and in that aged figure we have each recognized our own young self. How often have I sat down on the mossy wall that surrounded my churchyard, when I had more time for reverie than I have now,—sat upon the mossy wall, under a great oak, whose branches came low down and projected far out,—and looked at the rough gnarled bark, and at the pacing river, and at the belfry of the little church, and there and then thought of Mansie Wauch and of his vision of Future Years! How often in these hours, or in long solitary walks and rides among the hills,



Page 111

have I had visions, clear as that of Mansie Wauch, of how I should grow old in my country parish! Do not think that I wish or intend to be egotistical, my friendly reader. I describe these feelings and fancies because I think this is the likeliest way in which to reach and describe your own. There was a rapid little stream that flowed, in a very lonely place, between the highway and a cottage to which I often went to see a poor old woman; and when I came out of the cottage, having made sure that no one saw me, I always took a great leap over the little stream, which saved going round a little way. And never once, for several years, did I thus cross it without seeing a picture as clear to the mind's eye as Mansie Wauch's,—a picture which made me walk very thoughtfully along for the next mile or two. It was curious to think how one was to get through the accustomed duty after having grown old and frail. The day would come when the brook could be crossed in that brisk fashion no more. It must be an odd thing for the parson to walk as an old man into the pulpit, still his own, which was his own when he was a young man of six-and-twenty. What a crowd of old remembrances must be present each Sunday to the clergyman's mind, who has served the same parish and preached in the same church for fifty years! Personal identity, continued through the successive stages of life, is a commonplace thing to think of; but when it is brought home to your own case and feeling, it is a very touching and a very bewildering thing. There are the same trees and hills as when you were a boy; and when each of us comes to his last days in this world, how short a space it will seem since we were little children! Let us humbly hope, that, in that brief space parting the cradle from the grave, we may (by help from above) have accomplished a certain work which will cast its blessed influence over all the years and all the ages before us. Yet it remains a strange thing to look forward and to see yourself with gray hair, and not much even of that; to see your wife an old woman, and your little boy or girl grown up into manhood or womanhood. It is more strange still to fancy you see them all going on as usual in the round of life, and you no longer among them. You see your empty chair. There is your writing-table and your inkstand; there are your books, not so carefully arranged as they used to be; perhaps, on the whole, less indication than you might have hoped that they miss you. All this is strange when you bring it home to your own case; and that hundreds of millions have felt the like makes it none the less strange to you. The commonplaces of life and death are not commonplace when they befall ourselves. It was in desperate hurry and agitation that Mansie Wauch saw his vision; and in like circumstances you may have yours too. But for the most part such moods come in leisure,—in saunterings through the autumn woods,—in reveries by the winter fire.



Page 112

I do not think, thus musing upon our occasional glimpses of the Future, of such fancies as those of early youth,—fancies and anticipations of greatness, of felicity, of fame; I think of the onward views of men approaching middle age, who have found their place and their work in life, and who may reasonably believe, that, save for great unexpected accidents, there will be no very material change in their lot till that “change come” to which Job looked forward four thousand years since. There are great numbers of educated folk who are likely always to live in the same kind of house, to have the same establishment, to associate with the same class of people, to walk along the same streets, to look upon the same hills, as long as they live. The only change will be the gradual one which will be wrought by advancing years.

And the onward view of such people in such circumstances is generally a very vague one. It is only now and then that there comes the startling clearness of prospect so well set forth by Mansie Wauch. Yet sometimes, when such a vivid view comes, it remains for days, and is a painful companion of your solitude. Don't you remember, clerical reader of thirty-two, having seen a good deal of an old parson, rather sour in aspect, rather shabby-looking, sadly pinched for means, and with powers dwarfed by the sore struggle with the world to maintain his family and to keep up a respectable appearance upon his limited resources; perhaps with his mind made petty and his temper spoiled by the little worries, the petty malignant tattle and gossip and occasional insolence of a little backbiting village? and don't you remember how for days you felt haunted by a sort of nightmare that there was what you would be, if you lived so long? Yes; you know how there have been times when for ten days together that jarring thought would intrude, whenever your mind was disengaged from work; and sometimes, when you went to bed, that thought kept you awake for hours. You knew the impression was morbid, and you were angry with yourself for your silliness; but you could not drive it away.

It makes a great difference in the prospect of Future Years, if you are one of those people who, even after middle age, may still make a great rise in life. This will prolong the restlessness which in others is sobered down at forty: it will extend the period during which you will every now and then have brief seasons of feverish anxiety, hope, and fear, followed by longer stretches of blank disappointment. And it will afford the opportunity of experiencing a vividly new sensation, and of turning over a quite new leaf, after most people have settled to the jog-trot at which the remainder of the pilgrimage is to be covered. A clergyman of the Church of England may be made a bishop, and exchange a quiet rectory for a palace. No doubt the increase of responsibility is to a conscientious man almost appalling; but surely the rise in life is great. There you are, one of four-and-twenty,



Page 113

selected out of near twenty thousand. It is possible, indeed, that you may feel more reason for shame than for elation at the thought. A barrister unknown to fame, but of respectable standing, may be made a judge. Such a man may even, if he gets into the groove, be gradually pushed on till he reaches an eminence which probably surprises himself as much as any one else. A good speaker in Parliament may at sixty or seventy be made a Cabinet Minister. And we can all imagine what indescribable pride and elation must in such cases possess the wife and daughters of the man who has attained this decided step in advance. I can say sincerely that I never saw human beings walk with so airy tread, and evince so fussily their sense of a greatness more than mortal, as the wife and the daughter of an amiable but not able bishop I knew in my youth, when they came to church on the Sunday morning on which the good man preached for the first time in his lawn sleeves. Their heads were turned for the time; but they gradually came right again, as the ladies became accustomed to the summits of human affairs. Let it be said for the bishop himself, that there was not a vestige of that sense of elevation about him. He looked perfectly modest and unaffected. His dress was remarkably ill put on, and his sleeves stuck out in the most awkward fashion ever assumed by drapery. I suppose that sometimes these rises in life come very unexpectedly. I have heard of a man who, when he received a letter from the Prime Minister of the day offering him a place of great dignity, thought the letter was a hoax, and did not notice it for several days. You could not certainly infer from his modesty what has proved to be the fact, that he has filled his place admirably well. The possibility of such material changes must no doubt tend to prolong the interest in life, which is ready to flag as years go on. But perhaps with the majority of men the level is found before middle age, and no very great worldly change awaits them. The path stretches on, with its ups and downs; and they only hope for strength for the day. But in such men's lot of humble duty and quiet content there remains room for many fears. All human beings who are as well off as they can ever be, and so who have little room for hope, seem to be liable to the invasion of great fear as they look into the future. It seems to be so with kings, and with great nobles. Many such have lived in a nervous dread of change, and have ever been watching the signs of the times with apprehensive eyes. Nothing that can happen can well make such better; and so they suffer from the vague foreboding of something which will make them worse. And the same law reaches to those in whom hope is narrowed down, not by the limit of grand possibility, but of little,—not by the fact that they have got all that mortal can get, but by the fact that they have got the little which is all that Providence seems to intend to give to *them*. And, indeed, there is something



Page 114

that is almost awful, when your affairs are all going happily, when your mind is clear and equal to its work, when your bodily health is unbroken, when your home is pleasant, when your income is ample, when your children are healthy and merry and hopeful,—in looking on to Future Years. The more happy you are, the more there is of awe in the thought how frail are the foundations of your earthly happiness,—what havoc may be made of them by the chances of even a single day. It is no wonder that the solemnity and awfulness of the Future have been felt so much, that the languages of Northern Europe have, as I dare say you know, no word which expresses the essential notion of Futurity. You think, perhaps, of *shall* and *will*. Well, these words have come now to convey the notion of Futurity; but they do so only in a secondary fashion. Look to their etymology, and you will see that they *imply* Futurity, but do not *express* it. *I shall* do such a thing means *I am bound to do it, I am under an obligation to do it*. *I will* do such a thing means *I intend to do it. It is my present purpose to do it*. Of course, if you are under an obligation to do anything, or if it be your intention to do anything, the probability is that the thing will be done; but the Northern family of languages ventures no nearer than *that* towards the expression of the bare, awful idea of Future Time. It was no wonder that Mr. Croaker was able to cast a gloom upon the gayest circle, and the happiest conjuncture of circumstances, by wishing that all might be as well that day six months. Six months! What might that time not do? Perhaps you have not read a little poem of Barry Cornwall's, the idea of which must come home to the heart of most of us:—

“Touch us gently, Time!
Let us glide adown thy stream
Gently,—as we sometimes glide
Through a quiet dream.
Humble voyagers are we,
Husband, wife, and children three;—
One is lost,—an angel, fled
To the azure overhead.

“Touch us gently, Time! We've not proud nor soaring wings: *Our* ambition, our content,
Lies in simple things. Humble voyagers are we, O'er life's dim, unsounded sea,
Seeking only some calm clime:— Touch us gently, gentle Time!”

I know that sometimes, my friend, you will not have much sleep, if, when you lay your head on your pillow, you begin to think how much depends upon your health and life. You have reached now that time at which you value life and health not so much for their service to yourself, as for their needfulness to others. There is a petition familiar to me in this Scotch country, where people make their prayers for themselves, which seems to me to possess great solemnity and force, when we think of all that is implied in it. It is,

Spare useful lives! One life, the slender line of blood passing into and passing out of one human heart, may decide the question, whether wife and children



Page 115

shall grow up affluent, refined, happy, yes, and *good*, or be reduced to hard straits, with all the manifold evils which grow of poverty in the case of those who have been reduced to it after knowing other things. You often think, I doubt not, in quiet hours, what would become of your children, if you were gone. You have done, I trust, what you can to care for them, even from your grave: you think sometimes of a poetical figure of speech amid the dry technical phrases of English law: you know what is meant by the law of *Mortmain*; and you like to think that even your *dead hand* may be felt to be kindly intermeddling yet in the affairs of those who were your dearest: that some little sum, slender, perhaps, but as liberal as you could make it, may come in periodically when it is wanted, and seem like the gift of a thoughtful heart and a kindly hand which are far away. Yes, cut down your present income to any extent, that you may make some provision for your children after you are dead. You do not wish that they should have the saddest of all reasons for taking care of you, and trying to lengthen out your life. But even after you have done everything which your small means permit, you will still think, with an anxious heart, of the possibilities of Future Years. A man or woman who has children has very strong reason for wishing to live as long as may be, and has no right to trifle with health or life. And sometimes, looking out into days to come, you think of the little things, hitherto so free from man's heritage of care, as they may some day be. You see them shabby, and early anxious: can *that* be the little boy's rosy face, now so pale and thin? You see them in a poor room, in which you recognize your study-chairs with the hair coming out of the cushions, and a carpet which you remember now threadbare and in holes.

It is no wonder at all that people are so anxious about money. Money means every desirable material thing on earth, and the manifold immaterial things which come of material possessions. Poverty is the most comprehensive earthly evil; all conceivable evils, temporal, spiritual, and eternal, may come of *that*. Of course, great temptations attend its opposite; and the wise man's prayer will be what it was long ago,—“Give me neither poverty nor riches.” But let us have no nonsense talked about money being of no consequence. The want of it has made many a father and mother tremble at the prospect of being taken from their children; the want of it has embittered many a parent's dying hours. You hear selfish persons talking vaguely about faith. You find such heartless persons jauntily spending all they get on themselves, and then leaving their poor children to beggary, with the miserable pretext that they are doing all this through their abundant trust in God. Now this is not faith; it is insolent presumption. It is exactly as if a man should jump from the top of St. Paul's, and say that he had faith that



Page 116

the Almighty would keep him from being dashed to pieces on the pavement. There is a high authority as to such cases,—“Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.” If God had promised that people should never fall into the miseries of penury under any circumstances, it would be faith to trust that promise, however unlikely of fulfilment it might seem in any particular case. But God has made no such promise; and if you leave your children without provision, you have no right to expect that they shall not suffer the natural consequences of your heartlessness and thoughtlessness. True faith lies in your doing everything you possibly can, and *then* humbly trusting in God. And if, after you have done your very best, you must still go, with but a blank outlook for those you leave, why, *then* you may trust them to the Husband of the widow and Father of the fatherless. Faith, as regards such matters, means firm belief that God will do all He has promised to do, however difficult or unlikely. But some people seem to think that faith means firm belief that God will do whatever they think would suit them, however unreasonable, and however flatly in the face of all the established laws of His government.

We all have it in our power to make ourselves miserable, if we look far into Future Years and calculate their probabilities of evil, and steadily anticipate the worst. It is not expedient to calculate too far ahead. Of course, the right way in this, as in other things, is the middle way: we are not to run either into the extreme of over-carefulness and anxiety on the one hand, or of recklessness and imprudence on the other. But as mention has been made of faith, it may safely be said that we are forgetful of that rational trust in God which is at once our duty and our inestimable privilege, if we are always looking out into the future, and vexing ourselves with endless fears as to how things are to go then. There is no divine promise, that, if a reckless blockhead leaves his children to starve, they shall not starve. And a certain inspired volume speaks with extreme severity of the man who fails to provide for them of his own house. But there is a divine promise which says to the humble Christian,—“As thy days, so shall thy strength be.” If your affairs are going on fairly now, be thankful, and try to do your duty, and to do your best, as a Christian man and a prudent man, and then leave the rest to God. Your children are about you; no doubt they may die, and it is fit enough that you should not forget the fragility of your most prized possessions; it is fit enough that you should sometimes sit by the fire and look at the merry faces and listen to the little voices, and think what it would be to lose them. But it is not needful, or rational, or Christian-like, to be always brooding on that thought. And when they grow up, it may be hard to provide for them. The little thing that is sitting on your knee may before many years be alone in life, thousands of miles



Page 117

from you and from his early home, an insignificant item in the bitter price which Britain pays for her Indian Empire. It is even possible, though you hardly for a moment admit *that* thought, that the child may turn out a heartless and wicked man, and prove your shame and heartbreak: all wicked and heartless men have been the children of somebody; and many of them, doubtless, the children of those who surmised the future as little as Eve did when she smiled upon the infant Cain. And the fireside by which you sit, now merry and noisy enough, may grow lonely,—lonely with the second loneliness, not the hopeful solitude of youth looking forward, but the desponding loneliness of age looking back. And it is so with everything else. Your health may break down. Some fearful accident may befall you. The readers of the magazine may cease to care for your articles. People may get tired of your sermons. People may stop buying your books, your wine, your groceries, your milk and cream. Younger men may take away your legal business. Yet how often these fears prove utterly groundless! It was good and wise advice, given by one who had managed, with a cheerful and hopeful spirit, to pass through many trying and anxious years, to “take short views”:—not to vex and worry yourself by planning too far ahead. And a wiser than the wise and cheerful Sydney Smith had anticipated his philosophy. You remember Who said, “Take no thought”—that is, no over-anxious and over-careful thought—“for the morrow; for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself.” Did you ever sail over a blue summer sea towards a mountainous coast, frowning, sullen, gloomy: and have you not seen the gloom retire before you as you advanced; the hills, grim in the distance, stretch into sunny slopes when you neared them; and the waters smile in cheerful light, that looked so black when they were far away? And who is there that has not seen the parallel in actual life? We have all known the anticipated ills of life—the danger that looked so big, the duty that looked so arduous, the entanglement that we could not see our way through—prove to have been nothing more than spectres on the far horizon; and when at length we reached them, all their difficulty had vanished into air, leaving us to think what fools we had been for having so needlessly conjured up phantoms to disturb our quiet. Yes, there is no doubt of it, a very great part of all we suffer in this world is from the apprehension of things that never come. I remember well how a dear friend, whom I (and many more) lately lost, told me many times of his fears as to what he would do in a certain contingency which both he and I thought was quite sure to come sooner or later. I know that the anticipation of it caused him some of the most anxious hours of a very anxious, though useful and honored life. How vain his fears proved! He was taken from this world before what he had dreaded had cast its most distant shadow. Well, let me try to discard the notion which has been sometimes worrying me of late, that perhaps I have written nearly as many essays as any one will care to read. Don’t let any of us give way to fears which may prove to have been entirely groundless.



