

The Atlantic Monthly, Volume 03, No. 17, March, 1859 eBook

The Atlantic Monthly, Volume 03, No. 17, March, 1859

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Page 1

HOLBEIN AND THE DANCE OF DEATH.

At the northwest corner of Switzerland, just on the turn of the Rhine from its westward course between Germany and Switzerland, to run northward between Germany and France, stands the old town of Bale. It is nominally Swiss; but its situation on the borders of three countries, and almost in them all, has given to the place itself and to its inhabitants a somewhat heterogeneous air. "It looks," says one traveller, "like a stranger lately arrived in a new colony, who, although he may have copied the dress and the manner of those with whom he has come to reside, wears still too much of his old costume to pass for a native, and too little to be received as a stranger." Perhaps we may get a better idea of the mixed nationality of the place by imagining a Swiss who speaks French with a German accent.

Bale is an ancient city; though Rome was bending under the weight of more than a thousand years when the Emperor Valentinian built at this angle of the river a fortress which was called the Basilia. Houses soon began to cluster round it upon the ruins of an old Helvetian town, and thus Basel or Bale obtained its existence and its name. Bale suffered many calamities. War, pestilence, and earthquake alternately made it desolate. Whether we must enumerate among its misfortunes a Grand Ecclesiastical Council which assembled there in 1431, and sat for seventeen years, deposing one infallible Pope, and making another equally infallible, let theological disputants decide. But the assembling of this Council was of some service to us; for its Secretary, Aeneas Sylvius, (who, like the saucy little *prima donna*, was one of the noble and powerful Italian family, the Piccolomini, and afterward, as Pope Pius *ii.*, wore the triple crown which St. Peter did not wear,) in his Latin dedication of a history of the transactions of that body to the Cardinal St. Angeli, has left a description of Bale as it was in 1436.

After telling us that the town is situated upon that "excellent river, the Rhine, which divides it into two parts, called Great Bale and Little Bale, and that these are connected by a bridge which the river rising from its bed sometimes carries off," he, naturally enough for an ecclesiastic and a future Pope, goes on to say, that in Great Bale, which is far more beautiful and magnificent than Little Bale, there are handsome and commodious churches; and he naively adds, that, "*although* these are not adorned with marble, and are built of common stone, they are much frequented by the people." The women of Bale, following the devotional instincts of their sex, were the most assiduous attendants upon these churches; and they consoled themselves for the absence of marble, which the good Aeneas Sylvius seems to imply would partly have excused them for staying away, by an arrangement in itself as odd as in Roman Catholic places of worship—to their honor—it



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is, and ever was, unusual. Each of them performed her devotions in a kind of inclosed bench or solitary pew. By most of these the occupant was concealed only to the waist when she stood up at the reading of the Gospel; some allowed only their heads to appear; and others of the fair owners were at once so devout, so cruel, and so self-denying as to shut out the eyes of the world entirely and at all times. But instances of this remorseless mortification of the flesh, seem to have been exceedingly rare. Queer enough these structures were, and sufficiently gratifying to the pride and provocative of the envy which the beauties of Bale (avowedly) went to churches in which there was no marble to mortify. For they were of different heights, according to the rank of the occupant. A simple burgher's wife took but a step toward heaven when she went to pray; a magistrate's of the lower house, we must suppose, took two; a magistrate's of the upper house, three; a lady, four; a baroness, five; a countess, six; and what a duchess, if one ever appeared there, did to maintain her dignity in the eyes of God and man, unless she mounted into the pulpit, it is quite impossible to conjecture. Aeneas Sylvius gives it as his opinion that these things were used as a protection against the cold, which to his Italian blood seemed very great. But that notion was surely instilled into the courtly churchman by some fair, demure Baloise; for had it been well-founded, the sentry-boxes would have risen and fallen with the thermometer, and not with the rank of the occupant.

The walls of the churches were hung around with the emblazoned shields of knights and noblemen, and the roofs were richly painted in various colors, and glowed with splendor when the rays of the sun fell upon them. Storks built their nests upon these roofs, and hatched their young there unmolested; for the Balois believed, that, if the birds were disturbed, they would fire the houses.

The dwellings of men of any wealth or rank were very curiously planned, elaborately ornamented, richly painted, and adorned with magnificent tapestry. The tables were covered with vessels of wrought silver, in which Sylvius confesses that the Balois surpassed even the skilful and profuse Italians. Fountains, those sources of fantastic and ever-changing beauty, were numerous,—so numerous, says our afterward-to-be-infallible authority, that the town of Viterbo, in Tuscany, had not so many,—and Viterbo was noted for its beauty, and for being surrounded with the villas of wealthy Italians, who have always used water freely in the way of fountains.

Bale, although it then—four hundred and twenty years ago—acknowledged the Emperor for its sovereign, was a free town, as it is now; that is, it had no local lord to favor or oppress it at his pleasure, but was governed by laws enacted by representatives of the people. The spirit of a noble independence pervaded the little Canton of which it was and is the capital. Though it was fortified, its stone defences were not strong; but when Sylvius tells us that the Balois thought that the strength of

their city consisted in the union of its inhabitants, who preferred death to loss of liberty, we see what stuff its men were made of, and why the town was free.



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Among its peculiarities, Bale had no lawyers,—this happy and united Bale. The Balois did not trouble themselves about the Imperial law, says Sylvius; but when disputes or accusations were brought before the magistrates, they were decided according to custom and the equity of each case. They were nevertheless inexorably severe in administering justice. A criminal could not be saved either by gold, or by intercession, or by the authority and influence of his family. He who was guilty must be punished; and the punishments were terrible. Criminals were banished, hung, beheaded, broken on the wheel, drowned in the Rhine, (a bad use to which to put that “excellent river,”) left to starve on a gradually diminished supply of bread and water. To compel confessions, tortures inconceivably horrible were used, to which the alternative of death would have been a boon; and yet there were not wanting those among the Balois who would endure these torments rather than utter their own condemnation.

They were devoted to religion, and held in great reverence the pictures and images of the Saints; but not on account of any admiration of the skill of painter or sculptor; for they cared little for the arts, and were so ignorant of literature that “no one of them had ever heard of Cicero or of any other orator.”

The men of Bale were of noble presence, and dressed well, although they avoided magnificence. Only those of knightly rank wore purple; the wealthy burghers confined themselves to black velvet; but their wives, on fete-days, blazed in splendid silk and satin and jewels. The boys went with naked feet, and, adds the reverend divine, the women wore upon their white legs only shoes. There was no distinction of age by costume, among the women,—a very great singularity in those days, when every stage and rank of life was marked by some peculiar style of dress; but in Bale the face alone distinguished the young girl from the matron of mature years. It may, however, be doubted by some, whether this is peculiar to the town of Bale or to the time of Sylvius. The men were addicted to voluptuous pleasures; they lived sumptuously, and passed a long time at table. In the words of our churchman, “They were too much devoted to Father Bacchus and Dame Venus,”—faults which they deemed venial. But he adds, that they were jealous of their honor, and held to what they promised; they would rather be upright than merely seem to be so. Though provident, they were content, unless very poor.

Another peculiarity of Bale: its clocks were one hour ahead of all others, and so continued at least till the middle of the last century. This of course depended on no difference of time; it was merely that when, for instance, at mid-day, the clocks of neighboring towns struck twelve, the clocks of Bale struck one. The origin of this seeming effort to hasten him who usually moves rapidly enough for us all is lost in obscurity.

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And now why is it that, we have gone back four hundred years and more, to linger thus long with the Secretary of the Great Ecclesiastical Council of Bale, in that quaint and queer old town, with its half French, half German look, its grand, grotesque old churches, hung round with knightly shields and filled with women, each in a pulpit of her own, its stork-crowned roofs, its houses blazing with wrought gold and silver, its threescore fountains, and the magnificence in which, without a court, it rivalled the richest capitals of Italy, its noble-spirited and pleasure-loving, but simple-minded and unlearned burghers, its white-limbed beauties, and its deceitful clocks? It is not because that town is now one of the principal ribbon-factories of the world, and exports to this country alone over \$1,200,000 worth yearly; although some fair readers may suppose that an all-sufficient reason,—and some of their admirers and protectors, too, for that matter. Think of it! nearly one million two hundred and fifty thousand dollars' worth of ribbons coming to us every year from a single town in Switzerland! The statement is enough to carry horror and dismay to the heart and the pocket of every father and brother, and above all, of every husband, actual or possible, who hears of it. It is a godsend to the protectionists, who might reedify their party on the basis of a prohibitory tariff against ribbons. If they were successful, their success would be brilliant; for if our fair tyrants could not get ribbons—those necessities of life—from Bale in Switzerland, they would tease and coax us to build them a Bale in America; and we should do it.

We have gone back to the old Bale of four hundred and twenty years ago, because there, and not long after that time,—about 1498,—according to general belief, Hans Holbein was born; because these were the surroundings under the influence of which he grew to manhood; and because there, about sixty years before his birth, a Dance of Death was painted, the most ancient and important of which we have any remaining memorial. This Dance was painted upon the wall of the churchyard of the Dominican Convent in Great Bale, by order of the very Ecclesiastical Council of which our Aeneas Sylvius was Secretary, and in commemoration of a plague which visited the town during the sitting of that Council, and carried off many of its members.

What is a Dance of Death? and why should Death be painted dancing? Some readers may think of it as a frantic revel of grim skeletons, or perhaps—like me in my boyish musings—imagine nameless shapes with Death and Hell gleaming in their faces, each clasping a mortal beguiled to its embrace, all flitting and floating round and round to unearthly music, and gradually receding through vast mysterious gloom till they are lost in its horrible obscurity.