Page 118

And then, if we are really spared to see those trials we sometimes think of, and which it is right that we should sometimes think of, the strength for them will come at the time. They will not look nearly so black, and we shall be enabled to bear them bravely. There is in human nature a marvellous power of accommodation to circumstances. We can gradually make up our mind to almost anything. If this were a sermon instead of an essay, I should explain my theory of how this comes to be. I see in all this something beyond the mere natural instinct of acquiescence in what is inevitable; something beyond the benevolent law in the human mind, that it shall adapt itself to whatever circumstances it may be placed in; something beyond the doing of the gentle comforter Time. Yes, it is wonderful what people can go through, wonderful what people can get reconciled to. I dare say my friend Smith, when his hair began to fall off, made frantic efforts to keep it on. I have no doubt he anxiously tried all the vile concoctions which quackery advertises in the newspapers, for the advantage of those who wish for luxuriant locks. I dare say for a while it really weighed upon his mind, and disturbed his quiet, that he was getting bald. But now he has quite reconciled himself to his lot; and with a head smooth and sheeny as the egg of the ostrich, Smith goes on through life, and feels no pang at the remembrance of the ambrosial curls of his youth. Most young people, I dare say, think it will be a dreadful thing to grow old: a girl of eighteen thinks it must be an awful sensation to be thirty. Believe me, not at all. You are brought to it bit by bit; and when you reach the spot, you rather like the view. And it is so with graver things. We grow able to do and to bear that which it is needful that we should do and bear. As is the day, so the strength proves to be. And you have heard people tell you truly, that they have been enabled to bear what they never thought they could have come through with their reason or their life. I have no fear for the Christian man, so he keeps to the path of duty. Straining up the steep hill, his heart will grow stout in just proportion to its steepness. Yes, and if the call to martyrdom came, I should not despair of finding men who would show themselves equal to it, even in this commonplace age, and among people who wear Highland cloaks and knickerbockers. The martyr's strength would come with the martyr's day. It is because there is no call for it now, that people look so little like it.

It is very difficult, in this world, to strongly enforce a truth, without seeming to push it into an extreme. You are very apt, in avoiding one error, to run into the opposite error; forgetting that truth and right lie generally between two extremes. And in agreeing with Sydney Smith, as to the wisdom and the duty of "taking short views," let us take care of appearing to approve the doings of those foolish and unprincipled people who will keep no outlook into



Page 119

the future time at all. A bee, you know, cannot see more than a single inch before it; and there are many men, and perhaps more women, who appear, as regards their domestic concerns, to be very much of bees: not bees in the respect of being busy; but bees in the respect of being blind. You see this in all ranks of life. You see it in the artisan, earning good wages, yet with every prospect of being weeks out of work next summer or winter, who yet will not be persuaded to lay by a little in preparation for a rainy day. You see it in the country gentleman, who, having five thousand a year; spends ten thousand a year; resolutely shutting his eyes to the certain and not very remote consequences. You see it in the man who walks into a shop and buys a lot of things which he has not the money to pay for, in the vague hope that something will turn up. It is a comparatively thoughtful and anxious class of men who systematically overcloud the present by anticipations of the future. The more usual thing is to sacrifice the future to the present; to grasp at what in the way of present gratification or gain can be got, with very little thought of the consequences. You see silly women, the wives of men whose families are mainly dependent on their lives, constantly urging on their husbands to extravagances which eat up the little provision which might have been made for themselves and their children when he is gone who earned their bread. There is no sadder sight, I think, than that which is not a very uncommon sight, the careworn, anxious husband, laboring beyond his strength, often sorrowfully calculating how he may make the ends to meet, denying himself in every way; and the extravagant idiot of a wife, bedizened with jewelry and arrayed in velvet and lace, who tosses away his hard earnings in reckless extravagance; in entertainments which he cannot afford, given to people who do not care a rush for him; in preposterous dress; in absurd furniture; in needless men-servants; in green-grocers above measure; in resolute aping of the way of living of people with twice or three times the means. It is sad to see all the forethought, prudence, and moderation of the wedded pair confined to one of them. You would say that it will not be any solid consolation to the widow, when the husband is fairly worried into his grave at last,—when his daughters have to go out as governesses, and she has to let lodgings,—to reflect that while he lived they never failed to have Champagne at his dinner-parties; and that they had three men to wait at table on such occasions, while Mr. Smith, next door, had never more than one and a maidservant. If such idiotic women would but look forward, and consider how all this must end! If the professional man spends all he earns, what remains when the supply is cut off; when the toiling head and hand can toil no more? Ah, a little of the economy and management which must perforce be practised after *that* might have tended powerfully



Page 120

to put off the evil day. Sometimes the husband is merely the careworn drudge who provides what the wife squanders. Have you not known such a thing as that a man should be laboring under an Indian sun, and cutting down every personal expense to the last shilling, that he might send a liberal allowance to his wife in England; while she meanwhile was recklessly spending twice what was thus sent her; running up overwhelming accounts, dashing about to public balls, paying for a bouquet what cost the poor fellow far away much thought to save, giving costly entertainments at home, filling her house with idle and empty-headed scapegraces, carrying on scandalous flirtations; till it becomes a happy thing, if the certain ruin she is bringing on her husband's head is cut short by the needful interference of Sir Cresswell Cresswell? There are cases in which tarring and feathering would soothe the moral sense of the right-minded onlooker. And even where things are not so bad as in the case of which we have been thinking, it remains the social curse of this age, that people with a few hundreds a year determinedly act in various respects as if they had as many thousands. The dinner given by a man with eight hundred a year, in certain regions of the earth which I could easily point out, is, as regards food, wine, and attendance, precisely the same as the dinner given by another man who has five thousand a year. When will this end? When will people see its silliness? In truth, you do not really, as things are in this country, make many people better off by adding a little or a good deal to their yearly income. For in all probability they were living up to the very extremity of their means before they got the addition; and in all probability the first thing they do, on getting the addition, is so far to increase their establishment and their expense that it is just as hard a struggle as ever to make the ends meet. It would not be a pleasant arrangement, that a man who was to be carried across the straits from England to France should be fixed on a board so weighted that his mouth and nostrils should be at the level of the water, thus that he should be struggling for life, and barely escaping drowning all the way. Yet hosts of people, whom no one proposes to put under restraint, do as regards their income and expenditure a precisely analogous thing. They deliberately weight themselves to that degree that their heads are barely above water, and that any unforeseen emergency dips their heads under. They rent a house a good deal dearer than they can justly afford; and they have servants more and more expensive than they ought; and by many such things they make sure that their progress through life shall be a drowning struggle: while, if they would rationally resolve and manfully confess that they cannot afford to have things as richer folk have them, and arrange their way of living in accordance with what they can afford, they would enjoy the feeling of ease and comfort; they would not be ever on the



Page 121

wretched stretch on which they are now, nor keeping up the hollow appearance of what is not the fact. But there are folk who make it a point of honor never to admit, that, in doing or not doing anything, they are actuated for an instant by so despicable a consideration as the question whether or not they can afford it. And who shall reckon up the brains which this social calamity has driven into disease, or the early paralytic shocks which it has brought on?

When you were very young, and looked forward to Future Years, did you ever feel a painful fear that you might outgrow your early home affections, and your associations with your native scenes? Did you ever think to yourself,—Will the day come when I shall have been years away from that river's side, and yet not care? I think we have all known the feeling. O plain church, to which I used to go when I was a child, and where I used to think the singing so very splendid! O little room, where I used to sleep! and you, tall tree, on whose topmost branch I cut the initials which perhaps the reader knows! did I not even then wonder to myself if the time and would ever come when I should be far away from you,—far away, as now, for many years, and not likely to go back,—and yet feel entirely indifferent to the matter? and did not I even then feel a strange pain in the fear that very likely it might? These things come across the mind of a little boy with a curious grief and bewilderment. Ah, there is something strange in the inner life of a thoughtful child of eight years old! I would rather see a faithful record of his thoughts, feelings, fancies, and sorrows, for a single week, than know all the political events that have happened during that space in Spain, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Russia, and Turkey. Even amid the great grief at leaving home for school in your early days, did you not feel a greater grief to think that the day might come when you would not care at all; when your home ties and affections would be outgrown; when you would be quite content to live on, month after month, far from parents, sisters, brothers, and feel hardly a perceptible blank when you remembered that they were far away? But it is of the essence of such fears, that, when the thing comes that you were afraid of, it has ceased to be fearful; still it is with a little pang that you sometimes call to remembrance how much you feared it once. It is a daily regret, though not a very acute one, (more's the pity,) to be thrown much, in middle life, into the society of an old friend whom as a boy you had regarded as very wise, and to be compelled to observe that he is a tremendous fool. You struggle with the conviction; you think it wrong to give in to it; but you cannot help it. But it would have been a sharper pang to the child's heart, to have impressed upon the child the fact, that "Good Mr. Goose is a fool, and some day you will understand that he is." In those days one admits no imperfection in the people and the things



Page 122

one likes. You like a person; and *he is good*. *That* seems the whole case. You do not go into exceptions and reservations. I remember how indignant I felt, as a boy, at reading some depreciatory criticism of the "Waverley Novels." The criticism was to the effect that the plots generally dragged at first, and were huddled up at the end. But to me the novels were enchaining, enthralling; and to hint a defect in them stunned one. In the boy's feeling, if a thing be good, why, there cannot be anything bad about it. But in the man's mature judgment, even in the people he likes best, and in the things he appreciates most highly, there are many flaws and imperfections. It does not vex us much now to find that this is so; but it would have greatly vexed us many years since to have been told that it would be so. I can well imagine, that, if you told a thoughtful and affectionate child, how well he would some day get on, far from his parents and his home, his wish would be that any evil might befall him rather than that! We shrink with terror from the prospect of things which we can take easily enough when they come. I dare say Lord Chancellor Thurlow was moderately sincere when he exclaimed in the House of Peers, "When I forget my king, may my God forget me!" And you will understand what Leigh Hunt meant, when, in his pleasant poem of "The Palfrey," he tells us of a daughter who had lost a very bad and heartless father by death, that,

"The daughter wept, and wept the more,
To think her tears would soon be o'er."

Even in middle age, one sad thought which comes in the prospect of Future Years is of the change which they are sure to work upon many of our present views and feelings. And the change, in many cases, will be to the worse. One thing is certain,—that your temper will grow worse, if it do not grow better. Years will sour it, if they do not mellow it. Another certain thing is, that, if you do not grow wiser, you will be growing more foolish. It is very true that there is no fool so foolish as an old fool. Let us hope, my friend, that, whatever be our honest worldly work, it may never lose its interest. We must always speak humbly about the changes which coming time will work upon us, upon even our firmest resolutions and most rooted principles; or I should say for myself that I cannot even imagine myself the same being, with bent less resolute and heart less warm to that best of all employments which is the occupation of my life. But there are few things which, as we grow older, impress us more deeply than the transitoriness of thoughts and feelings in human hearts.



Page 123

Nor am I thinking of contemptible people only, when I say so. I am not thinking of the fellow who is pulled up in court in an action for breach of promise of marriage, and who in one letter makes vows of unalterable affection, and in another letter, written a few weeks or months later, tries to wriggle out of his engagement. Nor am I thinking of the weak, though well-meaning lady, who devotes herself in succession to a great variety of uneducated and unqualified religious instructors; who tells you one week how she has joined the flock of Mr. A., the converted prize-fighter, and how she regards him as by far the most improving preacher she ever heard; and who tells you the next week that she has seen through the prize-fighter, that he has gone and married a wealthy Roman Catholic, and that now she has resolved to wait on the ministry of Mr. B., an enthusiastic individual who makes shoes during the week and gives sermons on Sundays, and in whose addresses she finds exactly what suits her. I speak of the better feelings and purposes of wiser, if not better folk. Let me think here of pious emotions and holy resolutions, of the best and purest frames of heart and mind. Oh, if we could all always remain at our best! And after all, permanence is the great test. In the matter of Christian faith and feeling, in the matter of all our worthier principles and purposes, that which lasts longest is best. This, indeed, is true of most things. The worth of anything depends much upon its durability,—upon the wear that is in it. A thing that is merely a fine flash and over only disappoint. The highest authority has recognized this. You remember Who said to his friends, before leaving them, that He would have them bring forth fruit, and much fruit. But not even *that* was enough. The fairest profession for a time, the most earnest labor for a time, the most ardent affection for a time, would not suffice. And so the Redeemer's words were,—“I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that *your fruit should remain.*” Well, let us trust, that, in the most solemn of all respects, only progress shall be brought to us by all the changes of Future Years.

But it is quite vain to think that feelings, as distinguished from principles, shall not lose much of their vividness, freshness, and depth, as time goes on. You cannot now by any effort revive the exultation you felt at some unexpected great success, nor the heart-sinking of some terrible loss or trial. You know how women, after the death of a child, determine that every day, as long as they live, they will visit the little grave. And they do so for a time, sometimes for a long time; but they gradually leave off. You know how burying-places are very trimly and carefully kept at first, and how flowers are hung upon the stone; but these things gradually cease. You know how many husbands and wives, after their partner's death, determine to give



Page 124

the remainder of life to the memory of the departed, and would regard with sincere horror the suggestion that it was possible they should ever marry again; but after a while they do. And you will even find men, beyond middle age, who made a tremendous work at their first wife's death, and wore very conspicuous mourning, who in a very few months may be seen dangling after some new fancy, and who in the prospect of their second marriage evince an exhilaration that approaches to crackiness. It is usual to speak of such things in a ludicrous manner; but I confess the matter seems to me anything but one to laugh at. I think that the rapid dying out of warm feelings, the rapid change of fixed resolutions, is one of the most sorrowful subjects of reflection which it is possible to suggest. Ah, my friends, after we die, it would not be expedient, even if it were possible, to come back. Many of us would not like to find how very little they miss us. But still, it is the manifest intention of the Creator that strong feelings should be transitory. The sorrowful thing is when they pass and leave absolutely no trace behind them. There should always be some corner kept in the heart for a feeling which once possessed it all. Let us look at the case temperately. Let us face and admit the facts. The healthy body and mind can get over a great deal; but there are some things which it is not to the credit of our nature should ever be entirely got over. Here are sober truth, and sound philosophy, and sincere feeling together, in the words of Philip van Artevelde:

“Well, well, she’s gone,
And I have tamed my sorrow. Pain and grief
Are transitory things, no less than joy;
And though they leave us not the men we were,
Yet they do leave us. You behold me here,
A man bereaved, with something of a blight
Upon the early blossoms of his life,
And its first verdure,—having not the less
A living root, and drawing from the earth
Its vital juices, from the air its powers:
And surely as man’s heart and strength are whole,
His appetites regerminate, his heart
Reopens, and his objects and desires
Spring up renewed.”

But though Artevelde speaks truly and well, you remember how Mr. Taylor, in that noble play, works out to our view the sad sight of the deterioration of character, the growing coarseness and harshness, the lessening tenderness and kindness, which are apt to come with advancing years. Great trials, we know, passing over us, may influence us either for the worse or the better; and unless our nature is a very obdurate and poor one, though they may leave us, they will not leave us the men we were. Once, at a public meeting, I heard a man in eminent station make a speech. I had never seen him



before; but I remembered an inscription which I had read, in a certain churchyard far away, upon the stone that marked the resting-place of his young wife, who had died many years before. I



Page 125

thought of its simple words of manly and hearty sorrow. I knew that the eminence he had reached had not come till she who would have been proudest of it was beyond knowing it or caring for it. And I cannot say with what interest and satisfaction I thought I could trace, in the features which were sad without the infusion of a grain of sentimentalism, in the subdued and quiet tone of the man's whole aspect and manner and address, the manifest proof that he had not shut down the leaf upon that old page of his history, that he had never quite got over that great grief of earlier years. One felt better and more hopeful for the sight. I suppose many people, after meeting some overwhelming loss or trial, have fancied that they would soon die; but that is almost invariably a delusion. Various dogs have died of a broken heart, but very few human beings. The inferior creature has pined away at his master's loss: as for *us*, it is not that one would doubt the depth and sincerity of sorrow, but that there is more endurance in our constitution, and that God has appointed that grief shall rather mould and influence than kill. It is a much sadder sight than an early death, to see human beings live on after heavy trial, and sink into something very unlike their early selves and very inferior to their early selves. I can well believe that many a human being, if he could have a glimpse in innocent youth of what he will be twenty or thirty years after, would pray in anguish to be taken before coming to *that!* Mansie Wauch's glimpse of destitution was bad enough; but a million times worse is a glimpse of hardened and unabashed sin and shame. And it would be no comfort—it would be an aggravation in that view—to think that by the time you have reached that miserable point, you will have grown pretty well reconciled to it. *That* is the worst of all. To be wicked and depraved, and to feel it, and to be wretched under it, is bad enough; but it is a great deal worse to have fallen into that depth of moral degradation and to feel that really you don't care. The instinct of accommodation is not always a blessing. It is happy for us, that, though in youth we hoped to live in a castle or a palace, we can make up our mind to live in a little parsonage or a quiet street in a country town. It is happy for us, that, though in youth we hoped to be very great and famous, we are so entirely reconciled to being little and unknown. But it is not happy for the poor girl who walks the Haymarket at night that she feels her degradation so little. It is not happy that she has come to feel towards her miserable life so differently now from what she would have felt towards it, had it been set before her while she was the blooming, thoughtless creature in the little cottage in the country. It is only by fits and starts that the poor drunken wretch, living in a garret upon a little pittance allowed him by his relations, who was once a man of character and hope, feels what a sad pitch he has come to. If you could get him to feel it constantly, there would be some hope of his reclamation even yet.



Page 126

It seems to me a very comforting thought, in looking on to Future Years, if you are able to think that you are in a profession or a calling from which you will never retire. For the prospect of a total change in your mode of life, and the entire cessation of the occupation which for many years employed the greater part of your waking thoughts, and all this amid the failing powers and flagging hopes of declining years, is both a sad and a perplexing prospect to a thoughtful person. For such a person cannot regard this great change simply in the light of a rest from toil and worry; he will know quite well what a blankness and listlessness and loss of interest in life will come of feeling all at once that you have nothing at all to do. And so it is a great blessing, if your vocation be one which is a dignified and befitting one for an old man to be engaged in, one that beseems his gravity—and his long experience, one that beseems even his slow movements and his white hairs. It is a pleasant thing to see an old man a judge; his years become the judgment-seat. But then the old man can hold such an office only while he retains strength of body and mind efficiently to perform its duties; and he must do all his work for himself: and accordingly a day must come when the venerable Chancellor resigns the Great Seal; when the aged Justice or Baron must give up his place; and when these honored Judges, though still retaining considerable vigor, but vigor less than enough for their hard work, are compelled to feel that their occupation is gone. And accordingly I hold that what is the best of all professions, for many reasons, is especially so for this, that you need never retire from it. In the Church you need not do all your duty yourself. You may get assistance to supplement your own lessening strength. The energetic young curate or curates may do that part of the parish work which exceeds the power of the aging incumbent, while the entire parochial machinery has still the advantage of being directed by his wisdom and experience, and while the old man is still permitted to do what he can with such strength as is spared to him, and to feel that he is useful in the noblest cause yet. And even to extremest age and frailty,—to age and frailty which would long since have incapacitated the judge for the bench,—the parish clergyman may take some share in the much-loved duty in which he has labored so long. He may still, though briefly, and only now and then, address his flock from the pulpit, in words which his very feebleness will make far more touchingly effective than the most vigorous eloquence and the richest and fullest tones of his young coadjutors. There never will be, within the sacred walls, a silence and reverence more profound than when the withered kindly face looks as of old upon the congregation, to whose fathers its owner first ministered, and which has grown up mainly under his instruction,—and when the voice that falls familiarly on so many ears tells again,



Page 127

quietly and earnestly, the old story which we all need so much to hear. And he may still look in at the parish school, and watch the growth of a generation that is to do the work of life when he is in his grave; and kindly smooth the children's heads; and tell them how One, once a little child, and never more than a young man, brought salvation alike to young and old. He may still sit by the bedside of the sick and dying, and speak to such with the sympathy and the solemnity of one who does not forget that the last great realities are drawing near to both. But there are vocations which are all very well for young or middle-aged people, but which do not quite suit the old. Such is that of the barrister. Wrangling and hair-splitting, browbeating and bewildering witnesses, making coarse jokes to excite the laughter of common jury-men, and addressing such with clap-trap bellowings, are not the work for gray-headed men. If such remain at the bar, rather let them have the more refined work of the Equity Courts, where you address judges, and not juries; and where you spare clap-trap and misrepresentation, if for no better reason, because you know that these will not stand you in the slightest stead. The work which best befits the aged, the work for which no mortal can ever become too venerable and dignified or too weak and frail, is the work of Christian usefulness and philanthropy. And it is a beautiful sight to see, as I trust we all have seen, *that* work persevered in with the closing energies of life. It is a noble test of the soundness of the principle that prompted to its first undertaking. It is a hopeful and cheering sight to younger men, looking out with something of fear to the temptations and trials of the years before them. Oh! if the gray-haired clergyman, with less now, indeed, of physical strength and mere physical warmth, yet preaches, with the added weight and solemnity of his long experience, the same blessed doctrines now, after forty years, that he preached in his early prime; if the philanthropist of half a century since is the philanthropist still,—still kind, hopeful, and unwearied, though with the snows of age upon his head, and the hand that never told its fellow of what it did now trembling as it does the deed of mercy; then I think that even the most doubtful will believe that the principle and the religion of such men were a glorious reality! The sternest of all touchstones of the genuineness of our better feelings is the fashion in which they stand the wear of years.

But my shortening space warns me to stop; and I must cease, for the present, from these thoughts of Future Years,—cease, I mean, from writing about that mysterious tract before us: who can cease from thinking of it? You remember how the writer of that little poem which has been quoted asks Time to touch gently him and his. Of course he spoke as a poet, stating the case fancifully,—but not forgetting, that, when we come to sober sense,



Page 128

we must prefer our requests to an Ear more ready to hear us and a Hand more ready to help. It is not to Time that I shall apply to lead me through life into immortality! And I cannot think of years to come without going back to a greater poet, whom we need not esteem the less because his inspiration was loftier than that of the Muses, who has summed up so grandly in one comprehensive sentence all the possibilities which could befall *him* in the days and ages before him. "Thou shall guide me with Thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory!" Let us humbly trust that in that sketch, round and complete, of all that can ever come to us, my readers and I may be able to read the history of our Future Years!

BROTHER JONATHAN'S LAMENT FOR SISTER CAROLINE.

She has gone,—she has left us in passion and pride,—
Our stormy-browed sister, so long at our side!
She has torn her own star from our firmament's glow,
And turned on her brother the face of a foe!

O Caroline, Caroline, child of the sun,
We can never forget that our hearts have been one,—
Our foreheads both sprinkled in Liberty's name,
From the fountain of blood with the finger of flame!

You were always too ready to fire at a touch;
But we said, "She is hasty,—she does not mean much."
We have scowled, when you uttered some turbulent threat;
But Friendship still whispered, "Forgive and forget!"

Has our love all died out? Have its altars grown cold?
Has the curse come at last which the fathers foretold?
Then Nature must teach us the strength of the chain
That her petulant children would sever in vain.

They may fight till the buzzards are gorged with their spoil,
Till the harvest grows black as it rots in the soil,
Till the wolves and the catamounts troop from their caves,
And the shark tracks the pirate, the lord of the waves:

In vain is the strife! When its fury is past,
Their fortunes must flow in one channel at last,



As the torrents that rush from the mountains of snow
Roll mingled in peace through the valleys below.

Our Union is river, lake, ocean, and sky:
Man breaks not the medal, when God cuts the die!
Though darkened with sulphur, though cloven with steel,
The blue arch will brighten, the waters will heal!

O Caroline, Caroline, child of the sun,
There are battles with Fate that can never be won!
The star-flowering banner must never be furled,
For its blossoms of light are the hope of the world!

Go, then, our rash sister! afar and aloof,—
Run wild in the sunshine away from our roof;
But when your heart aches and your feet have grown sore,
Remember the pathway that leads to our door!

ORIGINAL MEMORIALS OF MRS. PIOZZI.



Page 129

Ninety years ago, one of the pleasantest houses near London, for the society that gathered within it, was Mr., or rather, Mrs. Thrale's, at Streatham Park. To be a guest there was to meet the best people in England, and to hear such good talk that much of it has not lost its flavor even yet. Strawberry Hill, Holland House, or any other famous house of that day, has left but faint memories of itself, compared with those of Streatham. Boswell, the most sagacious of men in the hunt after good company, had the good wit and good fortune to get entrance here. One day, in 1769, Dr. Johnson delivered him "a very polite card" from Mr. and Mrs. Thrale, inviting him to Streatham. "On the 6th of October, I complied," he says, "with their obliging invitation, and found, at an elegant villa six miles from town, every circumstance that can make society pleasing." Upon the walls of the library hung portraits of the master and mistress of the house, and of their most familiar friends and guests, all by Sir Joshua. Madame d'Arblay, in her most entertaining "Diary," gives a list of them,—and a list is all that is needed of such famous names. "Mrs. Thrale and her eldest daughter were in one piece, over the fireplace, at full length. The rest of the pictures were all three-quarters. Mr. Thrale was over the door leading to his study. The general collection then began by Lord Sandys and Lord Westcote, (Lyttelton,) two early noble friends of Mr. Thrale. Then followed Dr. Johnson, Mr. Burke, Dr. Goldsmith, Mr. Murphy, Mr. Garrick, Mr. Baretti, Sir Robert Chambers, and Sir Joshua Reynolds himself,—all painted in the highest style of this great master, who much delighted in this his Streatham Gallery. There was place left but for one more frame when the acquaintance with Dr. Burney began at Streatham."

A household which had such men for its intimates must have had a more than common charm in itself, and at Streatham this charm lay chiefly in the character of its mistress. It was Mrs. Thrale who had the rare power "to call together the most select company when it pleased her." In 1770 she was thirty years old. A small and not beautiful woman, but with a variety of expression that more than compensated for the want of handsome features, with a frank, animated manner, and that highest tact which sets guests at ease, there was something specially attractive in her first address. But beyond this she was the pleasantest converser of all the ladies of the day. In that art in which one "has all mankind for competitors," there was no one equal to her in her way. Gifted with the readiest of well-stored memories, with a lively wit and sprightly fancy, with a strong desire to please and an ambition to shine, she never failed to win admiration, while her sweetness of temper and delicate consideration for others gained for her a general regard. For many years she was the friend who did most to make Johnson's life happy. He was a constant inmate at Streatham. "I long thought you,"



Page 130

wrote he, "the first of womankind." It was her "kindness which soothed twenty years of a life radically wretched." "To see and hear you," he wrote, "is always to hear wit and to see virtue." She belonged, in truth, to the most serviceable class of women,—by no means to the highest order of her sex. She was not a woman of deep heart, or of noble or tender feeling; but she had kindly and ready sympathies, and such a disposition to please as gave her the capacity of pleasing. Her very faults added to her success. She was vain and ambitious; but her vanity led her to seek the praises of others, and her ambition taught her how to gain them. She was selfish; but she pleased herself not at the expense of others, but by paying them attentions which returned to her in personal gratifications. She was made for such a position as that which she held at Streatham. The highest eulogy of her is given in an incidental way by Boswell. He reports Johnson as saying one day, "How few of his friends' houses would a man choose to be at when he is sick!" He mentioned one or two. I recollect only Thrale's."

All the world of readers know the main incidents of Mrs. Thrale's life. Her own books, Boswell, *Madame d'Arblay*, have made us almost as familiar with her as with Dr. Johnson himself. Not yet have people got tired of wondering at her marriage with Piozzi, or of amusing themselves with the gossip of the old lady who remained a wit at eighty years old, and, having outlived her great contemporaries, was happy in not outliving her own faculties. Few characters not more remarkable have been more discussed than hers. Macaulay, with characteristic unfairness, gave a view of her conduct which Mr. Hayward, in his recently published entertaining volumes,[A] shows to have been in great part the invention of the great essayist's lively and unprincipled imagination. In the autobiographical memorials of Mrs. Piozzi, now for the first time printed, there is much that throws light on her life, and her relations with her contemporaries. They do not so much raise one's respect for her, as present her to us as a very natural and generally likable sort of woman, even in those acts of her life which have been the most blamed.

[Footnote A: *Autobiography, Letters, and Literary Remains of Mrs. Piozzi (Thrale)*. Edited, with Notes and an Introductory Account of her Life and Writings, by A. Hayward, Esq., Q.C. In Two Volumes. London, 1861. Reprinted by Ticknor & Fields.]

If she had but died while she was mistress of Streatham, we should have only delightful recollections of her. She would have been one of the most agreeable famous women on record. But the last forty years of her life were not as charming as the first. Her weaknesses gained mastery over her, her vanity led her into follies, and she who had once been the favorite correspondent of Dr. Johnson now appears as the correspondent of such inferior persona that no association is connected



Page 131

with their names. Mrs. Thrale and Mrs. Piozzi are two different persons. One belongs to Streatham, the other to Bath; one is “always young and always pretty,” the other a rouged old woman. But it is unfair to push the contrast too far. Mrs. Piozzi at seventy or eighty was as sprightly, as good-natured, as Mrs. Thrale at thirty or forty. She never lost her vivacity, never her desire to please. But it is a sadly different thing to please Dr. Johnson, Burke, or Sir Joshua, and to please

Those real genuine no-mistake Tom Thumbs,
The little people fed on great men's crumbs.

One of the most marked and least satisfactory expressions of Mrs. Piozzi's character during her later years was a fancy that she took to Conway, a young and handsome actor, who appeared in Bath, where she was then living, in the year 1819. From the time of her first acquaintance with him, till her death, in 1821, she treated him with the most flattering regard,—with an affection, indeed, that might be called motherly, had there not been in it an element of excitement which was neither maternal nor dignified. Conway was a gentleman in feeling, and seems to have had not only a grateful sense of the old lady's partiality for him, but a sincere interest also in hearing from her of the days and the friends of her youth. So she wrote letters to him, gave him books filled with annotations, (it was a favorite habit of hers to write notes on the margins of books,) wrote for him the story of her life, and drew on the resources of her marvellous memory for his amusement. The old woman's kindness was one of the few bright things in poor Conway's unhappy life. His temperament was morbidly sensitive; and when, in 1821, while acting in London, Theodore Hook attacked him in the most cruel and offensive manner in the columns of the “John Bull,” he threw up his engagement, determined to act no more in London, and for a time left the stage. A year or two afterwards he came to this country, and met with a very considerable success. But he fancied himself underrated, and, after performing in Philadelphia in the winter of 1826, he took passage for Charleston, and on the voyage threw himself overboard and was lost. His effects were afterwards sold by auction in New York. Among them were many interesting relics and memorials of Mrs. Piozzi. Mr. Hayward mentions “a copy of the folio edition of Young's ‘Night Thoughts,’ in which he had made a note of its having been presented to him by his ‘dearly attached friend, the celebrated Mrs. Piozzi.’” But there were other books of far greater interest and value than this. There was, as we have been informed, a copy of Malone's Shakspeare, with numerous notes in the handwriting of Dr. Johnson, —and a copy of “Prayers and Meditations by Samuel Johnson,” with several additional manuscript prayers, and Mrs. Piozzi's name upon one of the fly-leaves. But more curious still was a copy of Mrs. Piozzi's “Journey through France, Italy, and Germany,” both volumes of which are full of marginal notes, while, inserted at the beginning and the end, are many pages of Mrs. Piozzi's beautifully written manuscript, containing a narrative and anecdotes of portions of her life. These volumes now lie before us,[B] and

their unpublished contents are as lively, as entertaining, and as rich in autobiographic illustration, as any of the material of which Mr. Hayward's recent book is composed.



Page 132

[Footnote B: This unique copy of the *Journey through France, etc.*, is in the possession of Mr. Duncan C. Pell, of Newport, R.I. It is to his liberality that we are indebted for the privilege of laying before the readers of the Atlantic the following portions of Mrs. Piozzi's manuscript.]

On the first fly-leaf is the following inscription:—

“These Books do not in any wise belong to me; they are the property of William Augustus Conway, Esq., who left them to my care, for purpose of putting notes, when he quitted Bath, May 14, 1819.