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But neither of these notions is near the truth. The Dance of Death is not a revel, and in it Death does not dance at all. A Dance of Death, or a Dance Macabre, as it was called, is a succession of isolated pictures, all informed with the same motive, it is true, but each independent of the others, and consisting of a group, generally of but two figures, one of which is the representative of Death. The second always represents a class; and in this figure every rank, from the very highest to the lowest, finds its type. The number of these groups or pictures varies considerably in the different dances, according to the caprice of the artist, or, perhaps, to the expense of his time and labor which he thought warranted by the payment he was to receive. But all express, with sufficient fulness, the idea that Death is the common lot of humanity, and that he enters with impartial feet the palace and the cottage, neither pitying youth nor respecting age, and waiting no convenient season.

The figure of Death in these strange religious works of Art,—for they were as purely religious in their origin as the Holy Families and Madonnas of the same and a subsequent period,—this figure of Death is not always a skeleton. It is so in but one of the forty groups in the Dance at Bale, which was the germ of Holbein's, and which, indeed, until very recently, was attributed to him, although it was painted more than half a century before he was born. It is generally assumed that a skeleton has always been the representative of Death, but erroneously; for, in fact, Holbein was the first to fix upon a mere skeleton for the embodiment of that idea.

The Hebrew Scriptures, which furnish us with the earliest extant allusion to Death as a personage, designate him as an angel or messenger of God,—as, for instance, in the record of the destruction of the Assyrian host in the Second Book of Kings (xix. 35). The ancient Egyptians, too, in whose strange system of symbolism may be found the germ, at least, of most of the types used in the religion and the arts of more modern nations, had no representation of Death as an individual agent. They expressed the extinction of life very naturally and simply by the figure of a mummy. Such a figure it was their custom to pass round among the guests at their feasts; and the Greeks and Romans imitated them, with slight modifications, in the form of the image and the manner of the ceremony. Some scholars have found in this custom a deep moral and religious significance, akin to that which certainly attached to the custom of placing a slave in the chariot of a Roman conquering general to say to him at intervals, as his triumphal procession moved with pomp and splendor through the swarming streets, "Remember that thou art a man." But this is too subtle a conjecture. The ceremony was but a silent way of saying, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die," which, as Paul's solemn irony makes but too plain, must be the philosophy of life to those who believe that the dead rise not, which was the case with the Egyptians and the Greeks, and the Hebrews also. An old French epitaph expresses to the full this philosophy:—



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“Ce que j’ai mange,
Ce que j’ai bu,
Ce que j’ai dissipe,
Je l’ai maintenant avec moi.
Ce que j’ai laisse,
Je l’ai perdu,”

What I ate,
What I drank,
What I dissipated,
I have with me.
That which I left
I lost.

The figure of the sad youth leaning upon an inverted torch, in which the Greeks embodied their idea of Death, is familiar to all who have examined ancient Art. The Etruscan Death was a female, with wings upon the shoulders, head, and feet, hideous countenance, terrible fangs and talons, and a black skin. No example of the form attributed to him by the early Christians has come down to us, that I can discover; but we know that they, as well as the later Hebrews, considered Death as the emissary of the Evil One, if not identical with him, and called him impious, unholy. It was in the Dark Ages, that the figure of a dead body or a skull was first used as a symbol of Death; but even then its office appears to have been purely symbolic, and not representative;—that is, these figures served to remind men of their mortality, or to mark a place of sepulture, and were not the embodiment of an idea, not the creation of a personage,—Death. It is not until the thirteenth or fourteenth century that we find this embodiment clearly defined and generally recognized; and even then the figure used was not a skeleton, but a cadaverous and emaciated body.

Among the remains of Greek and Roman Art, only two groups are known in which a skeleton appears; and it is remarkable that in both of these the skeletons are dancing. In one group of three, the middle figure is a female. Its comparative breadth at the shoulders and narrowness at the hips make at first a contrary impression; but the position of the body and limbs is, oddly enough, too like that of a female dancer of the modern French school to leave the question in more than a moment’s doubt. Thus the artists who did not embody their idea of death in a skeleton were the first to conceive and execute a real Dance of Death. In both the groups referred to, the motive is manifestly comic; and neither of them has any similarity to the Dances of Death of which Holbein’s has become the grand representative. These had their origin, we can hardly tell with certainty how, or when, or where; although the subject has enlisted the investigating labors of such accomplished scholars and profound antiquaries as Douce and Ottley in England, and Peignot and Langlois in France. But a story with which they are intimately connected, even if it is not their germ, has been discovered; ancient customs which must have aided in their development are familiar to all investigators of

ancient manners, and especially of ancient amusements; and the motives which inform them all, and the moral condition of Christendom of which they were the result, are plain enough.



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We have seen before, that this Dance consisted of several groups of two or more figures, one of which was always Death in the act of claiming a victim; and for the clear comprehension of what follows, it is necessary to anticipate a little, and remark, that there is no doubt that the Dance was first represented by living performers. Strange as this seems to us, it was but in keeping with the spirit of the time, which we call, perhaps with some presumption, the Dark Ages.

The story which is probably the germ of this Dance was called *Les Trois Morts et les Trois Vifs*,—"The Three Dead and the Three Living." It is of indefinable antiquity and uncertain origin. It is said, that three noble youths, as they returned from hunting, were met in the gloom of the forest by three hideous spectres, in the form of decaying human corpses; and that, as they stood rooted to the ground by this appalling sight, the figures addressed them solemnly upon the vanity of worldly grandeur and pleasure, and admonished them, that, although in the heyday of youth, they must soon become as they (the spectres) were. This story, or *dit*, "saying," as it was called in French, was exceedingly popular through-out Europe five or six hundred years ago. It is found in the language of every Christian nation of the period, and, extended by means of accessory incidents and much moralizing, is made to cover several pages in more than one old illuminated manuscript. In the Arundel MSS., in England, there is one of the many versions of the legend written in French so old that it is quite as difficult for Frenchmen as for Englishmen to read it. But over an illuminated picture of the incident, in which three kings are shown meeting the three skeletons, are these lines in English, as old, but less obsolete:—

Over the Kings.

"Ich am afert
Lo whet ich see
Methinketh hit be develes thre."

Over the Skeletons.

"Ich wes wel fair
Such schel tou be
For Godes love be wer by me."

In these rude lines is the whole moral of the legend, and of the Dance of Death which grew out of it. That growth was simple, gradual, and natural. In the versions and in the pictorial representations of the legend there soon began to be much variety in the persons who met the spectres. At first three noble youths, they became three kings, three noble ladies, a king, a queen, and their son or daughter, and so on,—the rank of the persons, however, being always high. For, as we shall have occasion to notice hereafter more particularly, the mystery of the Dance had a democratic as well as a religious significance; and it served to bring to mind, not only the irresistible nature of

Death's summons, but the real equality of all men; and this it did in a manner to which those of high condition could not object.

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The legend was made the subject of a fresco, painted about 1350, by the eminent Italian painter and architect, Orcagna, upon the walls of the Campo Santo at Pisa,—which some readers may be glad to be reminded was a cemetery, so called because it was covered with earth brought from the Holy Land. It is remarkable, however, that in this work the artist embodied Death not in the form commonly used in his day, but in the old Etruscan figure before mentioned. Orcagna's Death is a female, winged like a bat, and with terrible claws. Armed with a scythe, she swoops down upon the earth and reaps a promiscuous harvest of popes, emperors, kings, queens, churchmen, and noblemen. In the rude manner of the time, Orcagna has divided his picture into compartments. In one of these we see St. Macarius, one of the first Christian hermits, an Egyptian, sitting at the foot of a mountain; before him are three kings, who have returned from the chase accompanied by a gay train of attendants. The Saint calls the attention of the kings to three sepulchres in which lie the bodies of three other kings, one of which is much decomposed. The three living kings are struck with horror; but the painter has much diminished the moral effect of his work, for this century, at least, by making one of them hold his nose;—which is regarded by Mr. Ruskin as an evidence of Orcagna's devotion to the truth; but in this case that brilliant writer, but most unsafe critical guide, commits an error of a kind not uncommon with him. The representation of so homely an action, in such a composition, merely shows that the painter had not arrived at a just appreciation of the relative value of the actual,—and that he failed to see that by introducing this unessential incident he diverted attention from his higher purpose, dragged his picture from a moral to a material plane, and went at a bound far over the narrow limit between the horrible and the ludicrous.

St. Macarius is frequently introduced in the pictures of this subject; and some antiquaries suppose that hence the Dance of Death derived the name, Dance Macabre, by which it used to be generally known. Others derive it from the Arabic *mac-bourah*,—a cemetery. Neither derivation is improbable; but it is of little consequence to us which is correct.

It may seem strange that such a legend as this of "The Three Dead and the Three Living," with such a moral, should become the origin of a dance. But we should remember that in many countries dancing has been a religious ceremony. It was so with the Greeks and Romans, and also with the Hebrews, among whom, however, saltatory worship seems, on most occasions, to have been performed spontaneously, and by volunteers. All will remember the case of Miriam, who thus danced to the sound of her timbrel after the passage of the Red Sea; and who that has read it can forget the account of the dance which King David executed before the ark, dancing with all his might, and girded only with a linen ephod?

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Dancing has always seemed to us to be an essentially ridiculous transaction,—for a man, at least; and we confess that we sympathize with David's wife, Michal, who, seeing this extraordinary *pas seul* from her window, “despised David in her heart,” and treated him to a little conjugal irony when he came home. What would the lovely Eugenie have thought, if, after the fall of Sebastopol, she had seen his Majesty, the Emperor of the French, “cutting it down,” in broad daylight, before the towers of Notre Dame, girded only with a linen ephod,—though that's not exactly the name we give the garment now-a-days? But David was master, not only in Israel, but in his own household, (which is not the case with all kings and great men,) and he said to Michal, —“It was before the Lord, which chose me before thy father and before all his house;.... therefore will I play before the Lord;.... and of the maid-servants which thou hast spoken of, of them shall I be had in honor.” And Michal all her life repented bitterly the offence that she had given her husband.