“Hester Lynch Piozzi writes this for fear lest her death happening before his return, these books might be confounded among the others in her study.”

On the next page the narrative begins, and with a truly astonishing spirit for the writing of a woman in her eightieth year. Her old vivacity is still natural to her; there is nothing forced in the pleasantry of this introduction.

“A Lady once—’t was many years ago—asked me to lend her a book out of my library at Streatham Park. ‘A book of entertainment,’ said J, ‘of course.’ ‘That I don’t know or rightly comprehend;’ was her odd answer; ‘I wish for an *Abridgment*.’ ‘An Abridgment of what?’ ‘*That*,’ she replied, ‘you must tell *me*, my Dear; for I am no reader, like you and Dr. Johnson; I only remember that the last book I read was very pretty, and my husband called it an Abridgment.’.... And if I give some account of myself here in these few little sheets prefixed to my ‘*Journey thro’ Italy*,’ you must kindly accept

“The Abridgment.”

The first pages of the manuscript are occupied by Mrs. Piozzi with an account of her family and of her own early life. They contain in brief the same narrative that she gave in her “Autobiographical Memoirs,” printed by Mr. Hayward, in his first volume. Here is a story, however, which we do not remember to have seen before.

“My heart was free, my head full of Authors, Actors, Literature in every shape; and I had a dear, dear friend, an old Dr. Collier, who said he was sixty-six years old, I remember, the day I was sixteen, and whose instructions I prized beyond all the gayeties of early life: nor have I ever passed a day since we parted in which I have not recollected with gratitude the boundless obligations that I owe him. He was intimate with the famous James Harris of Salisbury, Lord Malmesbury’s father, of whom you have heard how Charles Townshend said, when he took his seat in the House of Commons,—‘Who is this man?’—to his next neighbour; ‘I never saw him before.’ ‘Who? Why, Harris the author, that wrote one book about Grammar [so he did] and one about Virtue.’ ‘What does he come here for?’ replies Spanish Charles; ‘he will find neither Grammar nor Virtue *here*.’ Well, my dear old Dr. Collier had much of both, and delighted to shake the

superflux of his full mind over mine, ready to receive instruction conveyed with so much tender assiduity.”



Page 133

In both her autobiographies, the printed as well as the manuscript, Mrs. Piozzi speaks in very cold and disparaging terms of her first husband, Mr. Thrale. Her marriage with him had not been a love-match; but we suspect that the long course of years had been unfavorable to his memory in her recollection, and that the blame with which his friends visited her second marriage, which was in all respects an affair of the heart, produced in her a certain bitterness of feeling toward Mr. Thrale, as if he had been the author of these reproaches. It is impossible to believe that he was as indifferent to her as she represents, and that her marriage with him was not moderately happy. Had it been otherwise, however well appearances might have been kept up, Dr. Johnson could hardly have been deceived concerning the truth, and would hardly have ventured to write to her in his letter of consolation upon Mr. Thrale's death in 1781,—

“He that has given you happiness in marriage, to a degree of which, without personal knowledge, I should have thought the description fabulous, can give you another mode of happiness as a mother.”

One of her most decided intellectual characteristics was her versatility, or, to give it a harder name, what Johnson called her “instability of attention.” Dulness was, in her code, the unpardonable sin. Variety was the charm of life, and of books. She never dwelt long on one idea. Her letters and her books are pieces of mosaic-work, the bits of material being put together without any regular pattern, but often with a pretty effect. Here is an illustration of her style.

“In a few years (our Letters tell the date) Johnson was introduced; and now I must laugh at a ridiculous *Retrospection*. When I was a very young wench, scarce twelve years old I trust, my notice was strongly attracted by a Mountebank in some town we were passing through. ‘What a fine fellow!’ said I; ‘dear Papa, do ask him to dinner with us at our inn!—or, at least, Merry Andrew, because he could tell us such *clever stories of his master*.’ My Father laughed sans intermission an hour by the dial, as Jacques once at Motley.—Yet did dear Mr. Conway’s fancy for H.L.P.’s conversation grow up, at first, out of something not unlike this, when, his high-polished mind and fervid imagination taking fire from the tall Beacon bearing Dr. Johnson’s fame above the clouds, he thought some information might perhaps be gained by talk with the old female who so long *carried coals to it*. She has told all, or nearly all, she knew,—

‘And like poor Andrew must advance,
Mean mimic of her master’s dance;—
But similes, like songs in love,
Describing much, too little prove.’

“So now, leaving Prior’s pretty verses, and leaving Dr. Johnson too, who was himself severely censured for his rough criticism on a writer who had pleased all in our Augustan age of Literature, poor H.L.P. turns egotist at eighty, and tells her own adventures.”



Page 134

But the octogenarian egotist has something to tell about beside herself. Here is a passage of interest to the student of Shakspearian localities, and bearing on a matter in dispute from the days of Malone and Chalmers.

“For a long time, then,—or I thought it such,—my fate was bound up with the old Globe Theatre, upon the Bankside, Southwark; the alley it had occupied having been purchased and thrown down by Mr. Thrale to make an opening before the windows of our dwelling-house. When it lay desolate in a black heap of rubbish, my Mother, one day, in joke, called it the Ruins of Palmyra; and after they had laid it down in a grass-plot, Palmyra was the name it went by, I suppose, among the clerks and servants of the brew-house; for when the Quaker Barclay bought the whole, I read that name with wonder in the Writings.”—“But there were really curious remains of the old Globe Playhouse, which, though hexagonal in form without, was round within, as circles contain more space than other shapes, and Bees make their cells in hexagons only because that figure best admits of junction. Before I quitted the premises, however, I learned that Tarleton, the actor of those times, was not buried at St. Saviour’s, Southwark, as he wished, near Massinger and Cower, but at Shoreditch Church. *He* was the first of the profession whose fame was high enough to have his portrait solicited for to be set up as a Sign; and none but he and Garrick, I believe, ever obtained that honour. Mr. Dance’s picture of our friend David lives in a copy now in Oxford St.,—the character, King Richard.”

Somewhat more than three years after her first husband’s death, Mrs. Thrale, in spite of the opposition of her friends, the repugnance of her daughters, and the sneers of society, married Piozzi. He was a poor Italian gentleman, whose only fortune was in his voice and his musical talent. He had been for some time an admired public singer in London and Paris. There was nothing against him but the opinion of society. Mrs. Thrale set this opinion at defiance: a rash thing for a woman to do, and hardly an excusable one in her case; for she was aware that she would thus alienate her daughters, and offend her best friends. But she was in love with him; and though for a time she tried to struggle against her passion, it finally prevailed over her prudence, her pride, and such affections as she had for others. Her health suffered during the struggle, the termination of which she thus narrates in her “Abridgment.” The account differs in some slight particulars from that in her “Autobiographical Memoirs”; but a comparison between the two serves rather to confirm than to impugn her general accuracy.



Page 135

"I hoped," she says, "in defiance of probability, to live my sorrows out, and marry the man of my choice. Health, however, began to give way, as my Letters to Dr. Johnson testify; and when my kind physician, Dobson, from Liverpool, found it in actual and positive danger,—'Now,' said he, 'I have respected your delicacy long enough; tell me at once who he is that holds *such* a life in his power: for write to him I must and will; it is my sacred duty.' 'Dear Sir,' said I, 'the difficulty is to keep him at a distance. Speak to these cruel girls, if you will speak.' 'One of whose lives your assiduous tenderness,' cried he, 'saved, with my little help, only a month ago!'—and ran up-stairs to the ladies. 'We know,' was their reply, 'that she is fretting after a fellow; but where he is—you may ask her—we know not.' 'He is at Milan, with his friend the Marquis of Araceli,' said I,—'from whom I had a letter last week, requesting Piozzi's recall from banishment, as he gallantly terms it, little conscious of what I suffer.' So we wrote; and he returned on the eleventh day after receiving the letter. Meanwhile my health mended, and I waited on the lasses to their own house at Brighthelmstone, leaving Miss Nicholson, a favorite friend of theirs, and all their intolerably insolent servants, with them. Piozzi's return accelerated the recovery of your poor friend, and we married in both Churches,—at St. James', Bath, on St. James' Day, 1784,—thirty-five years ago now that I write this Abridgment. When we came to examine Papers, however, our attorney, Greenland, discovered a *suppression* of fifteen hundred pounds, which helped pay our debts, discharge the mortgage, *etc.*, as Piozzi, like Portia, permitted me not to sleep by his side with an unquiet soul. He settled everything with his own money, depended on God and my good constitution for our living long and happily together,—and so we did, twenty-five years,—said change of scenery would complete the cure, and carried me off in triumph, as he called it, to shew his friends in Italy the foreign wife he had so long been sighing for. 'Ah, Madam!' said the Marquis, when he first saluted me, 'we used to blame dear Piozzi;—now we envy him!'"

Of Mrs. Piozzi's journey on the Continent we shall speak in another article. After a residence abroad of two years and a half, she and her husband returned to London in March, 1787. Mrs. Piozzi had come home determined to resume, if it were possible, her old place in society, and to assert herself against the attacks of wits and newspapers, and the coldness of old friends. She had been hardly and unfairly dealt with by the public, in regard to her marriage. The appearance, during her absence, of her volume of "Anecdotes of Dr. Johnson" had given unfriendly critics an opportunity to pass harsh judgment upon her literary merits, and had excited the jealousy of rival biographers of the dead lion. Boswell, Hawkins, Baretti, Chalmers, Peter Pindar, Gifford,



Page 136

Horace Walpole, all had their fling at her. Never was an innocent woman in private life more unfeelingly abused, or her name dragged before the public more wantonly, in squibs and satires, jests and innuendoes. The women who transgress social conventionalities are often treated as if they had violated the rules of morals. But she was not to be put down in this way. Her temperament enabled her to escape much of the pain which a more sensitive person would have suffered. She hardened herself against the malice of her satirists; and in doing so, her character underwent an essential change. She was truly happy with Piozzi, and she preserved, by strength of will, an inexhaustible fund of good spirits.

On first reaching London, "we drove," she writes in the Conway MSS., "to the Royal Hotel in Pall Mall, and, arriving early, I proposed going to the Play. There was a small front box, in those days, which held only two; it made the division, or connexion, with the side boxes, and, being unoccupied, we sat in it, and saw Mrs. Siddons act Imogen, I well remember, and Mrs. Jordan, Priscilla Tomboy. Mr. Piozzi was amused, and the next day was spent in looking at houses, counting the cards left by old acquaintances, *etc.* The lady-daughters came, behaved with cold civility, and asked what I thought of their decision concerning Cecilia, then at school—No reply was made, or a gentle one; but she was the first cause of contention among us. The lawyers gave her into my care, and we took her home to our new habitation in Hanover Square, which we opened with Music, cards, *etc.*, on, I think, the 22 March. Miss Thrales refused their company; so we managed as well as we could. Our affairs were in good order, and money ready for spending. The World, as it is called, appeared good-humored, and we were soon followed, respected, and admired. The summer months sent us about visiting and pleasuring, ... and after another gay London season, Streatham Park, unoccupied by tenants, called us as if *really home*. Mr. Piozzi, with more generosity than prudence, spent two thousand pounds on repairing and furnishing it in 1790;—and we had danced all night, I recollect, when the news came of Louis Seize's escape from, and recapture by, his rebel subjects."

Poor old woman, who could thus write of her own daughters!—poor old woman, who had not heart enough either to keep the love of her children or to grieve for its loss! Cecilia was her fourth and youngest child, and her story, as her mother tells it, may as well be finished here. After speaking in her manuscript of a claim on some Oxfordshire property, disputed by her daughters, she says, in words hard and cold as steel,—“We threw it up, therefore, and contented ourselves with the plague Cecilia gave us, who, by dint of intriguing lovers, teased my soul out before she was fifteen,—when she fortunately ran away, jumping out of the window at Streatham Park, with Mr. Mostyn of Segraid,—a



Page 137

young man to whom Sir Thomas Mostyn's title will go, if he does not marry, but whose property, being much encumbered, made him no match for Cecy and her forty thousand pounds; and we were censured for not taking better care, and suffering her to wed a *Welsh* gentleman,—object of ineffable contempt to the daughters of Mr. Thrale, with whom she always held correspondence while living with us, who indulged her in every expense and every folly,—although allowed only one hundred and forty pounds per ann. on her account.”

After two or three years spent in London, the Piozzis resided for some time at Streatham,—how changed in mistress and in guests from the Streatham of which Mrs. Thrale had been the presiding genius! But after a while they removed to Wales, where, on an old family estate belonging to Mrs. Piozzi, they built a house, and christened the place with the queer Welsh-Italian compound name of Brynbella. “Mr. Piozzi built the house for me, he said; my own old chateau, Bachygraig by name, tho' very curious, was wholly uninhabitable; and we called the Italian villa he set up as mine in the Vale of Cluid, North Wales, Brynbella, or the beautiful brow, making the name half Welsh and half Italian, as we were.” Here they lived, with occasional visits to other places, during the remainder of Piozzi's life. “Our head quarters were in Wales, where dear Piozzi repaired my church, built a new vault for my old ancestors, chose the place in it where he and I are to repose together..... He lived some twenty-five years with me, however, but so punished with Gout that we found Bath the best wintering-place for many, many seasons.—Mrs. Siddons' last appearance there he witnessed, when she played Calista to Dimond's Lothario, in which he looked so like Garrick it shocked us *all three*, I believe; for Garrick adored Mr. Piozzi, and Siddons hated the little great man to her heart. Poor Dimond! he was a well-bred, pleasing, worthy creature, and did the honours of his own house and table with peculiar grace indeed. No likeness in private life or manner,—none at all; no wit, no fun, no frolic humour had Mr. Dimond:—no grace, no dignity, no real unaffected elegance of mien or behaviour had his predecessor, David, —whose partiality to my fastidious husband was for that reason never returned. Merriment, difficult for *him* to comprehend, made no amends for the want of that which no one understood better;—so he hated all the wits but Murphy.”

And now that we are on anecdotes of the Theatre, here is another good story, which belongs to a somewhat earlier time, but of which Mrs. Piozzi does not mention the exact date. “The Richmond Theatre at that time attracted all literary people's attention, while a Coterie of Gentlemen and Noblemen and Ladies entertained themselves with getting up Plays, and acting them at the Duke of Richmond's house, Whitehall. Lee's ‘Theodosius’ was the favorite. Lord Henry Fitzgerald played



Page 138

Varanus very well,—for a Dilettante; and Lord Derby did his part surprisingly. But there was a song to be sung to Athenais, while she, resolving to take poison, sits in a musing attitude. Jane Holman—then Hamilton—*would* sing an air of Sacchini, and the manager *would not* hear Italian words. The ballad appointed by the author was disapproved by all, and I pleased everybody by my fortunate fancy of adapting some English verses to the notes of Sacchini's song; and Jane Hamilton sung them enchantingly:—

'Vain's the breath of Adulation,
Vain the tears of tenderest Passion,
Whilst a strong Imagination
Holds the wandering Mind away;
Art in vain attempts to borrow
Notes to soothe a rooted sorrow;
Fixed to die, and die to-morrow,
What can touch her soul to-day?'

"The lines were printed, but I lost them. 'What a wild Tragedy is this!' said I to Hannah More, who was one of the audience. 'Wild enough,' was her reply; 'but there's good Poetry in it, and good Passion, *and they will always do.*'"

"Hannah More never goes now to a Theatre. How long is H.L. Piozzi likely to be seen there? How long will Mr. Conway keep the stage?"

In the year 1798, the family of Mr. Piozzi having suffered greatly from the French invasion of Lombardy, he sent for the son of his youngest brother, a "little boy just turned of five years old." "We have got him here," wrote Mrs. Piozzi in a letter from Bath, dated January, 1799, published by Mr. Hayward, "and his uncle will take him to school next week." "As he was by a lucky chance baptized, in compliment to me, John Salusbury, [Salusbury was her family name,] he will be known in England by no other, and it will be forgotten he is a foreigner." "My poor little boy from Lombardy said, as I walked with him across our market, 'These are sheeps' heads, are they not, aunt? I saw a hasket of men's heads at Brescia.'" Little John, though he went to school, was often at home. After writing of the troubles with her own daughters, Mrs. Piozzi says in the manuscript before us,—“Had we vexations enough? We had certainly many pleasures. The house in Wales was beautiful, and the Boy was beautiful too. Mr. Piozzi said I had spoiled my own children and was spoiling his. My reply was, that I loved spoiling people, and hated any one I could not spoil. Am I not now trying to spoil dear Mr. Conway?"

Piozzi was not far from wrong in his judgment of her treatment of this boy, if we may trust to her complaints of his coldness and indifference to her. In 1814, at the time of his marriage, five years after Piozzi's death, she gave to him her Welsh estate; and it may



have been a greater satisfaction to her than any gratification of the affections could have afforded, to see him, before she died, high sheriff of his county, and knighted as Sir John Salusbury Piozzi Salusbury.



Page 139

There was little gayety in the life at Brynbella, or at Bath,—and the society that Mrs. Piozzi now saw was made up chiefly of new and for the most part uninteresting acquaintances. The old Streatham set, with a few exceptions, were dead, and of the few that remained none retained their former relations with its mistress. But she suffered little from the change, was contented to win and accept the flattery of inferior people, and, instead of spending her faculties in soothing the “radically wretched life” of Johnson, used them, perhaps not less happily, in lightening the sufferings of Piozzi during his last years. She tells a touching story of him in these days.

“Piozzi’s fine hand upon the organ and pianoforte deserted him. Gout, such as I never knew, fastened on his fingers, distorting them into every dreadful shape. ... A little girl, shewn to him as a musical wonder of five years old, said, ‘Pray, Sir, why are your fingers wrapped up in black silk so?’ ‘My Dear,’ replied he, ‘they are in mourning for my Voice.’ ‘Oh, me!’ cries the child, ‘*is she dead?*’ He sung an easy song, and the Baby exclaimed, ‘Ah, Sir! you are very naughty,—you tell fibs!’ Poor Dears! and both gone now!”

There were no morbid sensibilities in Mrs. Piozzi’s composition. She can tell all her sorrows without ever a tear. A mark of exclamation looks better than a blot. And yet she had suffered; but it had been with such suffering as makes the soul hard rather than tender. The pages with which she ends this narrative of her life are curiously characteristic.

“When life was gradually, but perceptibly, closing round him [Piozzi] at Bath, in 1808, I asked him if he would wish to converse with a Romish priest,—we had full opportunity there. ‘By no means,’ said he. ‘Call Mr. Leman of the Crescent.’ We did so,—poor Bessy ran and fetched him. Mr. Piozzi received the blessed Sacrament at his hands; but recovered sufficiently to go home and die in his own house. I sent for Salusbury, but he came three hours too late,—his master, Mr. Shephard, with him. In another year he went to Oxford, where he spent me above seven hundred pounds per annum, and kept me in continual terror lest the bad habits of the place should ruin him, body, soul, and purse. His old school-fellow, Smythe Owen,—then. Pemberton,—accompanied him, and to that gentleman’s sister he of course gave his heart. The Lady and her friends took advantage of my fondness, and insisted on my giving up the Welsh estate. I did so, hoping to live at last with my own children, at Streatham Park;—there, however, I found no solace of the sort. So, after entangling my purse with new repairing and furnishing that place, retirement to Bath with my broken heart and fortune was all I could wish or expect. Thither I hasted, heard how the possessors of Brynbella, lived and thrived, but

‘Who set the twigs will he remember
Who is in haste to sell the timber?’



Page 140

“Well, no matter! One day before I left it there was talk how Love had always Interest annexed to it. ‘Nay, then,’ said I, ‘what is my love for Salusbury?’ ‘Oh!’ replied Shephard, ‘there is Interest there. Mrs. Piozzi cannot, could not, I am sure, exist without some one upon whom to energize her affections; his Uncle is gone, and she is much obliged to young Salusbury for being ready at her hand to pet and spoil; her children will not suffer her to love them, and’—with a coarse laugh—‘what will she do when this fellow throws her off, as he soon will?’ Shephard was right enough. I sunk into a stupor, worse far than all the torments I had endured: but when Canadian Indians take a prisoner, dear Mr. Conway knows what agonies they put them to; the man bears all without complaining,—smokes, dances, triumphs in his anguish,—

‘For the son of Alcnoomak shall never complain.’

“When a little remission comes, however, then comes the torpor too;—he cannot then be waked by pain or moderate pleasure: and such was my case, when your talents roused, your offered friendship opened my heart to enjoyment Oh! never say hereafter that the obligations are on your side. Without you, dulness, darkness, stagnation of every faculty would have enveloped and extinguished all the powers of hapless

“H.L.P.”

The picture that Mrs. Piozzi paints of herself in these last words is a sad one. She herself was unconscious, however, of its real sadness. In its unintentional revelations it shows us the feebleness without the dignity of old age, vivacity without freshness of intellect, the pretence without the reality of sentiment. “Hapless H.L.P.”—to have lived to eighty years, and to close the record of so long a life with such words!

A little more than a year after this “Abridgment” was written, in May, 1821, Mrs. Piozzi died. Her children, from whom she had lived separated, were around her death-bed.[C]

[Footnote C: It is but four years ago that the Viscountess Keith, Mrs. Piozzi’s eldest daughter, died. She was ninety-five years old. Her long life connected our generation with that of Johnson and Burke. She was the last survivor of the Streatham “set,”—for, as “Queeney,” she had held a not unimportant place in it. She was at Johnson’s death-bed. At their last interview he said,—“My dear child, we part forever in this world; let us part as Christian friends should; let us pray together.”

It was in 1808 that Miss Thrale married Lord Keith, a distinguished naval officer.

In *The Gentleman’s Magazine*, for May, 1657, is an interesting notice of Lady Keith. “During many years,” it is there said, “Viscountess Keith held a distinguished position in the highest circles of the fashionable world in London; but during the latter portion of her life.... her time was almost entirely devoted to works of charity and to the performance of

religious duties. No one ever did more for the good of others, and few ever did so much in so unostentatious a manner.”]



Page 141

In judging her, it is to be borne in mind that the earlier and the later portions of her life are widely different from each other. As we have before said, Mrs. Thrale and Mrs. Piozzi are two distinct persons. Mrs. Thrale, whom the world smiled upon, whom the wits liked and society courted, who had the best men in England for her friends, is a woman who will always be pleasant in memory. Her unaffected grace, her kindliness, her good-humor, her talents, make her perpetually charming. She was helped by her surroundings to be good, pleasant, and clever; and she will always keep her place as one of the most attractive figures in the circle which was formed by Johnson, and Burke, and Reynolds, and Fanny Burney, and others scarcely less conspicuous. But Mrs. Piozzi, whom the world frowned upon, whom the wits jeered at, and society neglected, whose friends nobody now knows, will be best remembered and best liked as having once been Mrs. Thrale. There is no great charge against her; she was more sinned against than sinning; she was only weak and foolish, only degenerated from her first excellence. And even in her old age some traits of her youthful charms remain, and, seeing these, we regard her with a tender compassion, and remember of her only the bright helpfulness and freshness of her younger days, when Johnson "loved her, esteemed her, revered her, and thought her the first of womankind."

* * * * *

THE NIGER, AND ITS EXPLORERS.

A century ago, the interior of Africa was a sealed book to the civilized world. Candace, Queen of the Ethiopians, had been noticed in Holy Writ; the Nile with Thebes and Memphis on its banks, and a ship-canal to the Red Sea with triremes on its surface, had not escaped the eye of Herodotus: but the countries which gave birth to Queen and River were alike unknown. The sunny fountains, the golden sands, the palmy plains of Africa were to be traced in the verses of the poet; but he dealt neither in latitude nor longitude. The maps presented a *terra incognita*, or sterile mountains, where modern travellers have found rivers, lakes, and alluvial basins,—or exhibited barren wastes, where recent discoveries find rich meadows annually flowed, studded with walled towns and cities, enlivened by herds of cattle, or cultivated in plantations of maize and cotton.

Although the northern coast of Africa had once been the granary of Carthage and Rome, cultivation had receded, and the corn-ship of antiquity had given place to the felucca of the corsair, preying upon the commerce of Europe. A few caravans, laden with a little ivory and gold-dust or a few packages of drugs and spices, crept across the Desert, and the slave-trade principally, if not alone, drew to Africa the attention of civilized nations. Egypt, Tripoli and Tunis, Turkey and the Spanish Provinces, the West India Isles and the Southern States, knew it as the mart where human beings were bought and sold; and Christians were reconciled to the traffic by the hope that it might contribute to the moral, if not physical, welfare of the captive, by his removal to a more civilized region.



Page 142

During the last three centuries, millions of Africans have perished either on their way to slavery or in exhausting toil under a tropical sun; and the flag of England has been the most prominent in this demoralizing traffic. But it is due to England to say, that, since she withdrew from it, she has aimed to atone for the past by a noble and persevering devotion to the improvement of Africa. By repeated expeditions, by missions, treaties, colonies, and incentives to commerce, she has spread her light over the interior, and is now recognized both by the tribes of the Desert and by civilized nations as the great protector of Africa, and both geography and commerce owe to her most of their advances on the African continent.

So little was known of Africa, that, when Mungo Park made his report, in 1798, of the discovery of the Niger, and described large cities on its banks, and vessels of fifty tons burden navigating its waters, the world was incredulous; and his subsequent fate threw a cloud over the subject which was not entirely dispelled until his course was traced and his statements verified by modern travellers.

The route of Dr. Park was from the west coast, near Sierra Leone, to the upper branches of the Niger. On his second expedition he took with him a detachment of British soldiers, and a number of civilians, fresh from England, none of whom survived him. It appears from his journal that his men followed the foot-paths of the natives, slept in the open air, were exposed to the dews at night, and were overtaken by the rainy season before they embarked upon the Niger. Unacclimated, with no proper means of conveyance, no suitable clothing, and no precautions against the fever of the country, they nearly all became victims to their indiscretions. Park, however, at length launched his schooner on the Niger, passed the city of Timbuctoo, and, with two or three Englishmen, followed the river more than a thousand miles to Boussa. Reaching the rapids at this point in a low stage of the water, he was so indiscreet as to fire on the natives, and was drowned in his attempt to escape from them; but his fate remained in uncertainty for eighteen years.

The long struggle with Napoleon, the fearful loss of life which attended the journey of Park, and the doubts as to his fate, checked for many years the exploration of Africa. In 1821, a third attempt to explore the Niger was made by a Major Laing, who failed in his efforts to reach Timbuctoo, and fell a victim to Mahometan intolerance.

In 1822, a new effort was made by England to reach the interior, and Messrs. Denham and Clapperton joined the caravan from Tripoli, and crossed the Desert to the Soudan. They explored the country to the ninth degree of north latitude, found large Negro and Mahometan states in the interior, and visited Saccatoo, Kano, Murfeia, Tangalra, and other large towns, some of which contained twenty or thirty thousand people.

Page 143

In their journal we find a vivid sketch of a Negro army marching from Bornou to the South, with horsemen in coats-of-mail, as in the days of chivalry, and armed, as in those days, with lances and bows and arrows. A glowing description is given of the ravages that attended their march. When they entered an enemy's country, desolation marked their path, houses and corn-fields were destroyed, all the full-grown males were put to death, and the women and children reduced to servitude.

It was obvious that an incessant struggle was in progress between the Mahometan and Negro states, and that the Mahometan faith and Arab blood were slowly gaining an ascendancy over the Negro even down to the equator. The conquering tribes, by intermarriage with the females, were gradually changing the race, and introducing greater energy and intelligence; and the mixed races have exhibited great proficiency in various branches of manufacture. The invaders took with them large herds of cattle, and pursued a pastoral life, leaving the culture of the land principally to the Negro.

In 1825 Clapperton made his second expedition to the interior, accompanied by Richard Lander. In this journey the adventurous travellers landed at Badagry, and crossed through Yarriba to the Niger. On their way they spent several days at Katunga, the capital of Yarriba, a city so extensive that one of its streets is described as five miles in length. The town of Koofo, with twenty thousand inhabitants, as also large cotton-plantations, are mentioned by these travellers; and some idea of the territory they explored may be formed from the following extract from their narrative:—

“The further we penetrate into the country, the more dense we find the population to be, and civilization becomes at every step more strikingly apparent. Large towns, at a distance of only a few miles from each other, we were informed, lay on all sides of us, the inhabitants of which pay the greatest respect to the laws, and live under a regular form of government.”

It is to this fertile, populous, and peaceful region of the interior that the most successful efforts of the English missionaries have been of late directed.

In this expedition, Captain Clapperton died of the fever of the country. His faithful servant, Lander, after publishing his journal, returned to Africa, in 1830, with his brother, landed at Badagry, and again crossed the country to the Niger.

At Boussa, they obtained the first authentic information of the death of Park, and recovered his gun, robe, and other relics. Here, embarking in canoes, they ascended the river through its rapids to Yaouri, and thence traced it to the sea in the Bight of Benin. On their way, they discovered the Benue, which joins the Niger two hundred and seventy miles from the ocean, with a volume of water and a width nearly equal to its own. They encountered a large number of canoes, nearly fifty feet in length, armed in some cases with a brass six-pounder at the bow, and each manned by sixty or seventy

men actively engaged in the slave-trade. Forty of these canoes were found together at Eboe, near the mouth of the Niger.



Page 144

During the interval between the two expeditions of Lander to trace the course of this mysterious river, France was exploring its upper waters.

In 1827, Rene Caillie, a Frenchman, adopting the disguise of a Mahometan, left the western coast at Kakundy, a few miles north of Sierra Leone, and crossed the intervening highlands to the affluents of the Niger, which he struck within two hundred and fifty miles of the coast.

He first came to the Tankesso, a rapid stream flowing into the Niger just below its cascades, and noticed here a mountain of pale pink quartz in regular strata of eighteen inches in thickness, a few miles below which the river flows in a wide and tranquil stream through extensive plains, which it fertilizes by its inundations. One hundred miles below, at Boure, were rich gold mines within twenty miles of the Niger. In the dry season, he found its waters very cold and waist-deep.

Caillie travelled by narrow paths impervious to horses or carriages, and with a party of natives bearing merchandise on their heads. His route was through a country gradually ascending and occasionally mountainous, but fertile in the utmost degree, and watered by numerous streams and rivulets which kept the verdure constantly fresh, with delightful plains that required only the labor of the husbandman to produce everything necessary for human life.

Proceeding westward, he reached the main Niger, which he found, at the close of the dry season, and before it had received its principal tributaries, nine feet deep and nine hundred feet in width, with a velocity of two and a half miles an hour.

To this point, where the river becomes navigable for steamers, a common road or railway of three hundred miles in length might be easily constructed from Sierra Leone; and it is a little surprising that Great Britain, with her solicitude to reach the interior, should not have been tempted by the fertility, gold mines, and navigable waters in the rear of Sierra Leone, so well pictured by Caillie, to open at least a common highway to the Niger, an enterprise which might be effected for fifty thousand pounds. Although this may be so easily accomplished, the principal route to the interior of Africa is still the caravan track from Tripoli through the Desert, requiring three months by a hazardous and most fatiguing journey of fifteen hundred miles. The first movement for a road to the interior has been recently made in Yarriba, by T.J. Bowen, the American Baptist missionary, who pronounces it to be the prerequisite to civilization and Christianity.

Page 145

Caillie readied the Niger in May, just as the rainy season commenced, but, finding no facilities for descending the stream, he proceeded to the southwest, crossed many of its affluents, traversed a rich country, and, having exposed himself to the fever and met with many detentions, finally embarked in the succeeding March at Djenne, in a vessel of seventy tons burden, for Timbuctoo. He describes this vessel as one hundred feet in length, fourteen feet broad, and drawing seven feet of water. It was laden with rice, millet, and cotton, and manned by twenty-one men, who propelled the frail bark by poles and paddles. With a flotilla of sixty of these vessels he descended the Niger several hundred miles to Timbuctoo. He speaks of the river as varying from half to three-fourths of a mile in width, annually overflowing its banks and irrigating a large basin generally destitute of trees. After paying toll to the Tasaareks, a Moorish tribe, on the way, and losing one of the flotilla, he landed safely at Timbuctoo, and probably was the first European who visited that remote city, although Adams, an American sailor wrecked on the coast, claims to have been carried there before as a captive.