But dancing was not one of the regular ceremonies of the Christian Church, even in its corruptest days; and yet dances were performed four hundred years ago in the churches and in church-yards, as a part of, or an appendage to, entertainments of a religious character. These were the Mysteries and Moralities, which are the origin of our drama;—and it is remarkable that in all countries the drama has been at first a religious ceremony. These Mysteries and Moralities were religious plays of the rudest kind: the Mysteries being a representation, partly by dumb show and partly by words, of some well-known incident related in the Bible; and the Moralities, a kind of discussion and enforcement of religious doctrine or moral truth by allegorical personages. They were performed at first almost entirely in the churches, upon scaffolds erected for the purpose.

In a Mystery called “Candlemas Day, or the Killing of the Children of Israel,” which represented the Massacre of the Innocents, and in which Herod, Simeon, Joseph, the Virgin Mary, Watkin, a comic character, and Anna the Prophetess, appeared, there was a general dance of all the characters after the Prologue; and at the close of the play, there is a stage-direction for another, in response to a command of Anna the Prophetess, who says,—

“Shewe ye sume plesur as ye can
In the worship of Jesu, our Lady, and St. Anne.”

And thereupon King Herod, Simeon, Joseph, the Virgin Mary, Watkin the funny man, and the Prophetess well stricken in years, proceed to forward four, and end with a promenade all around. Indeed, our ancestors seem to have found it edifying, not to say entertaining, to go to a cathedral to see Satan and an Archbishop dance a hornpipe with the Seven Deadly Sins and the Five Cardinal Virtues.

A Morality called "Every Man," written about 1450, has a direct connection with the subject which we are considering. Every Man, the principal personage of the piece, is an allegorical representation of all mankind; and the purpose of the play is told in this sentence, which introduces it:—

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“Here begynneth a Treatyse how the Hye Fader of Heven sendeth Dethe to somon every creature to come & gyve a count of theyr lyves in this worlde, & is in maner of a Morall Playe.”

On the title-page of an edition printed in 1500, only one copy of which exists, is a very rude wood-cut, in which an individual, who is labelled “Every Man,” is startled at the sight of Death standing at the door of a church and summoning him. In this Moral Play, Fellowship, Good Deeds, Worldly Goods, Knowledge, Beauty, Strength, Discretion, and Five Wittes are characters; and they cannot interpose between Every Man and the summons of Death, nor will any of them, except Good Deeds, go with him. The representation of this play was a kind of Dance of Death, and from the acting of “Every Man” to the execution of that Dance was but a short step.

But the Dance of Death had been performed before “Every Man” was written; and dances in churches and churchyards were of yet greater antiquity. For, by an order of a Roman council under Pope Pius *ii.* in the tenth century, priests were directed “to admonish men and women not to dance and sing in the churches on feast-days, like Pagans.” The evil increased, however, until, according to the old chroniclers, a terrible punishment fell upon a party of dancers. One of them, Ubert, tells the story. It was on Christmas Eve, in the time of the Emperor Henry *ii.*, who assumed the imperial diadem in the year 1002, that a company of eighteen men and women amused themselves by dancing and singing in the churchyard of St. Magnus, in the diocese of Magdeburg, to the annoyance of a priest who was saying mass in the church. He ordered them to desist; but they danced on in reckless mirth. The holy father then invoked God and St. Magnus to keep them dancing for a whole year; and not in vain. For twelve months they danced in spite of themselves. Neither dew nor rain fell upon them; and their shoes and their clothes were not worn away, although by their dancing they buried themselves waist-high. Yet, fatigued and famished beyond human endurance, they danced on, unable to stop an instant for rest or food. The priest’s own daughter was among the dancers; and, unable to undo what the Saint had done, he sent his son to drag her out of the dance. But when her brother pulls her by the arm it comes off in his hand, and he in horror takes it to his father. No blood flows from the wound. The priest buries the arm, and the next morning he finds it upon the top of the grave. He repeats the burial, and with the same result. He makes a third attempt, and the grave casts out the limb with violence before his eyes. Meanwhile the girl and her companions continue dancing, and the Emperor, having heard of this strange occurrence, travels from Rome to see so sad a sight. He orders carpenters to inclose the dancers in a building, but in vain; for that which is built in the day falls down in the night. The dancers have neither rest nor mitigation of their

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curse until the expiration of the year, when they all rush into the church and fall before the altar in a swoon, from which they are not recovered for three days. Then they immediately flee each other's faces, and wander solitary through the world, still dancing at times in spite of themselves. In the olden time this was believed to be the origin of St. Vitus's dance; but we can now see that the dance is the origin of the story.

The Dance of Death was performed by a large company dressed in the costumes of various classes of society, which were then very marked in their difference. One by one the dancers suddenly and silently slipped off, thus typifying the departure of all mankind at Death's summons. That this Dance was performed, not only with the consent, but by the procurement of the clergy, is made certain by the discovery, in the archives of the Cathedral of Besancon, of the account of the payment of four measures of wine by the seneschal to those persons who performed the Dance Macabre on the 10th of July, 1453.

The moral lesson conveyed by this strange pastime or ceremony seems hardly calculated to secure for it a noteworthy popularity in any age; but for a long time it was, either as a ceremony or as a picture, very popular throughout Europe. We know of forty-four places in which it was painted or sculptured in some large public building, the oldest example being that at Little Bale, which was painted in 1312. This, like that in Great Bale, and most of the others, has been destroyed by time or violence. The Dance was made the ornament of books of devotion, and the subject of ornamental initial-letters; groups from it were engraved repeatedly by those fantastic designers and exquisite workmen known as the Little Masters of Germany; a single group was assumed as a device, or trademark, by more than one printer; and it was sung in popular ballads. There is now at Aix-la-Chapelle a huge state-bedstead, on the posts, sides, and footboards of which it is elaborately carved, in the manner of the sixteenth century; and it was even made the ornament of ladies' fans.

The reasons for this popularity were a certain strange fascination in the subject,—yet not so strange at a time when women would crowd to see men burned or hanged and quartered;—but chiefly, the grand democratic significance of the dance. Death has ever been, and ever will be, the greatest leveller; and at a time when rank had an importance and bestowed advantages of which we can form little idea, while at the same time men had begun to ask why this should be, such a satire as this Dance of Death, sanctioned by the Church, that great protector of established rights and dignities, and yet sparing neither noble nor hierarch, not even the Pope himself, satisfied an eager craving in the breast of poor, envious, self-asserting human nature. In one of those ornamental initial-letters above mentioned, the date of which was some years prior to the execution

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of Holbein's Dance, Death appears as a grave-digger, and lifts on his spade, out of the grave which he is making, two skulls, one crowned, the other covered with a peasant's hat. He grins with savage glee at seeing these remnants of the two extremes of society side by side; and underneath them, on the shovel, is written *Idem*,—"The Same." In this word is the key to the popularity of the Dance.

The most important and interesting of these pictured Dances of Death were those at Bale, at Strasbourg, and at Rouen. That at Bale consisted of thirty-nine groups, in the first three of which appear a Pope, an Emperor, and a King. These were portraits of Pope Felix V., the Emperor Sigismund, and King Albert *ii.*, of Rome, all of whom were present at the Council, by whose order, as we have seen, the Dance was painted. The last group of this Dance shows the seizure of the painter's child by Death. It having been almost destroyed by time, the wall on which it was painted was torn down about a hundred years ago; but engravings had been made of it in the latter part of the seventeenth century. The Dance at Strasbourg, like that at Bale, and many others, was on the wall of a Dominican convent. It was painted in arched compartments, and is peculiar in that its groups consist of many figures, among whom Death intrudes, and carries off one, generally the principal personage of the company. It was painted about 1450, and probably by the eminent German painter, Martin Schongauer; but having been utterly neglected and forgotten, it was finally plastered over, no one knows when. In repairing the church in 1824, it was accidentally discovered, and carefully exposed; but it was so much injured that it fell into decay soon after drawings had been made from it.

The Dance at Rouen was in the still existing Cemetery of St. Maclou, and was not a painting, but a sculpture. It was not entirely completed until 1526. The cemetery is surrounded by a covered gallery open on the inside, where it was supported by thirty-nine columns, distant about eleven feet from each other. Thirty-one of these still exist; and upon the shaft of all but four of them, on the side facing the court of the cemetery, is sculptured, in high relief, a group of two figures,—one a living personage, and the other the cadaverous body by which Death was represented. On the remainder were sculptured the Christian Virtues and the Fates,—two on each column. The capitals of these columns are decorated with figures quite in another manner. Cupids, naked female figures, grotesque masks, and shapes—human and bestial—are ingeniously substituted for the foliage usually found on that part of a column. The execution of these figures is of quite a high order. They have all been sadly mutilated; but, fortunately, that which has suffered least is a beautiful figure of Eve. Her head is gone; but the flowing lines of the lovely torso are unbroken, and the round and graceful limbs are almost as perfect as when they came from the sculptor's chisel. This figure is so like the Venus de Medici that it might have been copied from it.



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But what is Eve doing in a Dance of Death? Alas! she took the first step of that dance in Paradise, and the artists of the olden time did not deprive her of her due precedence. She leads the Dance, but with this difference from those who follow her:—they, cowering and muffled, go off the scene with Death; she, upright in her naked innocence and beauty, brings him on. Poor Eve! she had her punishment and made her atonement to man for leading him to death, in becoming the source and the joy and solace of his life; but it was not for the artists of the Dance of Death to embody this phase of her existence. So essential a part of the Dance is the temptation of Eve, that the whole subject was concentrated into the representation of that event by a German engraver, in this singular manner:—Adam and Eve stand by the Tree of Knowledge, around which twines the serpent, from whom Eve is receiving the apple; but the trunk of the tree is formed by the twisted legs and the ribs of a skeleton, from the head and the outstretched arms of which spring the branches and the foliage. It is worthy of remark, that many painters, the greatest of them (Raphael) at their head, have represented the tempter of Eden as a beautiful woman, whose body terminates in a serpent. It was a mistake on their part to do so. They knew how much of the Devil a woman might have in her, and how irresistible a temptress she is; but they forgot, that, on this occasion, woman, not man, was tempted.

There was a Dance of Death in Old St. Paul's Church, in London,—the one burned down in the Great Fire; and another in the beautiful little parish church of Stratford-on-Avon,—but this, too, has disappeared. It is interesting to know that they were there, and that Shakspeare saw them; for he has woven some of the thoughts that they awakened in his mind into a noble passage in one of his historical plays. We shall recur to it in examining Holbein's Dance.

The Dance was represented, and still exists, in one very singular place. At Lucerne, in Switzerland, it appears upon a covered bridge, in the triangles formed by the beams which support the roof. The groups, of which there are thirty-six, are double, looking away from each other, and are so arranged, that the passenger, on entering the bridge, has before him a long array of these grotesque and gloomy pictures. The motive for placing the Dance in such a place is unknown, and it is difficult to conjecture what it was. It could hardly have been to enforce the old adage,—Speak well of the bridge that carries you over.

* * * * *

While we have been thus endeavoring to discover the origin of the Dance of Death, what it was, and what it meant, Holbein has been waiting more patiently than he was wont, for us to see who he was, and why the Dance, which was known three hundred years at least before he was born, is now universally spoken of as his.



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Hans Holbein, the greatest painter of the German school, came honestly by his talent and his name. He was the son of Hans Holbein, a painter, who was the son of another Hans Holbein, also a painter. The first Hans was a poor painter; the second a good one; and the third so great, that the world, when it speaks their common name, means only him. The father and grandfather were born at Augsburg, in Bavaria, and of late years it has been asserted by mousing antiquaries that the grandson was born there too; but this, perhaps, is not quite certain; and it is much pleasanter to adhere to the ancient faith, and believe that he was born at that strange old Bale, in sight of that great Dance, the reproduction, or rather recreation, of which was to make so great a part of his fame,—especially as he was quite surely an inhabitant of the town at such tender years, that the veriest Know-Nothing in the place would not have deprived him of his citizenship.

Of Holbein's life we unfortunately know very little. He showed his talent early, as all the great painters have done. Conscious of his abilities, he devoted himself eagerly to the study of the profession to which his genius urged him. He learned not only painting, but engraving, the sculpture of metals, and architecture; and of all these, it will be remembered, Bale offered him facilities for study, in examples which must have stimulated both his imagination and his ambition. He did not lack encouragement; for the nobles and burghers of Bale had begun to acquire a taste for the arts, which their ruder fathers contemned; and they had, at this time, a university in their city, which made them acquainted with Cicero and the orators, of whom Aeneas Sylvius found them so ignorant.

But Holbein, although eminent and well employed, did not thrive. He had some Balois failings, and, as Aeneas Sylvius would have said, worshipped Father Bacchus and Dame Venus with too much devotion;—not that he was a drunkard or a debauchee; but he sought in conviviality with men of talent, and in the company of beautiful women, too happy in the caresses of the great painter, who was generous with his florins, that happiness which he could not find at home. For poor Hans was afflicted with what has been the moral and social ruin of many a better, if not greater man than he—a froward, shrill-tongued wife. Luckily, however, the great scholar and philosopher, Erasmus, went into retirement at Bale, in 1521; and he soon recognized the genius of Holbein, and became his admirer and friend. By his advice, and at the solicitation of an English nobleman, and, poor fellow, seeking refuge from the temper of his wife, whom even the sweet cares of maternity could not mollify, Holbein determined to leave Bale for England. What was the great cause of Frau Holbein's tantrums,—whether Hans's ears were pierced with conjugal clamors, as poor Albert Duerer's, the other great German painter's, were, because he could not supply

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all his wife's demands for money, to enable her, perhaps, to exhibit herself at church on holy days in one of those precious pulpits, splendid in velvet and jewels, to the discomfiture of the other painters' wives,—we do not know; but whatever was the cause of her oft-recurring outbreaks, they made him not unwilling to put France and the English Channel between himself and her, his children, and the home of his childhood.

He gave out, at first, that his absence from Bale would be temporary,—only for the purpose of raising the value of his works, by making them more difficult to obtain. Before he went, he finished and sent home a portrait on which he was engaged. It was one of his best pictures; and the person for whom it was painted, lost for a while in admiration of its beauty, noticed at last that a fly, which had settled upon the forehead, remained there motionless. He stepped up to brush the insect away, and found that it was a part of the picture. This story has, since Holbein's time, been told of many painters,—among others, of Benjamin West. Such a piece of mere imitation should have added nothing to the reputation of a painter of Holbein's powers; but the story was soon told all over Bale, and orders were given to prevent the loss to the city of so great an artist. But Holbein had quietly gone off, furnished with letters of introduction from Erasmus, who wrote in one of them that in Bale the arts were chilled; which might well be true of a place where so much ado was made about the painting of a fly.

In England, Holbein found a friend and patron in Sir Thomas More,—Henry the Eighth's great Lord Chancellor; and a sight of some of his works won him, ere long, the favor of the King himself. He was appointed Court Painter, with apartments at the palace, and a yearly salary of two hundred florins, (or thirty pounds, equal to about two hundred pounds now,) which he received in addition to the price of his pictures. After about three years of prosperity he went home to his wife and children; but as he soon returned to England, we may safely conclude that his visit was to provide for the latter, and with no hope of living with the former. Some years after, in 1538, when his fame was still increasing, the city of Bale, proud of its son, offered him a handsome annuity, in the hope that that might induce him to return to his country, his children, and his wife. But he could not be tempted. Though not the wisest of men, he was Solomon enough to know that "it is better to dwell in a corner of the house-top than with a brawling woman and in a wide house"; and as he was successful and held in honor in England as well as Bale, he contented himself with a corner of King Henry's palace.

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But although he fled from his wife, he painted her portrait; and we need no testimony to warrant the likeness. She is the very type of one of those meek shrews, alternately a martyr and a fury, that drive a man to madness when they speak and to despair when they are silent. We might reasonably wonder that he would paint so vivid a representation of that which he so sedulously shunned. But poor Hans, who probably had some lingering remains of his early love, knew, that, although he should make a speaking likeness, it would be a silent one, and that this Frau Holbein must keep the look which he chose to summon to her face. That, indeed, was knowledge that was power! How he must have chuckled as he saw his wife looking at him more natural than life and yet without the power to worry him! His own portrait shows us a broad, good-natured, ruddy face, in which we see marks of talent when we know that it is Holbein's. But in spite of its strength, its bronze, and its beard, it has a somewhat sad and subdued air; and its heavy-lidded, pensive eyes look deprecatingly at a Frau Holbein in the distance.

While he lived at Greenwich palace, an incident occurred which may not be known to all our readers, and which is a striking illustration of the esteem in which he was held by Henry. It is not a little to the honor of that monarch, who, arbitrary and sensual as he was, had some noble traits of character. One day, as Holbein was painting a lady's portrait in his private studio, a nobleman intruded upon him rudely. Holbein resented the discourtesy, and, as it was doggedly persisted in, finally threw my lord downstairs. There was an outcry; and the painter, bolting his door on the inside, escaped from his window along the eaves of the roof, and, making his way directly to the King, threw himself before him and begged a pardon, without telling his offence. Henry promised forgiveness on condition of a full confession, which the painter began. But meantime the nobleman arrived, and Henry, in deference to his rank, gave him precedence, and stepped into another apartment to hear his story. He accused Holbein of the violence, but suppressed the provocation; whereat Henry broke into a towering Tudor rage, and, after reproaching the nobleman for his prevarication, said, "You have to do with me, Sir. I tell you, that of seven peasants I could make seven earls like you; but of seven earls I could not make one Holbein. Do not molest him, if you value your head." And as second-hand heads, though plentiful about those days, were found to be of no value, even to the original owner, Holbein remained unmolested.

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Holbein is known chiefly by his portraits. He painted some historical and sacred pictures; but though they all bear witness to his genius, it can hardly be denied that they also show that that genius was not suited to such works. Holbein had an objective perception;—that is, his mind received impressions entirely uninfluenced by its own character or condition; and his pictures, therefore, seem like literal transcripts of what was before his eyes. He nowhere shows that he had an idea of abstract beauty, or the power of generalizing from individuals, or that he was at all discontented with the subjects which he painted; so that his works leave an impression of absolute faithfulness. But to suppose, therefore, that his portraits have merely the merit of reproducing the external facts of Nature, like photographs, would do him wrong; for he was faithful to expression as well as form, and has perpetuated upon his canvas the voluptuous sweetness of Anne Boleyn, the courtliness and manly grace of Wyatt, and the severity, the energy, and the penetrating judgment of Sir Thomas More. His portrait of the last is one of the greatest portraits ever painted. Some competent critics consider it the greatest. It is so real, so human, that we might be well content, if one in twenty of the actual men we meet were half as real and human; and it expresses, with equal strength and subtilty, the large and noble nature of the man. Holbein was a great colorist, and imitated all the rich and tender hues of Nature, in their delicate and almost imperceptible gradations, with a minute truthfulness which is quite marvellous.