From the narratives of Park, Clapperton, Lander, and Caillie, confirmed by Bairkie and Barth, the latter of whom explored the banks of the Niger from Timbuctoo to Boussa, it has been ascertained to be a noble stream, navigable for nearly twenty-five hundred miles, with an average width of more than half a mile, and an average depth of three fathoms, —comparing favorably with our own Mississippi. There appears to be but one portion of the stream difficult for navigation, and that is the portion from Yaouri to Lagaba, a distance of eighty miles. In this space are several reefs and ledges, mostly bare at low water, and the river is narrowed in width by mountains on either side; but in the wet season it overflows its banks at this point, and is then navigated by the larger class of canoes. There can be little doubt that it is susceptible of navigation above and below by the largest class of river steamers, and that the rapids themselves may in the higher stages of water be ascended by the American high-pressure steamers which navigate our Western rivers, drawing, as they do in low stages of the Ohio and Missouri, but sixteen to eighteen inches.

As soon as it was ascertained that the Niger reached the ocean in the Bight of Benin, and that its upper waters had been navigated by Caillie and Park, a private association, aided by the British government, fitted out a brig and several steamers, with a large party of scientific men, who, in 1833, entered the Niger from the sea.

Great Britain, though enterprising and persevering, is slow in adapting means to ends, and made a series of mistakes in her successive expeditions, which might have been avoided, if she would have condescended to profit by the experience of her children on this side of the Atlantic.



Page 146

The expedition of 1833 was deficient in many things. The power and speed of the steamers were insufficient, their draught of water too great, and they were so long delayed in their outfit and in their sea-voyage that they found the river falling, and were detained by shoals and sand-bars. The accommodations were unsuitable; and the men, exposed to a bad atmosphere among the mangroves at the mouth of the river, and confined in the holds of the vessels, were attacked by fever, and but ten of them survived. The expedition, however, succeeded in reaching Rabba, on the Niger, five hundred miles from the sea, ascended the Benue, eighty miles above the confluence, and charts were made and soundings taken for the distance explored.

In 1842 the British government made a new effort to explore the Niger, and built for that purpose three iron steamers, the Wilberforce, Albert, and Soudan, vessels of one hundred to one hundred and thirty-nine feet in length. The error committed in the first expedition, of too great draught, was avoided; but the steamers had so little power and keel that their voyage to the Niger was both tedious and hazardous, and their speed was found insufficient to make more than three knots per hour against the current of the river. Arriving on the coast late in the season, they were unable to ascend above the points already explored, and the officers and men, suffering from the tedious navigation, close cabins, and effluvia from the falling river, lost one-fourth of their number by fever, while the African Kroomen, accustomed to the climate and sleeping on the open deck, enjoyed perfect health. It was the intention of government to establish a model farm and mission at the confluence of the Niger and Benue; but the officers, discouraged by sickness, abandoned their original purpose, and the expedition proved another failure, involving a loss of at least sixty thousand pounds.

After the lapse of twelve years, it was ascertained that private steamers and sailing vessels were resorting to the Niger, and that an active trade was springing up in palm-oil, the trees producing which fringe the banks of the river for some hundreds of miles from the sea; and in 1853, a Liverpool merchant, McGregor Laird, who had accompanied the former expedition, fitted out, with the aid of government, the Pleiad steamer for a voyage up the Niger.

One would imagine that by this time the British government would have corrected their former errors; and a part were corrected. The speed of this steamer surpassed that of her predecessors, and her draught did not exceed five feet. She was well provided with officers, and a crew of native Kroomen from the coast; and she was supplied with ample stores of quinine. But, singular as it may appear, this steamer, destined, to ascend the great rivers up which the former expedition found a strong breeze flowing daily, was not furnished with a *sail*; and although the banks of the



Page 147

Niger were lined with forest-trees, and the supply of coal was sufficient for a few days only, not a single axe or saw was provided for cutting wood, and the Kroomen hired from the coast were compelled to trim off with shingle-hatchets nearly all the fuel used in ascending the river,—and in descending, the steamer was obliged to drift down with the current. Moreover, she was but one hundred feet in length, with an engine and boiler occupying thirty feet of her bold,—thus leaving but thirty-five feet at each end for officers, men, and stores. Neither state-room, cabin, nor awning was provided on deck to shelter the crew from an African sun.

With all these deficiencies, however, they achieved a partial triumph. Entering the river in July, they ascended the southern branch, now known as the Benue, for a distance of seven hundred miles from the sea, reaching Adamawa, a Mahometan state of the Soudan. On the fifteenth of August they encountered the rise of waters, and found the Benue nearly a mile in width and from one to three fathoms in depth. They observed it overflowing its banks for miles and irrigating extensive and fertile plains to the depth of several feet, and saw reason to believe that this river, which flows westerly from the interior, may be navigated at least one thousand miles from the sea. As Dr. Barth visited it at a city several hundred miles above the point reached by the *Pleiad*, and found it flowing with a wide and deep current, it may be regarded as the gateway into the interior of Africa.

One of our light Western steamers, manned by our Western boatmen and axemen, with its three decks, lofty staterooms, superior speed, and light draught, would have been most admirably fitted for this exploration.

But the expedition, with all its deficiencies, achieved a further triumph. Dr. Bairkie, by using quinine freely, and by removing the beds of the officers from the stifling cabins to the deck, escaped the loss of a single man, although four months on the river,—thus demonstrating that the white man can reach the interior of Africa in safety, a problem quite as important to be solved as the course and capacity of the Niger and its branches.

Thus have been opened to navigation the waters of the Mysterious River.

When the Landers first floated down the stream in their canoe, thirty years since, they found vast forests and little cultivation, and the natives seemed to have no commerce except in slaves and yams for their support. But an officer who accompanied the several steam expeditions was astonished in his last visit to see the change which a few years had produced. New and populous towns had sprung up, extensive groves of palm-trees and gardens lined the banks, and vessels laden with oil, yams, ground-nuts, and ivory indicated the progress of legitimate commerce.



The narrative of Dr. Bairkie, a distinguished German scholar, who has written an account of the voyage of the Pleiad, will be found both interesting and instructive; and we may some day expect another volume, for he has returned to the scene of his adventures.



Page 148

Another German in the service of Great Britain has given us a vivid picture of Central Africa north of the equator. Dr. Henry Barth has recently published, in four octavo volumes, a narrative of his travels in Africa for five years preceding 1857. During this period, he accompanied the Sheik of Bornou, one of the chief Negro states of Africa, on his march as far south as the Benue, explored the borders of Lake Tsadda, crossed the Niger at Sai, and visited the far-famed city of Timbuctoo. Here he incurred some danger from the fanaticism of the Moslems; but his command of Arabic, his tact and adroitness in distinguishing the Protestant worship of the Deity from the homage paid by Roman Catholics to images of the Virgin and Saints, and in illustrating the points in which his Protestant faith agreed with the Koran, extricated him from his embarrassment.

Dr. Barth found various Negro cities with a population ranging from fifteen to twenty thousand, and observed large fields of rice, cotton, tobacco, and millet. On his way to Timbuctoo, he saw a field of this last-named grain in which the stalks stood twenty-four feet high. Our Patent Office should secure some of the seed which he has doubtless conveyed to Europe. The following prices, which he names, give us an idea of the cheapness of products in Central Africa:—An ox two dollars, a sheep fifty cents, tobacco one to two cents per pound.

From the sketch we have given of the Niger and its branches, and of the countries bordering upon them, it would appear to be the proper policy of Great Britain and other commercial nations to open a way from Sierra Leone to the Niger, and to establish a colony near the confluence of this river with the Benue. From this point, which is easily accessible from the sea and the ports of the British colonies on the western coast of Africa, light steamers may probably ascend to Sego and Djenne, encountering no difficulties except at the rapids near Boussa, and may penetrate into the heart of the Soudan. In this region are mines of lead, copper, gold, and iron, a rich soil, adapted to cotton, rice, indigo, sugar, coffee, and vegetable butter, with very cheap labor. With steamers controlling the rivers, a check could here be given to the slave-trade, and to the conflicts between the Moors and Negroes, and Christianity have a fair prospect of diffusion. Such a colony is strongly recommended by Lieutenant Allen, who accompanied the expeditions of 1833 and 1842; and there can be no doubt that it would attract the caravans from the remote interior, and put an end to the perilous and tedious expeditions across the Desert.

REVIEWS AND LITERARY NOTICES.

Benvenuto Rambaldi da Imola Illustrato nella Vita e nelle Opere, e di lui Comento Latino sulla Divina Commedia di Dante Allighieri voltalo in Italiano dall' Avvocato GIOVANNI TAMBURINI. Imola. 1855-56. 3 vol. in 8vo. [The Commentary of Benvenuto Rambaldi of Imola on the *Divina Commedia*, translated from Latin into Italian, by Giovanni Tamburini.]



Page 149

Almost five centuries have passed since Benvenuto of Imola, one of the most distinguished men of letters of his time, was called by the University of Bologna to read a course of lectures upon the "Divina Commedia" before the students at that famous seat of learning. From that time till the present, a great part of his "Comment" has lain in manuscript, sharing the fate of the other earliest commentaries on the poem of Dante, not one of which, save that of Boccaccio, was given to the press till within a few years. This neglect is the more strange, since it was from the writers of the fourteenth century, almost contemporary as they were with Dante, that the most important illustrations both of the letter and of the sense of the "Divina Commedia" were naturally to be looked for. When they wrote, the lapse of time had not greatly obscured the memory of the events which the poet had recorded, or to which he had referred. The studies with which he had been familiar, the external sources from which he had drawn inspiration, had undergone no essential change in direction or in nature. The same traditions and beliefs possessed the intellects of men. Similar social and political influences moulded their characters. The distance that separated Dante from his first commentators was mainly due to the surpassing nature of his genius, which, in some sort, made him, and still makes him, a stranger to all men, and very little to changes like those which have slowly come about in the passage of centuries, and which divide his modern readers from the poet.

It was the intention of Benvenuto, as he tells us, "to elucidate what was dark in the poem being veiled under figures, and to explain what was involved in its multiplex meanings." But his Comment is more illustrative than analytic, more literal than imaginative, and its chief value lies in the abundance of current legends which it contains, and in the number of stories related in it, which exhibit the manners or illustrate the history of the times. So great, indeed, is the value of this portion of his work, that Muratori, to whom a large debt of gratitude is due from all students of Italian history, published in 1738, in the first volume of his "Antiquitates Italicae Medii Aevi," a selection of such passages, amounting altogether to about one half of the whole Comment. However satisfactory this incomplete publication might be to the mere historical investigator, the students of the "Divina Commedia" could not but regret that the complete work had not been printed,—and they accordingly welcomed with satisfaction the announcement, a few years since, of the volumes whose title stands at the head of this article, which professed to contain a translation of the whole Comment. It seemed a pity, indeed, that it should have been thought worth while to translate a book addressing itself to a very limited number of readers, most of whom were quite as likely to understand the original Latin as the modern Italian, while also a special value attached to the style and form in which it was first written. But no one could have suspected what "translation" meant in the estimation of the Signor Tamburini, whose name appears on the title-page as that of the translator.

Page 150

Traduttore—traditore, “Translator—traitor,” says the proverb; and of all traitors shielded under the less offensive name, Signor Tamburini is beyond comparison the worst we have ever had the misfortune to encounter. A place is reserved for him in that lowest depth in which, according to Dante’s system, traitors are punished.

It appears from his preface that Signor Tamburini is not without distinction in the city of Imola. He has been President of the Literary Academy named that of “The Industrious.” To have been President of all Academy in the Roman States implies that the person bearing this honor was either an ecclesiastic or a favorite of ecclesiastics. Hitherto, no one could hold such an office without having his election to it confirmed by a central board of ecclesiastical inspectors (*la Sacra Congregazione degli Studj*) at Rome. The reason for noticing this fact in connection with Signor Tamburini will soon become apparent.

In his preface, Signor Tamburini declares that in the first division of the poem he has kept his translation close to the original, while in the two later divisions he had been *meno legato*, “less exact,” in his rendering. This acknowledgment, however unsatisfactory to the reader, presented at least an appearance of fairness. But, from a comparison of Signor Tamburini’s work with the portions of the original preserved by Muratori, we have satisfied ourselves that his honesty is on a level with his capacity as a translator, and what his capacity is we propose to enable our readers to judge for themselves. For our own part, we have been unable to distinguish any important difference in the methods of translation followed in the three parts of the Comment.

So far as we are aware, this book has not met with its dues in Europe. The well-known Dantophilist, Professor Blanc of Halle, speaks of it in a note to a recent essay (*Versuch einer blos philogischen Erklarung der Goettlichen Komoedie*, von Dr. L.G. Blanc, Halle, 1860, p. 5) as “a miserably unsatisfactory translation,” but does not give the grounds of his assertion. We intend to show that a grosser literary imposition has seldom been attempted than in these volumes. It is an outrage on the memory of Dante not less than on that of Benvenuto. The book is worse than worthless to students; for it is not only full of mistakes of carelessness, stupidity, and ignorance, but also of wilful perversions of the meaning of the original by additions, alterations, and omissions. The three large volumes contain few pages which do not afford examples of mutilation or misrepresentation of Benvenuto’s words. We will begin our exhibition of the qualities of the Procrustean mistranslator with an instance of his almost incredible carelessness, which is, however, excusable in comparison with his more wilful faults. Opening the first volume at page 397, we find the following sentence,—which we put side by side with the original as given by Muratori. The passage relates to the 33d and succeeding verses of Canto XVI.



Page 151

TAMBURINI

Qui Dante fa menzione di Guido Guerra, e meravigliano molti della modestia dell' autore, che da costui e dalla di lui moglie tragga l'origine sua, mentre poteva derivarla care di gratitudine affettuosa a quella,—Gualdrada,—stipito suo,—dandole nome e tramandandola quasi all' eternità, mentre per se stessa sarebbe forse rimasta sconosciuta.

BENVENUTO.

Et primo incepit a digniori, scilicet a Guidone Guerra; et circa istius descriptionem lectori est aliquantulum immorandum, quia multi mirantur, immo truffantur ignoranter, quod Dantes, qui poterat describere istum praeclarum virum a claris progenitoribus et ejus claris gestis, describit eum ab una femina, avita sua, Domna Gualdrada. Sed certe Auctor fecit talem descriptionem tam laudabiliter quam prudenter, ut heic implicite tangeret originem famosae stirpis istius, et ut daret meritam famam et laudem huic mulieri dignissimae.

A literal translation will afford the most telling comment on the nature of the Italian version.

TRANSLATION.

Here Dante makes mention of Guido Guerras, and many marvel at the modesty of the Author, in deriving his own origin from him and from his wife, when he might have derived it from a more noble source. But I find in such modesty the greater merit, in that he did not wish to fail in affectionate gratitude toward her,—Gualdrada,—his ancestress, —giving her name and handing her down as it were to eternity, while she by herself would perhaps have remained unknown.

TRANSLATION.

In the first place he began with the worthiest, namely, Guido Guerra; and in regard to the description of this man it is to be dwelt upon a little by the reader, because scoff at Dante, because, when he might have described this very distinguished man by his distinguished ancestors and his distinguished deeds, he does describe him by a woman, his grandmother, the Lady Gualdrada. But certainly the author did this not less praiseworthy than wisely, that he might here, by implication, touch upon the origin of that famous family, and might give a merited fame and praise to this most worthy woman.

It will be noticed that Signor Tamburini makes Dante derive *his own* origin from Gualdrada,—a mistake from which the least attention to the original text, or the slightest acquaintance with the biography of the poet, would have saved him.



Another amusing instance of stupidity occurs in the comment on the 135th verse of Canto XXVIII., where, speaking of the young king, son of Henry II. of England, Benvenuto says, "Note here that this youth was like another Titus the son of Vespasian, who, according to Suetonius, was called the love and delight of the human race." This simple sentence is rendered in the following astounding manner: "John [the young king] was, according to Suetonius, another Titus Vespasian, the love and joy of the human race"!