This being the character of his mind, it would hardly be supposed that he could produce such a work as the great Dance of Death, which has caused all others to be forgotten, except by antiquarians. For this Dance is the most remarkable embodiment in Art of that fantastic and grotesque idealism which has found its best expression in the works of German poets and painters; and the preeminence of Holbein's over all the other representations of the same subject consists in this,—that, while they are but a dull and formal succession of mere costumed figures seized by a corpse and shrinking away from its touch, Holbein's groups are instinct with life, character, and emotion. In particular is this true of the figure of Death, although it is a mere skeleton,—the face without a muscle, and for the eye but a rayless cavern. Death is not one whom “a limner would love to paint or a lady to look upon”; but Holbein has given a strange and fascinating interest to the figure, which in all other hands is merely repulsive. The grim monarch sat to a painter who not only added to the truthfulness of his portrait the charm of poetic feeling, but the magic touch of whose pencil made his dry bones live.

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The insignificance of the material in which the painter worked, when compared with the effect which he produced, is also remarkable in this unique work of Art. For Holbein's Dance of Death is not, like the others, either a great fresco painting, or a series of sculptures; it is not a painting at all,—but merely a series of very small woodcuts, fifty-three in number, forty-six of which were published at Lyons in 1538, and the whole afterwards at Bale in 1554, under the title, *Simulachres de la Mort, Icones Mortis*: that is, in French and Latin, "Images of Death,"—for the title "Dance of Death" is of recent origin. The leaves on which the cuts are printed make but part of a little book not so large as a child's primer; but a copy of it is now worth ten times its weight in gold. It was copied and republished in numberless editions, as a popular book, merely for the sake of the subject, and the great lesson taught by it,—each print being accompanied by an admonitory stanza, and a quotation from the Bible. Beside these editions, endeavors have been made of later years to imitate it satisfactorily as a work of Art,—but in vain. Great as we think our advancement in the arts has been,—the mechanical part of them, at least,—all the efforts of the lithographer, the wood-cutter, and even the line-engraver, to reproduce the spirit or the very lines of this work, have been but partially successful. There is as much difference between the most carefully-executed and costliest copies and good impressions of the original wood-cuts, made three hundred years ago, and sold for a franc or two, as there is between pinchbeck and gold.

Any attempt to reproduce the effect of those groups in words can hardly fail to fall equally short of the mark; but we will tell our readers what they are, and endeavor to give some notion of their purpose and spirit.

The first shows the Creation of Woman;—we have seen before why she is made thus prominent in the Dance. The composition is crowded with the denizens of the earth, the air, and the water; the sun, the moon, and the stars all appear; the four winds of heaven issue from the laboring cheeks of figures that impersonate them. The Creator, in the form of an aged man in royal robes, and wearing the imperial crown, lifts Eve bodily from the side of the sleeping Adam.

The second represents the Temptation. Eve reclines upon the ground, and shows Adam the fruit which she has plucked. Adam stands grasping the tree with his left hand, and raises his right to gather for himself. The serpent, who looks down upon Eve, has the face and body of a woman. The forms in this group are fine; Adam's is remarkable for its symmetry and grace; but Eve's face is ignoble. Indeed, Holbein, like Rembrandt, seems to have been incapable of an idea of female beauty.

In the third we see the Expulsion from Paradise; and here the Dance begins. Our guilty parents fly before the flaming sword,—poor Eve cowering, and her hair streaming in a wavy flood upon the wind; and before them, but unseen, Death leaps and curvets to the sound of a vielle or rote,—an old musical stringed instrument,—which he has hung about his neck. His glee, as he leads forth his victims into the valley where his shadow

lies, is perceptible in every line of his angular anatomy; his very toes curl up like those of a baby in its merriment.



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In the fourth, Adam has begun to till the ground. The pioneer of his race, he is uprooting a huge tree, all unconscious that another figure is laboring at his side. It is not Eve, who sits in the background with her first-born at her breast and her distaff by her side,—but Death, who, with a huge lever in his bony gripe, goes at his work with a fierce energy which puts the efforts of his muscular companion to shame. The people of Holbein's day not only saw in this subject the beginning of that toil which is the lot of humankind, but, as they looked upon the common ancestors of all men, laboring for the means of life, they asked, in the words of an old distich,—

“When Adam delved and Eve span,
Where was then the gentleman?”

The fifth composition seems to represent a general rejoicing over the Triumph of Death. It shows a churchyard and porch filled with skeletons, who blow trumpets of all sorts and sizes; one beats frantically upon a pair of kettle-drums, and another, wearing a woman's nightcap, with a broad frill border, plays the hurdy-gurdy.

In the sixth, a Pope, the highest earthly potentate, is in the act of crowning an Emperor, who kneels to kiss his toe. But the successor of St. Peter does not see, as he sits upon his throne, giving authority and sanction to the ruler of an empire, that a skeleton leans from behind that throne, and grins in his face, and that another in a cardinal's hat mingles with the throng before him.

The seventh is one of the finest of the series. An Emperor is enthroned, with his courtiers round him. He is threatening one with his sword for some act of injustice from which a poor peasant who kneels before him has suffered. But, unseen by all, a skeleton bestrides the shoulders of the monarch and lays his hand upon his very crown. There can be no doubt that Shakspeare had this subject in his mind when he wrote that fine passage in “King Richard the Second,”—

“Within the hollow crown
That rounds the mortal temples of a king
Keeps Death his court; and there the antic sits,
Scoffing his state and grinning at his pomp;
Allowing him a breath, a little scene
To monarchize, be feared, and kill with looks;
Infusing him with self and vain conceit,
As if this flesh which walls about our life
Were brass impregnable; and humored thus,
Comes at the last, and with a little pin
Bores through his castle wall, and—farewell, King!”



In the eighth we see a King (it is unmistakably Francis I.) dining under a canopy, and served by a splendid retinue. He stretches out his hand to receive a wine-cup; for he does not see that Death is filling it.

A Cardinal appears in the ninth, selling an indulgence for a heavy bribe; and we all rejoice to see that Death has laid hands upon his hat,—the symbol of his rank,—and is about to tear it from his head.



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In the tenth, an Empress, passing through her palace-yard, attended by her ladies, is led by the favorite on whom she leans, and who she does not see is Death, into an open grave.

Death, in the next, has assumed the guise of a Court Fool, and has seized a Queen at the very gate of her palace. She recognizes him, and struggles, shrieking, to free herself from his grasp; but in vain. With a grin of fierce delight, he lifts up his hour-glass before her, and, in spite of her resistance and that of a gentleman who attends her, is about to bear her off. Every line of this composition is instinct with life.

In the twelfth, Death carries off a Bishop from his flock.

In the thirteenth, an Elector of the Empire, surrounded by his retinue, is approached by a poor woman, who begs his aid in behalf of herself and her child; he repulses her scornfully; for he does not see that Death, the avenger of the oppressed poor, and who is here crowned with oak-leaves, has laid his gripe upon him. Holbein has put such an expression of power into the arm and of wrath into the face of this skeleton, that we expect to see his victim haled off into the air before our very eyes.

The Abbot and the Abbess are the subjects of the next two cuts. In the former, Death has assumed the mitre and the crosier of his victim, and drags him off with such an expression of fun and burlesque pomp as we sometimes see in the face of a mischievous boy who mocks his betters. In the companion group his look is that of a demon; and with his head fantastically dressed, he drags the Abbess off by the scapulary which hangs from her neck.

A Nobleman and a Canon are his prey in the sixteenth and seventeenth groups. We lack space to describe any but the most remarkable with particularity.

The satire of the next three is levelled against the Lawyers, who were held in such little respect in Bale. They show a Judge who takes a bribe from a rich to wrong a poor suitor, and a Counsellor and an Advocate who lend their talents to wealthy clients, but turn their backs upon the poor victims of "the oppressor's wrong." In one, a demon is blowing suggestions into the Counsellor's ear from a pair of bellows, which he has doubtless used elsewhere for other purposes; in all, Death stands ready to avenge the poor.

In the twenty-first, a Preacher addresses a Congregation, whose interested attention the painter has portrayed with great skill, knowledge of character, and consequent variety and truth of expression. Behind the Preacher stands Death, and, with a kind of grotesque practical pun, holds the jaw of a skeleton over his head, as far more eloquent than his own.

A Priest and a Mendicant Friar are the subjects of the twenty-second and twenty-third.



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The twenty-fourth is of peculiar interest. In it we see a youthful Nun, who, it is clear, has taken her vows too hastily, kneeling before the oratory in her cell. But her heart is not in her devotions; for the lover whom she abandoned has made his way into the apartment, and sits on her bed singing to his lute. Her hands are clasped, not in prayer, but in an agony of love and apprehension. She turns from the crucifix to gaze at him; and we see how the interview will end: for an aged female attendant, in coif and scapulary, leans over to extinguish the candles. We see, too, what its consequence will be; for that attendant is Death.

Among the remaining subjects, which we cannot examine particularly, or in their order, are those of the Old Man and Old Woman led by Death, each to the sound of a dulcimer;—the Physician, to whom in mockery Death himself brings a patient;—the Astronomer, to whom the skeleton offers a skull in place of a celestial globe;—the Miser, from whom Death snatches his hoarded gold; and the Merchant, whom the same inexorable hand tears away from his ships and his merchandise;—the storm-tossed ship, with Death snapping the mast;—a Count, dressed in the extreme of courtly splendor, who recognizes Death in the disguise of a peasant who has flung down his flail to seize his lordship's emblazoned shield and dash it to pieces;—a Duchess, whom one skeleton drags rudely from her canopied bed, while another scrapes upon a violin;—a Peddler;—a Ploughman, of whose four-horse team Death is the driver;—Gamblers, Drunkards, and Robbers, all interrupted in their wickedness by Death;—a Wagoner, whose wagon, horse, and load have been tumbled in a ruinous heap by a pair of skeletons;—a Blind Beggar, who stumbles over a stony path after Death, who is his deceitful leader, and who turns back with a look of malicious glee to see his bewilderment and suffering;—and a Court Fool, whom Death, playing on bagpipes, and dancing, approaches, and, plucking him by the garment, wins him, with a coaxing leer, to join his pastime.

A few others claim our more particular attention. Among them is a Knight, armed cap-a-pie, who is run through and through, from back to front, by Death, himself half armed in mockery. There is a concentrated vigor in the thrust of the lance, and a cool venom in the countenance of the assailant, that we may seek in vain in the works of famous battle-painters; and it must always be remembered that Holbein's figure is entirely without those indications of muscular movement by which we express our feelings,—in fact, a mere bare-boned skeleton.

A Bride at her wedding-toilet, whom Holbein has contrived to make almost beautiful, receives a robe from one attendant; another clasps round her neck a collar—of gold and jewels? No,—of bones, and with bony fingers. And the next cut to this shows us the Bridegroom and Bride walking through an apartment hung with arras, while before them dances Death, beating a tabor, like a child beside himself with joy.



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One of the finest and most touching conceptions in the whole series represents a dilapidated Cottage,—a mere shanty, so wretched that the love of those who live in it is all their happiness,—nay, all their comfort. The mother is preparing for two little children the simplest and poorest of meals, at a fire made of a few small sticks. She finds consolation in the very pranks that hinder her humble task. Death enters,—there is no door to keep him out,—and, seizing the hand of the younger child, who turns and stretches out the other imploringly to his mother, carries him off, remorseless and exulting, leaving her frantic with grief. We may look with comparative indifference, and sometimes even with sympathy, upon his other feats,—but who is there that does not hate that grinning skeleton?—And yet, perhaps, he exults that he has saved one soul, yet pure, from misery and crime.

For vigor of movement the group of Death and the Soldier is preeminent. The field is covered with the wounded and the slain, in the midst of which the soldier encounters his last enemy. The man is armed in panoply, and wields a huge two-handed sword with a vigor unabated by former struggles. Death has caught a shield from the arm of some previous victim; but his only offensive weapon is a huge thigh-bone, which we plainly see will bear down all before it. In the distance another figure of Death flies madly over the hills, beating a drum which summons other soldiers to the field. It is impossible to convey in words the fierce eagerness of this figure, minute as it is, and composed of a few lines.

The forty-seventh composition is one which has puzzled the critics and antiquaries; but it is not easy to conjecture why. It shows us a wretched Beggar, naked, sick, lame,—utterly destitute, miserable, and forsaken,—suffering at once all the ills that flesh is heir to. He sits huddled together on some straw, near a large building, and lifts his hands and face up piteously to heaven. Death is not there; and the antiquaries ask in wonder, Why is the subject introduced? Why, but to show that to him alone who would gladly welcome Death, Death will not come?

The work ends, as a connected series, with the Last Judgment, where Christ, who conquered Death, appears seated on the bow of promise,—with his feet resting on a celestial sphere, attended by angels, and showing to a throng of those who have risen from the grave the wounds by which he redeemed them from its power.

To this is added an ornamental tail-piece called Death's Arms. It shows a skull in a battered shield, which has for a crest a regal helmet surmounted by an hour-glass and two bony arms grasping a stone. The supporters to the shield are a gentleman and lady richly dressed,—said to represent Holbein and his wife.

It is not known, positively, when Holbein drew these designs upon the blocks (for of course he did not engrave them); and it has even been disputed by one or two eminent antiquarian critics, that he designed them at all. But there does not appear to be a single valid reason for thus diminishing his fame. He probably was engaged on them

between 1531, the date of his first return to Bale, and 1538, when they were published, —the year in which he refused the solicitation of his townsmen to return to the home of his childhood and the bosom of his family.

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Holbein continued to live in London until the year 1554, when that city suffered a visitation of the plague, similar to that which was the occasion of the painting of the Great Dance of Death at Bale. Holbein was struck by the disease; and Death, knowing gratitude as little as remorse, triumphed over him who had blazoned his triumphs. Upon the painter's fame, however, and that of his great work, Death could not lay his hand; but so long as the grim tyrant shall claim his victims, so long will he perpetuate the memory of Hans Holbein.

Though he was a royal favorite, it is not known where he died; and the place where lie the ashes of him who, on a king's word, was greater than seven earls, is equally unknown; there is not a line or a stone to mark it. So soon after his death as in the reign of Charles I., (within one hundred years,) a nobleman—noble by nature as well as by birth—desirous of erecting a monument to him, sought his grave, but in vain, and was compelled to abandon his design. And thus was Holbein driven to live among strangers, to die without a wife to console or children to mourn him, and to lay his bones in a nameless grave in a foreign land.

Such is an imperfect and brief account of the origin, the various forms, and the meaning of the Dance of Death, and of the life and character of him whose genius has caused it to be called by his name. It may smell too much of mortality and antiquity for this fast-living and forward-looking age; for it is not only a monument of the past, but an exponent of its spirit. We can look back at it, through the mellowing mist of centuries, with curiosity not unmixed with admiration; but we should turn with aversion from such a work, coming from the hands of an artist of our own day. We think, and with some reason, that we do not need its teachings; for we are freed from the thralldom that gave edge to its democratic satire; and we have learned to look with greater calmness, if not with higher hope, upon the future, to which the grave is but the ever-open portal. But we may yet profit by a thoughtful consideration of the eternal truths embodied by Holbein in his Dance of Death; and in the story of his life there is a lesson for every man, and every woman too, if they will but find it.

LIZZY GRISWOLD'S THANKSGIVING.

"So John a'n't a-comin', Miss Gris'ld," squeaked Polly Mariner, entering the great kitchen, where Mrs. Griswold was paring apples and Lizzy straining squash.

"Isn't he?" quietly replied the lady addressed, as the tailoress sat down in the flag-bottomed rocking-chair, and began rocking vehemently, all the time eyeing Lizzy from the depths of her poke-bonnet with patient scrutiny.



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“No, he a’n’t,—so Mr. Gris’ld says,” went on Polly. “You see, I was a-comin’ up here from the Centre, so’s to see if Sam couldn’t wait for his roundabout till arter Thanksgivin’; for Keziah Perkins, she ’t was my sister’s husband’s fust wife’s darter, ‘n’ finally married sister’s fust husband’s son, she’s a real likely woman, and she’s wrote over from Taunton to ask me to go there to Thanksgivin’; ‘n’ to-day’s Monday; ‘n’ I was a-comin’ here Tuesday so’s to make Sam’s roundabout; ‘n’ yesterday Miss Luken’s boy Simon, he ’t a’n’t but three year old, he got my press-board, when he was a-crawlin’ round, ‘n’ laid it right onto the cookin’-stove, and fust thing Miss Lukens know’d it blazed right up, ‘n’ I can’t get another fixed afore Wednesday, and then I’d ought to be to Taunton, ‘cause there a’n’t no stage runs Thursday, and there hadn’t oughter, of course”——

“We have got a press-board,” said Mrs. Griswold, quietly.

“Yes, and I a’n’t goin’ to grandfather’s in my old jacket, Miss Poll,” interposed Sam, one of the “terrible” children who are scattered here and there through this world. “Catch me where all the folks are, in that old butternut suit!” added Sam.

But here his father stepped in at the door,—a fine, sturdy, handsome farmer, one of New England’s model men, whose honesty was a proverb, and whose goodness a reliance to every creature in Greenfield.

“John isn’t coming, wife,” said Mr. Griswold, in a steady, sober tone. “He says business will delay him, so that he can only get to Coventry just as we do.”

“So you had a letter,” said Mrs. Griswold, carefully avoiding a look at Lizzy.

“Yes,” said Mr. Griswold, in a very abrupt way.—“Are you ready to go back, Miss Polly? for I’ve got to go down to the Centre again with a load of wheat.”

“Well, yes, I don’t know but I be. I ken stay over, if you want help, Miss Gris’ld. I’m a-goin’ to the minister’s to help Miss Fletcher a little mite this afternoon, but I guess she don’t lot on it none; ‘n’ seein’ it’s you, I ken stay, if you want help.”

Lizzy looked quickly across the kitchen at her mother.

“Oh! no, thank you, Miss Polly, I know Mrs. Fletcher would feel very badly to lose your help, and I really don’t need it until to-morrow.”

“Then I’ll come round to the door as quick as I’ve loaded up,” said Mr. Griswold; and Miss Polly settled back in her chair to wait comfortably; a process much intensified by a large piece of Mrs. Griswold’s gingerbread and a glass of new cider, both brought her by Lizzy’s hospitable hands,—readier even than usual just now, in the vain hope of stopping Polly Mariner’s clattering tongue. But neither gingerbread nor cider was a specific to that end: Polly talked while she ate, and ate while she talked. But while she

finishes her luncheon, let us make known to the patient reader whom and what the tailoress discusses.



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John Boynton was a step-cousin of Lizzy Griswold's. Her youngest aunt had married a widower, with one son, some five years older than Lizzy, and had always lived in the old homestead at Coventry, with her father; while the other daughters and sons, six in number, were scattered over the State, returning once a year, at Thanksgiving, to visit their birthplace, and bring their children into acquaintance with each other. Eben Griswold, who lived at Greenfield, was nearer home than any of the others, and Lizzy, consequently, oftener at her grandfather's house than her cousins. She and John Boynton were playmates from childhood, and it was not strange that John, who had never known a pleasure unshared by Lizzy, or suffered a pain without her consolation, should grow up in the idea that he could not possibly live without her, an idea also entertained half-consciously by Miss Lizzy, though neither of them ever yet had expressed it; for John was poor, and had no home to offer any woman, much less the petted child of a rich farmer. So Mr. Boynton, Jr., left home to teach school in Roxbury, five years before the date of our story, without making any confidences on the subject of his hopes and fears to Miss Griswold; and she knit him stockings and hemmed pocket-handkerchiefs for him with the most cold-blooded perseverance, and nobody but the yarn and the needles knew whether she dropped any tears on them or not.