Page 152

Again, in giving the account of Guido da Montefeltro, (*Inferno*, Canto XXVII.,) Benvenuto says on the lines,

—e poi fui Cordeliero,
Credendomi si cinto fare ammenda,

“And then I became a Cordelier, believing thus girt to make amends,”—“That is, hoping under such a dress of misery and poverty to make amends for my sins; but others did not believe in him [in his repentance]. Wherefore Dominus Malatesta, having learned from one of his household that Dominus Guido had become a Minorite Friar, took precautions that he should not be made the guardian of Rimini.” This last sentence is rendered by our translator,—“One of the household of Malatesta related to me (!) that Ser Guido adopted the dress of a Minorite Friar, and sought by every means not to be appointed guardian of Rimini.” A little farther on the old commentator says,—“He died and was buried in Ancona, and I have heard many things about him which may afford a sufficient hope of his salvation”; but he is made to say by Signor Tamburini,—“After his death and burial in Ancona many works of power were ascribed to him, and I have a sweet hope that he is saved.”

We pass over many instances of similar misunderstanding of Benvenuto's easily intelligible though inelegant Latin, to a blunder which would be extraordinary in any other book, by which our translator has ruined a most characteristic story in the comment on the 112th verse of Canto XIV. of the “Purgatory.” We must give here the two texts.

BENVENUTO

Et heic nota, ut videas, si magna nobilitas vigebat paulo ante in Bretenorio, quod tempore istius Guidonis, quando aliquis vir nobilis et honorabilis applicabat ad terram, magna contentio erat inter multos nobiles de Bretenorio, in cuius domum ille talis forensis deberet declinare. Propter quod concorditer convenerunt inter se, quod columna lapidea figeretur in medio plateae cum multis annulis ferreis, et omnis superveniens esset hospes illius ad cuius anulum alligaret equum.

TRANSLATION.

And here take notice, that you may see if great nobility flourished a little before this time in Brettinoro, that, in the days of this Guido, when any noble and honorable man came to the place, there was a great rivalry among the many nobles of Brettinoro, as to which of them should receive the stranger in his house. Wherefore they harmoniously agreed that a column of stone should be set up in the middle of the square, furnished with many iron rings, and any one who arrived should be the guest of him to whose ring he might tie his horse.

TAMBURINI.

Al tempo di Guido in Brettinoro anche i nobili aravano le terre; ma insorsero discordie fra essi, e sparve la innocenza di vita, e con essa la liberalita. I brettinoresi determinarono di alzare in piazza una colonna con intorno tanti anelli di ferro, quanto le nobili famiglie di quel castello, e chi fosse arrivato ed avesse legato il cavallo ad uno de' predetti anelli, doveva esser ospite della famiglia, che indicava l' anello cui il cavallo era attaccato.



Page 153

TRANSLATION.

In the time of Guido in Brettinoro even the nobles ploughed the land; but discords arose among them, and innocence of life disappeared, and with it liberality. The people of Brettinoro determined to erect in the public square a column with as many iron rings upon it as there were noble families in that stronghold, and he who should arrive and tie his horse to one of those rings was to be the guest of the family pointed out by the ring to which the horse was attached.

Surely, Signor Tamburini has fixed the dunce's cap on his own head so that it can never be taken off. The commonest Latin phrases, which the dullest schoolboy could not mistranslate, he misunderstands, turning the pleasant sense of the worthy commentator into the most self-contradictory nonsense.

"Ad confirmandum propositum," says Benvenuto, "occurrit mihi res jocosa,"[A]—"In confirmation of this statement, a laughable matter occurs to me"; and he goes on to relate a story about the famous astrologer Pietro di Abano. But our translator is not content without making him stultify himself, and renders the words we have quoted, "A maggiore conferma referiro un fatto a me accaduto"; that is, he makes Benvenuto say, "I will report an incident that happened to me," and then go on to tell the story of Pietro di Abano, which had no more to do with him than with Signor Tamburini himself.

[Footnote A: Comment on Purg. xvi. 80.]

We might fill page after page with examples such as these of the distortions and corruptions of Benvenuto's meaning which we have noted on the margin of this so-called translation. But we have given more than enough to prove the charge of incompetence against the President of the "Academy of the Industrious," and we pass on to exhibit him now no longer as simply an ignoramus, but as a mean and treacherous rogue.

Among the excellent qualities of Benvenuto there are few more marked than his freedom in speaking his opinion of rulers and ecclesiastics, and in holding up their vices to reproach, while at the same time he shows a due spirit of respect for proper civil and ecclesiastical authority. In this he imitates the temper of the poet upon whose work he comments,—and in so doing he has left many most valuable records of the character and manners especially of the clergy of those days—He loved a good story, and he did not hesitate to tell it even when it went hard against the priests. He knew and he would not hide the corruptions of the Church, and he was not the man to spare the vices which were sapping the foundations not so much of the Church as of religion itself. But his translator is of a different order of men, one of the devout votaries of falsehood and concealment; and he has done his best to remove some of the most characteristic touches of Benvenuto's work, regarding them as unfavorable to the Church, which even

now in the nineteenth century cannot well bear to have exposed the sins committed by its rulers



Page 154

and its clergy in the thirteenth or fourteenth. Signor Tamburini has sought the favor of ecclesiastics, and gained the contempt of such honest men as have the ill-luck to meet with his book. Wherever Benvenuto uses a phrase or tells an anecdote which can be regarded as bearing in any way against the Church, we may be sure to find it either omitted or softened down in this Papalistic version. We give a few specimens.

In the comment on Canto III. of the "Inferno," Benvenuto says, speaking of Dante's great enemy, Boniface VIII.,—"Auctor ssepiissime dicit de ipso Bonifacio magna mala, qui de rei veritate fuit magnanimus peccator": "Our author very often speaks exceedingly ill of Boniface, who was in very truth a grand sinner." This sentence is omitted in the translation.

Again, on the well-known verse, (*Inferno*, xix. 53,) "Se' tu gia costi ritto, Bonifazio?" Benvenuto commenting says,—"Auctor quando ista scripsit, viderat pravam vitam Bonifacii, et ejus mortem rabidam. Ideo bene judicavit eum damnatum.... Heic dictus Nicolaus impropere Bonifacio duo mala. Primo, quia Sponsam Christ! fraudulenter assumpsit de manu simplicis Pastoris. Secundo, quia etiam earn more meretricis tractavit, simoniacc vendendo eam, et tyrannice tractando": "The author, when he wrote these things, had witnessed the evil life of Boniface, and his raving death. Therefore he well judged him to be damned.... And here the aforementioned Pope Nicholas charges two crimes upon Boniface: first, that he had taken the Bride of Christ by deceit from the hand of a simple-minded Pastor; second, that he had treated her as a harlot, simoniacally selling her, and tyrannically dealing with her."

These two sentences are omitted by the translator; and the long further account which Benvenuto gives of the election and rule of Boniface is throughout modified by him in favor of this "*magnanimus peccator*." And so also the vigorous narrative of the old commentator concerning Pope Nicholas III. is deprived of its most telling points: "Nam fuit primus in cujus curia palam committeretur Simonia per suos attinentes. Quapropter multum ditavit eos possessionibus, pecuniis et castellis, super omnes Romanos": "For he was the first at whose court Simony was openly committed in favor of his adherents. Whereby he greatly enriched them with possessions, money, and strongholds, above all the Romans." "Sed quod Clerici capiunt raro dimittunt": "What the clergy have once laid hands on, they rarely give up." Nothing of this is found in the Italian,—and history fails of her dues at the hands of this tender-conscienced modernizer of Benvenuto. The comment on the whole canto is in this matter utterly vitiated.

In the comment on Canto XXIX. of the "Inferno," which is full of historic and biographic material of great interest, but throughout defaced by the license of the translator, occurs a passage in regard to the Romagna, which is curious not only as exhibiting the former condition of that beautiful and long-suffering portion of Italy, but also as applying to its recent state and its modern grievances.



Page 155

BENVENUTO.

Judicio meo mihi videtur quod quatuor deduxerunt eam nobilem provinciam ad tantam desolationem. Primum est avaritia Pastorum Ecclesiae, qui nunc vendunt unam terram, nunc aliam; et nunc unus favet uni Tyranno, nunc alius alteri, secundum quod saepe mutantur officiales. Secundum est pravitas Tyrannorum suorum, qui semper inter se se lacerant et rodunt, et subditos excoriant. Tertium est fertilitas locorum ipsius provinciae, cujus pinguedo allicit barbaros et externos in praedam. Quartum est invidia, quae viget in cordibus ipsorum incolarum.

TAMBURINI.

Per me ritengo, che quattro fossero le cagioni per cui la Romagna si ridusse a tanta desolazione: l' abuso per avarizia di alcuni ecclesiastici, che alienarono or una, or un' altra terra, e si misero d' accordo coi tiranni,—i tiranni stessi che sempre erano discordi fra loro a danno de' sudditi,—la fertilita de' terreni, che troppo alletta gli strani, ed i barbari,—l' invidia, che regna fra gli stessi roma gnuoli.

“In my judgment,” says Benvenuto, who speaks with the authority of long experience and personal observation, “it seems to me that four things have brought that noble province to so great desolation. The first of which is, the avarice of the Pastors of the Church, who now sell one tract of its land, and now another; while one favors one Tyrant, and another another, so that the men in authority are often changed. The second is, the wickedness of the Tyrants themselves, who are always tearing and biting each other, and fleecing their subjects. The third is, the fertility of the province itself, which by its very richness allures barbarians and foreigners to prey upon it. The fourth is, that spirit of jealousy which flourishes in the hearts of the inhabitants themselves.” It will be noticed that the translator changes the phrase, “the avarice of the Pastors of the Church,” into “the avarice of some ecclesiastics,” while throughout the passage, as indeed throughout every page of the work, the vigor of Benvenuto’s style and the point of his animated sentences are quite lost in the flatness of a dull and inaccurate paraphrase.

A passage in which the spirit of the poet has fully roused his manly commentator is the noble burst of indignant reproach with which he inveighs against and mourns over Italy in Canto VI. of the “Purgatory”:—

Ahi serva Italia, di dolore ostello,
Nave senza nocchiero in gran tempesta,
Non donna di provincie, ma bordello.

“Nota metaphoram pulcram: sicut enim in lupanari venditur caro humana pretio sine pudore, ita meretrix magna, idest Curia Romana, et Curia Imperialis, vendunt libertatem Italicam.... Ad Italiam concurrunt omnes barbarae nationes cum aviditate ad ipsam



conculcandam.... Et heic, Lector, me excusabis, qui antequam ulterius procedam, cogor facere invectivam contra Danter. O utinam, Poeta mirifice, rivivisceres modo! Ubi pax, ubi tranquillitas in Italia?... Nunc autem dicere possim de tola Italia quod Vergilius tuus de una Urbe dixit:



Page 156

—'Crudelis ubique
Lucutus, ubique pavor, et plurima mortis imago.'

.... Quanto ergo excusabilius, si fas esset, possem exclamare ad Omnipotentem quam tu, qui in tempora felicia incidisti, quibus nos omnes nunc viventes in misera Italia possumus invidere? Ipse ergo, qui potest, mittat amodo Veltrum, quem tu vidisti in Somno, si tamen umquam venturus est."

"Note the beauty of the metaphor: for, as in a brothel the human body is sold for a price without shame, so the great harlot, the Court of Rome, and the Imperial Court, sell the liberty of Italy.... All the barbarous nations rush eagerly upon Italy to trample upon her.... And here, Reader, thou shalt excuse me, if, before going farther, I am forced to utter a complaint against Dante. Would that, O marvellous poet, thou wert now living again! Where is peace, where is tranquillity in Italy?... But I may say now of all Italy what thy Virgil said of a single city,—'Cruel mourning everywhere, everywhere alarm, and the multiplied image of death.' ...With how much more reason, then, were it but right, might I call upon the Omnipotent, than thou who fellest upon happy times, which we all now living in wretched Italy may envy! Let Him, then, who can, speedily send the Hound that thou sawest in thy dream, if indeed he is ever to come!"

It would be surprising, but for what we have already seen of the manner in which Signor Tamburini performs his work, to find that he has here omitted all reference to the Church, omitted also the address to Dante, and thus changed the character of the whole passage.

Again, in the comment on Canto XX. of the "Purgatory," where Benvenuto gives account of the outrage committed, at the instigation of Philippe le Bel, by Sciarra Colonna, upon Pope Boniface VIII., at Anagni, the translator omits the most characteristic portions of the original.

* * * * *

BENVENUTO.

Sed intense dolore superante animum ejus, conversus in rabiem furoris, coepit se rodere totum. Et sic verificata est prophetia simplicissimi Coelestini, qui praedixerat sibi: Intrasti ut Vulpes, Regnabis ut Leo, Morieris ut Canis.

TAMBURINI.

L'angoscia per altro la vinse sul di lui animo, perche fu preso da tal dolore, che si mordeva e lacerava le membra, e cosi termino sua vita. In tal modo nel corso della vita di Bonifazio fu verificata la profezia di Celestino.

* * * * *



“But his intense mortification overcoming the mind of the Pope, he fell into a rage of madness, and began to bite himself all over his body. And thus the prophecy of the simple-minded Celestine came true, who had predicted to him. Thou hast entered [into the Papacy] like a Fox, thou wilt reign like a Lion, thou wilt die like a Dog.”

It will be observed that the prophecy is referred to by the translator, but that its stinging words are judiciously left out.



Page 157

The mass of omissions such as these is enormous. We go forward to the comment on Canto XII. of the "Paradiso," which exhibits a multitude of mutilations and alterations. For instance, in the comment on the lines in which Dante speaks of St. Dominick as attacking heresies most eagerly where they were most firmly established, (*dove le resistenze eran piu grosse*,) our translator represents Benvenuto as saying, "That is, most eagerly in that place, namely, the district of Toulouse, where the Albigenses had become strong in their heresy and in power." But Benvenuto says nothing of the sort; his words are, "Idest, ubi erant majores Haeretici, vel ratione scientiae, vel potentiae. Non enim fecit sicut quidam moderni Inquisitores, qui non sunt audaces nec solertes, nisi contra quosdam divites denariis, pauperes amicis, qui non possunt facere magnam resistantiam, et extorquent ab eis pecunias, quibus postea emunt Episcopatum."

"That is, where were the greatest Heretics, either through their knowledge or their power. For he did not do like some modern Inquisitors, who are bold and skilful only against such as are rich in money, but poor in friends, and who cannot make a great resistance, and from these they squeeze out their money with which they afterwards buy an Episcopate."

Such is the way in which what is most illustrative of general history, or of the personal character of the author himself, is constantly destroyed by the processes of Signor Tamburini. From the very next page a passage of real value, as a contemporary judgment upon the orders of St. Dominick and St. Francis, has utterly disappeared under his hands. "And here take notice, that our most far-sighted author, from what he saw of these orders, conjectured what they would become. For, in very truth, these two illustrious orders of Preachers and Minorites, formerly the two brightest lights of the world, now have indeed undergone an eclipse, and are in their decline, and are divided by quarrels and domestic discords. And consequently it seems as if they were not to last much longer. Therefore it was well answered by a monk of St. Benedict, when he was reproached by a Franciscan friar for his wanton life,—When Francis shall be as old as Benedict, then you may talk to me."

But there is a still more remarkable instance of Signor Tamburini's tenderness to the Church, and of the manner in which he cheats his readers as to the spirit and meaning of the original, in the comment on the passage in Canto XXI. of the "Paradise," where St. Peter Damiano rebukes the luxury and pomp of the modern prelates, and mentions, among their other displays of vanity, the size of their cloaks, "which cover even their steeds, so that two beasts go under one skin." "Namely," says the honest old commentator, "the beast of burden, and the beast who is borne, who in truth is the more beastly of the two. And, indeed, were the author now alive, he might change his words, and



Page 158

say, So that three beasts go under one skin,—to wit, a cardinal, a harlot, and a horse; for thus I have heard of one whom I knew well, that he carried his mistress to the chase, seated behind him on the croup of his horse or mule, and he himself was in truth 'as the horse or as the mule, which have no understanding.'... And wonder not, Reader, if the author as a poet thus reproach these prelates of the Church; for even great Doctors and Saints have not been able to abstain from rebukes of this sort against such men in the Church." Nothing of all this is to be found in the Italian version.