Now it had always been John Boynton's custom to give his school Thanksgiving-week as a vacation,—to take the train on Monday for Greenfield, and stay there till Wednesday, when the whole family set off together for Coventry, to spend the next day, according to time-honored precedent.

Whatever John and Lizzy did in those two dull November days, it never has been made known to the present chronicler; it is only understood that no point-blank love-making went on; yet the days always ran away, instead of creeping; and neither of the twain could believe it was Wednesday when Wednesday came. But this year those forty-eight hours were destined to drag past, for John wasn't coming; why, we shall discover,—for Polly Mariner has finished the cider, and the gingerbread is as much subject of inquiry as "The Indians,—where are they?"

"So John Boynton a'n't a-comin'? Well! Hetty Maria Clapp's jest got home from Bunkertown, that's tew mile from Roxbury, 'n' she told Miss Lucas that Miss Perrit, whose sister's son keeps a grocer's store to Roxbury, told that Mr. Boynton, their teacher to the 'Cademy, was waitin' on Miss Roxany Sharp's cousin, a dreadful pretty gal, who'd come down from Boston to see Roxany, an' liked it so well she staid to Roxbury all through October. I do'no's I should ha' remembered it, only 't I hed the dredfullest jumpin' toothache that ever you did, 'n' Miss Lucas, she'd jest come in to our house, an' she run an' got the lodlum an' was a-puttin' some on't onto some cotton so's to plug the hole, while she was tellin'; 'n'



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I remember I forgot all about the jumpin' while 't she was talkin', so I ses, ses I, 'Miss Lucas, I guess your talkin's as good as lodlum'; 'n' she bu'st out larfin', 'n' ses she, 'Polly Mariner, I declare for't, you do beat all!' 'Well,' ses I, 'I'd die content, ef I could beat John Boynton; fur ef ever I see a feller payin' attention to a gal, he's been payin' on't to Lizzy Gris'ld this four year; and 'ta'n't no wonder 't I think hard on't, for there never was a prettier-behaved gal than her on Greenfield Hill'; an' I ses"——

Lizzy was on the point of "freeing her mind" just at this juncture, when Mrs. Griswold interposed her quiet voice,—

"Don't trouble yourself to defend Lizzy, Miss Mariner; you know John Boynton is her cousin, and he has been here a good deal. Folks will talk, I suppose, always; but if John Boynton marries well, I don't think anybody 'll be more forward to shake hands with him than our Lizzy."

"Of course I shall," said the young lady, with a most indignant toss of her head. "Pray, keep your pity, Miss Polly, for somebody else. I don't need it."

"H'm," sniffed the sagacious Polly. "Well, I didn't suppose you'd allow 't you felt put out about it; and I wouldn't, if I was you. Besides, there's as good fish in the sea as——I declare for 't! there's Mr. Gris'ld! I'll come round early to-morrer. Good-day, all on ye!"

So Polly departed.

"I don't care, if he is!" said Lizzy, flinging herself down on the settle, when the door closed behind Polly's blue cloak.

Mrs. Griswold said nothing, but Sam looked up from his whittling, and coolly remarked,
—

"It looks as if you did, though!"

"Sam!" said his mother, with—emphasis.

Sam whistled, and, with his hands in his pockets, having shut his jack-knife with a click, and kicked his shavings into the fire, muttered something about feeding the pigs, and beat an ignominious retreat,—snubbed, as the race of Adam daily are, and daily will be, let us hope, for telling "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth."

For Lizzy certainly did look as if she cared. A pretty enough picture she made, too, flung down on the old black settle, one well-shaped hand pinching the arm as if it had been—John Boynton's!—the other as vigorously clenched on a harmless check-apron that showed no disposition to get away; her bright red lips trembling a little, and her gray



eyes suspiciously shiny about the lashes, while her soft black hair had fallen from part of its restraints on to the gay calico dress she wore, and her foot beat time to some quick step that she didn't sing!

Mrs. Griswold did not care for the picturesque, just then; she cared much more for Lizzy, and her acute feminine instinct helped her to the right word.

"I don't believe it, dear!" said she; "you'd better finish straining that squash, or Widow Peters won't have her pies for Thursday."



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Lizzy went to work,—work is a grand panacea, even for sentimental troubles,—and in doing battle with the obstinate squash,—which was not as well cooked as it might have been,—Lizzy, for the moment, looked quite bright, and forgot John, till her father came in to dinner.

Somebody once said that Mrs. Griswold was “a lesser Providence,” and Lizzy thought so now; for scarce were they all seated at dinner, when she remarked, in a very unconcerned and natural way,—

“What keeps John in Roxbury so long, father?”

“He has business in Boston,” curtly answered Mr. Griswold.—“Sam, did you go over to the Corners, yesterday, about those sheep?”

Sam answered, and the conversation went on, but John’s name did not enter it, nor did Mr. Griswold offer to show his letter either to mother or Lizzy.

Now the latter lady, not being a perfect woman, had sundry small faults; she was proud, after a certain fashion of her own; slightly sentimental, which is rather a failing than a fault; but her worst trait was a brooding, fault-seeing, persevering tact at making herself miserable, scarce ever equalled. The smallest bit of vantage-ground was enough for a start, and on that foundation Lizzy took but a few hours of suspicion and imagination to build up a whole Castle Doubting. The cause she had to-day was even greater than was necessary; it was peculiar that her father should be so reserved; it was more strange that he so perseveringly withheld John’s letter; and certainly he watched Lizzy at her work with unusually tender eyes, that sometimes filled with a sort of mist. All these things heaped up evidence for the poor girl; she brooded over each separate item all night, and added to the sum Polly Mariner’s gossip, and looked forward to the day when everybody in Greenfield should say, “Lizzy Griswold’s had a disapp’ntment of John Boynton!” Poor, dear, Lizzy! as if that were an unheard-of pang! as if nine-tenths of her accusers were not “disapp’nted” themselves,—some before, some after marriage,—some in themselves, some in their children, some in their wretched, dreary lives! But there was only one John and only one heart-break present to her vision.

Polly Mariner came to breakfast next day, and pervaded the kitchen like a daily paper. Horrible murders, barn-burnings, failures, deaths, births, marriages, separations, lawsuits, slanders, and petty larcenies outran each other in her glib speech, and her fingers flew as fast on Sam’s blue jacket as her tongue clattered above it.

Lizzy’s pride kept her up before the old woman; she was in and out and everywhere, a pretty spot of crimson on either fair cheek, her eyes as sparkling and her step as light as any belle’s in a ballroom, and her whole manner so gay and charming that Polly inwardly pronounced John Boynton a mighty fool, if he dodged such a pretty girl as that, and one with “means.”



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But night came, and Polly went. Lizzy went to bed with a bad headache,—convenient synonyme for aches of soul or body that one does not care to christen! Sleep she certainly did that night, for she dreamed John was married to a rich Boston girl with red hair and a yellow flannel dress, and that Polly Mariner was bridesmaid in the peculiar costume of a blue roundabout and pantaloons! But sleep with such dreams was scarcely a restorer; and Wednesday morning, when Mrs. Griswold asked Lizzy if she had put up her carpet-bag to go to Coventry, she received for answer a flood of tears, and a very earnest petition to be left at home.

“Leave you, Lizzy! Why, grandfather couldn’t have Thanksgiving without you! And Uncle Boynton! And Aunt Lizzy is coming up from Stonington with the new baby;—and—John, too! You must go, Lizzy, dear!”

“I can’t, mother! I can’t!” said the poor girl, sobbing after every word; “please don’t ask me. I can’t! I’ve got a headache; oh, dear!” Here a fresh burst of tears followed, as Lizzy buried her head in her mother’s lap.

Mrs. Griswold was both grieved and astonished; she sat speechless, stroking the soft hair that swept over her knee, till Lizzy’s sobs quieted, and then said,—

“Well, dear, if you’re set on staying at home, I won’t oppose it, if your father thinks best; but I must ask him; only what will you do, Lizzy, here alone all night?”

“Chloe and Peter will be here, mother; and I’ll make Chloe sleep in Sam’s room, and leave the door open; and when they go down to Dinah’s, I’ll lock up, and I shan’t feel afraid in broad day.”

Mrs. Griswold shook her head doubtfully.

“I’ll see what father says,” said she. So Lizzy lifted her head, and smoothed her hair, while her mother went out to the barn to consult “father.”

Here she was, if anything, more puzzled. Mr. Griswold heard the proposal with a rather misty look, as if he didn’t see why, and when his wife finished, said, gravely,—

“What is it, Susan? Anybody ’t has lived as long as I have knows pretty well that a woman’s headache stands for a whole dictionary.”

“Why, you see,” said Mrs. Griswold, twisting a little lock of hay in her fingers, and faintly blushing, as if the question had been of herself rather than Lizzy, “she—well, the fact is, husband, she’s kind of riled about John’s not coming; you see we haven’t been real particular about the children, and so”——



“You needn’t spell it, Susan,” said Mr. Griswold, with a half smile; “Polly Mariner’s tongue helped on, I guess. You let Lizzy stay, if she wants to; ’twon’t hurt her; when folks want to sulk, I generally let ’em. She can stay.”

He began to whistle “Yankee Doodle” and pitch hay energetically, while “Susan” was within hearing; but how would that dear woman’s soul have floundered deeper and deeper in the fog that clouded it now, had she seen her grave husband sit down on one end of the hay-mow and laugh till the tears stood in his keen eyes, and then, drawing his coat-sleeve across the shaggy lashes, say to himself, “Poor child!” and begin his work with fresh strength!