But it is not only in omission that the translator shows his devotion to the Church. He takes upon himself not infrequently to alter the character of Benvenuto's narratives by the insertion of phrases or the addition of clauses to which there is nothing corresponding in the original. The comment on Canto XIX. of the "Inferno" affords several instances of this unfair procedure. "Among the Cardinals," says Benvenuto, "was Benedict of Anagni, a man most skilful in managing great affairs and in the rule of the world; who, moreover, sought the highest dignity." "Vir astutissimus ad quæque magna negotia et imperia mundi; qui etiam affectabat summam dignitatem." This appears in the translation as follows: "Uomo astutissimo, perito d' affari, e conoscitore delle altre corti: affettava un contegno il piu umile, e riservato." "A man most astute, skilled in affairs, and acquainted with other courts; he assumed a demeanor the most humble and reserved." A little farther on, Benvenuto tells us that many, even after the election of Benedict to the Papacy, reputed Celestine to be still the true and rightful Pope, in spite of his renunciation, because, they said, such a dignity could not be renounced. To this statement the translator adds, "because it comes directly from God,"—a clause for the benefit of readers under the pontificate of Pius IX.

In the comment on Canto XIX. of the "Purgatory" occurs the following striking passage: "Summus Pontificatus, si bene geritur, est summus honor, summum onus, summa servitus, summus labor. Si vero male, est summum periculum animæ, summum malum, summa miseria, summus pudor. Ergo dubium est ex omni parte negotium. Ideo bene præfatus Adrianus Papa IV. dicebat, Cathedram Petri spinosam, et Mantum ejus acutissimis per totum consertum aculeis, et tantæ gravitatis, ut robustissimos premat et conterat humeros. Et concludebat, Nonne miseria dignus est qui pro tanta pugnat miseria?"

"The Papacy, if it be well borne, is the chief of honors, of burdens, of servitudes, and of labors; but if ill, it is the chief of perils for the soul, the chief of evils, of miseries, and of shames. Wherefore, it is throughout a doubtful affair. And well did the aforesaid Pope Adrian IV. say, that the Chair of Peter was thorny, and his Mantle full of sharpest stings, and so heavy as to weigh down and bruise the stoutest shoulders; and, added he, Does not that man deserve pity, who strives for a woe like this?"



Page 159

This passage, so worthy of preservation and of literal translation, is given by Signor Tamburini as follows: "The tiara is the first of honors, but also the first and heaviest of burdens, and the most rigorous slavery; it is the greatest risk of misfortune and of shame. The Papal mantle is pierced with sharp thorns; who, then, will excuse him who frets himself for it?"

But it is not only in passages relating to the Church that the translator's faithlessness is displayed. Almost every page of his work exhibits some omission, addition, transposition, or paraphrase, for which no explanation can be given, and not even an insufficient excuse be offered. In Canto IX. of the "Paradise," Dante puts into the mouth of Cunizza, speaking of Foulques of Marseilles, the words, "Before his fame shall die, the hundredth year shall five times come around." "And note here," says Benvenuto, "that our author manifestly tells a falsehood; since of that man there is no longer any fame, even in his own country. I say, in brief, that the author wishes tacitly to hint that he will give fame to him by his power,—a fame that shall not die so long as this book shall live; and if we may conjecture of the future, it is to last for many ages, since we see that the fame of our author continually increases. And thus he exhorts men to live virtuously, that the wise may bestow fame upon them, as he himself has now given it to Cunizza, and will give it to Foulques." Not a word of this appears in Signor Tamburini's pages, interesting as it is as an early expression of confidence in the duration of Dante's fame.

A similar omission of a curious reference to Dante occurs in the comment on the 23d verse of Canto XXVII. of the "Inferno," where Benvenuto, speaking of the power of mental engrossment or moral affections to overcome physical pain, says, "As I, indeed, have seen a sick man cause the poem of Dante to be brought to him for relief from the burning pains of fever."

Such omissions as these deprive Benvenuto's pages of the charm of *naivete*, and of the simple expression of personal experience and feeling with which they abound in the original, and take from them a great part of their interest for the general reader. But there is another class of omissions and alterations which deprives the translation of value for the special student of the text of Dante,—a class embracing many of Benvenuto's discussions of disputed readings and remarks upon verbal forms. Signor Tamburini has thus succeeded in making his book of no use as an authority, and prevented it from being referred to by any one desirous of learning Benvenuto's judgment in any case of difficulty. To point out in detail instances of this kind is not necessary, after what we have already done.



Page 160

The common epithets of critical justice fail in such a case as that of this work. The facts concerning it, as they present themselves one after another, are stronger in their condemnation of it than any words. It would seem as if nothing further could be added to the disgrace of the translator; but we have still one more charge to prove against him, worse than the incompetence, the ignorance, and the dishonesty of which we have already found him guilty. In reading the last volume of his work, after our suspicions of its character had been aroused, it seemed to us that we met here and there with sentences which had a familiar tone, which at least resembled sentences we had elsewhere read. We found, upon examination, that Signor Tamburini, under the pretence of a translation of Benvenuto, had inserted through his pages, with a liberal hand, considerable portions of the well-known notes of Costa, and, more rarely, of the still later Florentine editor, the Abate Bianchi. It occurred to us as possible that Costa and Bianchi had in these passages themselves translated from Benvenuto, and that Signor Tamburini had simply adopted their versions without acknowledgment, to save himself the trouble of making a new translation. But we were soon satisfied that his trickery had gone farther than this, and that he had inserted the notes of these editors to fill up his own pages, without the slightest regard to their correspondence with or disagreement from the original text. It is impossible to discover the motive of this proceeding; for it certainly would seem to be as easy to translate, after the manner in which Signor Tamburini translates, as to copy the words of other authors. Moreover, his thefts seem quite without rule or order: he takes one note and leaves the next; he copies a part, and leaves the other part of the same note; he sometimes quotes half a page, sometimes only a line or two in many pages. Costa's notes on the 98th and 100th verses of Canto XXI. of the "Paradise" are taken out without the change of a single word, and so also his note on v. 94 of the next Canto. In this last instance we have the means of knowing what Benvenuto wrote, because, although the passage has not been given by Muratori, it is found in the note by Parenti, in the Florentine edition of the "Divina Commedia" of 1830. "Vult dicere Benedictus quod miraculosius fuit Jordanem converti retrorsum, et Mare Rubrum aperiri per medium, quam si Deus succurreret et provideret istis malis. Ratio est quod utrumque praedictorum miraculorum fuit contra naturam; sed punire reos et nocentes naturale est et usitatum, quamvis Deus punierit peccatores Aegyptios per modum inusitatum supernaturaliter Jordanus sic nominatur a duobus fontibus, quorum unus vocatur JOR et alius vocatur DAN: inde JORDANUS, ut ait Hieronymus, locorum orientalium persedulus indagator. *Volto ritroso*; scilicet, versus ortum suum, vel contra: *el mar fugire*; idest, et Mare Rubrum fugere hinc inde, quando fecit



Page 161

viam populo Dei, qui transivit sicco pede: *fu qui mirabile a vedere*; idest, miraculosius, *chel soccorso que*, idest, quam esset mirabile succursum divinum hic venturum ad puniendos perversos." Now this whole passage is omitted in Signor Tamburini's work; and in its place appears a literal transcript from Costa's note, as follows: "Veramente fu piu mirabile cosa vedere il Giordano volto all' indietro o fuggire il mare, quando cosi volle Iddio, che non sarebbe vedere qui il provvedimento a quel male, che per colpa de' traviati religiosi viene alia Chiesa di Dio."

Another instance of this complete desertion of Benvenuto, and adoption of another's words, occurs just at the end of the same Canto, v. 150; and the Florentine edition again gives us the original text. It is even more inexplicable why the so-called translator should have chosen this course here than in the preceding instance; for he has copied but a line and a half from Costa, which is not a larceny of sufficient magnitude to be of value to the thief.

We have noted misappropriations of this sort, beside those already mentioned, in Cantos II. and III. of the "Purgatory," and in Cantos I., II., XV., XVI., XVIII., XIX., and XXIII., of the "Paradise." There are undoubtedly others which have not attracted our attention.

We have now finished our exposure of the false pretences of these volumes, and of the character of their author. After what has been said of them, it seems hardly worth while to note, that, though handsome in external appearance, they are very carelessly and inaccurately printed, and that they are totally deficient in needed editorial illustrations. Such few notes of his own as Signor Tamburini has inserted in the course of the work are deficient alike in intelligence and in object.

A literary fraud of this magnitude is rarely attempted. A man must be conscious of being supported by the forces of a corrupt ecclesiastical literary police before venturing on a transaction of this kind. No shame can touch the President of the "Academy of the Industrious." His book has the triple *Imprimatur* of Rome. It is a comment, not so much on Dante, as on the low standard of literary honesty under a government where the press is shackled, where true criticism is forbidden, where the censorship exerts its power over the dead as well as the living, and every word must be accommodated to the fancied needs of a despotism the more exacting from the consciousness of its own decline.

It is to be hoped, that, with the new freedom of Italian letters, an edition of the original text of Benvenuto's Comment will be issued under competent supervision. The old Commentator, the friend of Petrarch and Boccaccio, deserves this honor, and should have his fame protected against the assault made upon it by his unworthy compatriot.

Reminiscences of Scottish Life and Character. By E.E. RAMSAY, M.A., LL.D., F.R.S.E., Dean of Edinburgh. From the Seventh Edinburgh Edition. Boston: Ticknor & Fields. 12mo.

Page 162

This book was not made, but grew. The foundation was a short lecture delivered in Edinburgh. It was so popular that it was published in a pamphlet form. The popularity of the pamphlet induced Dean Ramsay to recall many anecdotes illustrating national peculiarities which could not be compressed into a lyceum address. The result was that the pamphlet became a thin volume, which grew thicker and thicker as edition after edition was called for by the curiosity of the public. The American reprint is from the seventh and last Edinburgh edition, and is introduced by a genial preface, written especially for American readers. The author is more than justified in thinking that there are numerous persons scattered over our country, who, from ties of ancestry or sympathy with Scotland, will enjoy a record of the quaint sayings and eccentric acts of her past humorists,—“her original and strong-minded old ladies,—her excellent and simple parish ministers,—her amusing parochial half-daft idiots,—her pawky lairds,—and her old-fashioned and now obsolete domestic servants and retainers.” Indeed, the Yankee is sufficiently allied, morally and intellectually, with the Scotchman, to appreciate everything that illustrates the peculiarities of Scottish humor. He has shown this by the delight he has found in those novels of Scott’s which relate exclusively to Scotland. The Englishman, and perhaps the Frenchman, may have excelled him in the appreciation of “Ivanhoe” and “Quentin Durward,” but we doubt if even the first has equalled him in the cozy enjoyment of the “Antiquary” and “Guy Mannering.” And Dean Ramsay’s book proves how rich and deep was the foundation in fact of the qualities which Sir Walter has immortalized in fiction. He has arranged his “Reminiscences of Scottish Life and Character” under five heads, relating respectively to the religious feelings and observances, the conviviality, the domestic service, the language and proverbs, and the peculiarities of the wit and humor of Scotland. In New England, and wherever in any part of the country the New-Englander resides, the volume will receive a most cordial recognition. Dean Ramsay’s qualifications for his work are plainly implied in his evident understanding and enjoyment of the humor of Scottish character. He writes about that which he feels and knows; and, without any exercise of analysis and generalization, he subtly conveys to the reader the inmost spirit of the national life he undertakes to illustrate by narrative, anecdote, and comment. The finest critical and artistic skill would be inadequate to insinuate into the mind so keen and vivid a perception of Scottish characteristics as escape unconsciously from the simple statements of this true Scotchman, who is in hearty sympathy with his countrymen.

The Pulpit of the American Revolution: or, The Political Sermons of the Period of 1776.
With a Historical Introduction, Notes, and Illustrations. By JOHN WINGATE
THORNTON, A.M. Boston: Gould & Lincoln. 12mo.



Page 163

This is a volume worthy a place in every American library, public or private. It consists of nine discourses by the same number of patriotic clergymen of the Revolution. Mr. Thornton, the editor, has supplied an historical introduction, full of curious and interesting matter, and has also given a special preface to each sermon, with notes explaining all those allusions in the text which might puzzle an ordinary reader of the present day. His annotations have not only the value which comes from patient research, but the charm which proceeds from loving partisanship. He transports himself into the times about which he writes, and almost seems to have listened to the sermons he now comes forward to illustrate. The volume contains Dr. Mayhew's sermon on "Unlimited Submission," Dr. Chauncy's on the "Repeal of the Stamp Act," Rev. Mr. Cooke's Election Sermon on the "True Principles of Civil Government," Rev. Mr. Gordon's "Thanksgiving Sermon in 1774," and the discourses, celebrated in their day, of Langdon, Stiles, West, Payson, and Howard. Among these, the first rank is doubtless due to Dr. Mayhew's remarkable discourse at the West Church on the 30th of January, 1750. The topics relating to "non-resistance to the higher powers," which Macaulay treats with such wealth of statement, argument, and illustration, in his "History of England," are in this sermon discussed with equal earnestness, energy, brilliancy, fulness, and independence of thought. If all political sermons were characterized by the rare mental and moral qualities which distinguish Jonathan Mayhew's, there can be little doubt that our politicians and statesmen would oppose the intrusion of parsons into affairs of state on the principle of self-preservation, and not on any arrogant pretension of superior sagacity, knowledge, and ability. In the power to inform the people of their rights and teach them their duties, we would be willing to pit one Mayhew against a score of Cushings and Rhetts, of Slidells and Yanceys. The fact that Mayhew's large and noble soul glowed with the inspiration of a quick moral and religious, as well as common, sense, would not, in our humble opinion, at all detract from his practical efficiency.

Works of Charles Dickens Household Edition. Illustrated from Drawings by F.O.C. Darley and John Gilbert. The Pickwick Papers. New York: W.A. Townsend & Co. 4 vols. 12mo.

We have long needed a handsome American edition of the works of the most popular English novelist of the time, and here we have the first volumes of one which is superior, in type, paper, illustrations, and general taste of mechanical execution, to the best English editions. It is to be published at the rate of two volumes a month until completed, and in respect both to cheapness and elegance is worthy of the most extensive circulation. Such an enterprise very properly commences with "The Pickwick Papers," the work in which the hilarity, humor, and tenderness

Page 164

of the author's humane and beautiful genius first attracted general regard; and it is to be followed by equally fine editions of the romances which succeeded, and, as some think, eclipsed it in merit and popularity. We most cordially wish success to an undertaking which promises to substitute the finest workmanship of the Riverside Press for the bad type and dingy paper of the common editions, and hope that the publishers will see the propriety of adequately remunerating the author.

It is pleasant to note that years and hard work have not dimmed the brightness or impaired the strength of Dickens's mind. The freshness, vigor, and affluence of his genius are not more evident in the "Old Curiosity Shop" than in "Great Expectations," the novel he is now publishing, in weekly parts, in "All the Year Round." Common as is the churlish custom of depreciating a new work of a favorite author by petulantly exalting the worth of an old one, no fair reader of "Great Expectations" will feel inclined to say that Dickens has written himself out. In this novel he gives us new scenes, new incidents, new characters, and a new purpose; and from his seemingly exhaustless fund of genial creativeness, we may confidently look for continual additions to the works which have already established his fame. The characters in "Great Expectations" are original, and some of them promise to rank among his best delineations. Pip, the hero, who, as a child, "was brought up by hand," and who appears so far to be led by it,—thus illustrating the pernicious effect in manhood of that mode of taking nourishment in infancy,—is a delicious creation, quite equal to David Copperfield. Jaggers, the peremptory lawyer, who carries into ordinary conduct and conversation the habits of the criminal bar, and bullies and cross-examines even his dinner and his wine,—Joe, the husband of "the hand" by which Pip was brought up,—Wopsle, Wemmick, Orlick, the family of the Pockets, the mysterious Miss Havisham, and the disdainful Estella, are not repetitions, but personages that the author introduces to his readers for the first time. The story is not sufficiently advanced to enable us to judge of its merit, but it has evidently been carefully meditated, and here and there the reader's curiosity is stung by fine hints of a secret which the weaver of the plot still contrives to keep to himself. The power of observation, satire, humor, passion, description, and style, which the novel exhibits, gives evidence that Dickens is putting forth in its production his whole skill and strength.

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