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So matters were all arranged. After dinner, the rusty, dusty, old carriage appeared at the door, with the farm-horses harnessed thereto, jingling, and creaking, and snapping, as if oil and use were strange to its dry joints and stiff straps. Mrs. Griswold mounted to the back seat, after kissing Lizzy with hearty regret and tenderness,—her old gray pelisse and green winter bonnet harmonizing with the useful age of her conveyance. “Father,” in a sturdy great-coat and buckskin mittens, took the reins; and Sam, whose blue jacket was at that moment crushing his mother’s Sunday cap in a bandbox that sat where Lizzy should have been, clambered over the front wheel, to the great detriment of the despised butternut suit, and, seizing the whip, applied it so suddenly to Tom and Jerry that they started off down the Coventry road at a pace that threatened a solution of continuity to bones and sinews, as well as wood and leather.

Lizzy turned away sadly from the door. Who can say that just at that minute she did not wish she had gone, too? But nobody heard her say so. She went up-stairs to her room, and tried to read, but couldn’t attach any ideas to the words; she was half an hour over a page of a very good book, and then flung it upon the bed with an expression of disgust, as if it were the book’s fault. Poor authors! toil your fingers off, and spin your brains out! be as wise as Solomon, or witty as Sheridan! your work is vanity and vexation of spirit, unless the reader’s brain choose to receive and vivify the hieroglyphs of your ideas; think yourselves successful because a great man praises you, and tomorrow that man is twisted with dyspepsia, or some woman passes him without a smile, and your sparkling sketch, your pathetic poem are declared trash! Such is fame! Of which little homily the moral is,—Write for money! What a thing it is to be worldly-wise! So was not Lizzy; if she had been, she would now be at Coventry, kissed and caressed by grandfather, aunts, uncles, cousins, and——But we won’t anticipate.

Lizzy flung down the book, and went to her closet for another; but it was as good (or as bad) as Bluebeard’s closet, for there hung the pretty crimson merino, with delicate lace at the throat and round the short sleeves, in which Miss Lizzy Griswold once intended to electrify Mr. John Boynton this very evening. True it is that short sleeves are not the most sensible things for November; but Lizzy was twenty, and had such round, white arms, that she liked to wear short sleeves, as any girl would; and who is going to blame her? Not I! A girl doesn’t know her privileges who was never just a little vain,—just a little glad to be pretty when John is by. Lizzy looked at the crimson merino, and at the smart slippers on the door with a shining black bow on each instep. There, too, on a little low table, was a green box; somebody had left it open,—mother, perhaps,—so she saw on its cotton bed a red coral bracelet, that came from Roxbury, or thereabout, last year at this time. Lizzy shut up the box, and went down-stairs to get tea.



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Chloe was indignant to think “Miss 'Lisbeth” thought she couldn't get supper without help, and Miss 'Lisbeth was vexed with Chloe for being cross. And then, when supper came, the tea seemed to be very unwilling to be swallowed, and the new bread was full of large lumps that choked a person, and the lamps didn't burn clearly at all,—and—and —when Chloe, still sulky, had cleared the table, Lizzy sat down on a low cricket beside her mother's stuffed rocking-chair, and had as good a cry as ever she had in her life, and felt much better for it.

So she sat there, with her head on the arm of the chair, rather tired with the cry, rather downhearted for want of the supper she hadn't eaten, and making pictures in the fire, when all of a sudden it came into her head to wonder what they were doing at Coventry. There was grandfather, no doubt, in the keeping-room, telling his never-tiring stories of Little Robby, and Old Bose, and the Babes in the Wood; of singing the ever-new ditty of

“Did you ever, ever, ever, ever, ever, ever, ever, ever,”—

and so on, *ad infinitum*, till you got to—

“See a man eat a whale?”

to some half dozen children; while sweet Aunt Lizzy, serenely smiling, rocked the fair little baby that fifteen cousins had kissed for welcome that day; and Uncle Boynton trotted the baby's brother on his knee, inviting him persistently to go to Boston and buy a penny-cake, greatly to little Eben's aggravation, who would end, Lizzy knew, by crying for the cake, and being sent to bed. Then there were Sam, and Lucy Peters, and Jim Boynton, up to all sorts of mischief in the kitchen,—Susan Boynton and Nelly James cracking nuts and their fingers on the hearth,—father and mother up-stairs in grandmother's room; for grandmother was bedridden, but kindly, and good, and humorous, and patient, even in her hopeless bed, and nobody was dearer to the whole family than she. Then, of course, there was a fire in the best parlor, and there were all the older cousins, telling conundrums and stories, and playing grown-up games, and some two, or four, may-be, looking out in couples at the moonshine, from behind the curtains,—Sue James, perhaps, and John. Sue was so pretty!

Lizzy's head bent lower on the arm of the chair; her thoughts travelled back over a great many Thanksgivings,—years ago, when she wore short frocks, and used to go with John to see the turkeys fed, and be so scared when they gobbled and strutted with rage at her scarlet bombazette;—how they used to pick up frozen apples and thaw them in the dish-kettle; how she pounded her thumb, cracking butternuts with a flat-iron, and John kissed it to make it well,—only it didn't! And then how they slid down-hill before church, and sat a long two hours thereafter in the square pew, smelling of “meetin'-seed,” and dinted with the kicks of weary boys in new boots; and finally, after the first anthem and the two hymns and the three prayers and the long sermon were over, came



home to dinner, where the children had their own table at the end of the grown people's board, and Lizzy always took the head and John the foot,—till, exhausted by the good things they had eaten, and tantalized by the good things they couldn't eat, they crept away to the fire and their picture-books for a quiet hour, winding up the day with all the plays that country and city children alike delight in.



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Then came recollections of later days, when John was a young man, and Lizzy still a little girl,—when long talks banished turkeys and apples and sliding,—when new books or sleigh-rides crowded out the old games,—when the two days of John's yearly visit were half-spent in the leafless, sunny woods, gathering mosses and acorn-cups, delicate fern leaves, and clusters of fire-moss, and red winter-green berries, for the pretty frames and baskets Lizzy's skilful fingers fabricated,—when he shook hands at coming and going, instead of kissing her;—but it seemed just the same, somehow. Dear me! those days were all gone! John didn't care about her any more! he was in love with a beautiful Boston lady. Why should he care about a homely little country cousin? He would go to live in Boston in a great big house, and he'd be a great man, and people would talk about him, and she should see his name in the papers, but he never would come to Coventry any more! And he'd acted as if he did love her, too!—that was men's way,—heartless things! If John had a good time, what did he care if Lizzy did grow into a gray-haired, puckered-up old maid, like Miss Case, with nobody to love her, or take care of her, or ask about her, or—or—kiss her?—The climax was too much for Lizzy; great big tears ran down on the arm of the stuffed chair, and she would have sobbed out loud, only Chloe opened the door, to put up the tea-things, I suppose, and Lizzy wouldn't cry before her. But, for all that, she didn't hear Chloe come to the fireplace; she only felt her sit down in the big chair, and, simultaneously, a pair of strong arms lifted Miss Lizzy on to John Boynton's knee, and held her there. It wasn't Chloe.

I declare, one gets out of patience with these men! they do astonish a person so sometimes, one doesn't know what to do or say. Lizzy had been thinking to herself, not two minutes ago, with what cool and smiling reserve she should meet John Boynton, how dignified and kindly distant she would be to him,—and now,—well! it was so sudden,—and then, as I said before, these men do get round one so,—if you happen to love them.—Lizzy forgot, I suppose; at any rate, she wasn't dignified, or reserved, or proper, or anything of the kind, for she just hid her pretty head on his square shoulder, and said, "Oh, John!"—"slowly, and nothing more,"—as Mr. Tennyson remarks about cutting Iphigenia's head off with a sharp knife.

I don't know that John talked much, either. I rather think Lizzy got over the climax that had troubled her a little while ago. Presently, she raised her head and gathered up her hair that had fallen down, and became painfully aware that she had on only a blue calico! John never knew it; he knew somebody had a very sweet face, full of cloudy blushes and sunshiny smiles, and, not being a Pre-Raphaelite, the foreground was of no consequence to him.



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So, after a time, Lizzy slipped down to her cricket again, still leaning on the arm—of the chair,—and John expounded to her the excellent reason that had delayed his coming home. He had been offered a large salary to take the head of a public school in Boston, and those two days had been devoted to arranging the affair; he had satisfied the school-committee as to his capacity, and made up his mind on several points of minor importance to them,—but, perhaps, greater to him. Among others, he had found a house, a tiny house, with a little yard behind, and a view of Boston Harbor from the upper windows, all at a reasonable rent, prospect thrown in; this house he had hired, and now—he had come to Greenfield for a housekeeper.

Lizzy suddenly discovered that she was hungry, and invited John into the kitchen to get a piece of pie; but, after all, instead of eating hers while he was eating his, she went upstairs, brushed out her hair and coiled it up with a coral-topped comb, that came to light, very strangely, just in time,—put on her merino frock, her bracelet, and her slippers,—rolled herself up in shawls and hoods and mittens, and was lifted into John's buggy, to old Chloe's great delight, who held the lamp, grinning like a lantern herself, and tucking "Mr. John's" fox-skin round his feet, as if he had been ten years old.

So Lizzy Griswold did get to Coventry the night before Thanksgiving, after all; and when Uncle Boynton met her at the door, he called her "my dear daughter." Perhaps, as John had told Lizzy, on the drive over, that her father had heard all about his business and his intentions, in that letter she did not see, the young lady had decided to disinherit him, and adopt Uncle Boynton in his place; rather an unfair proceeding, it is true, since the letter was withheld by John's special request; and, indeed, Lizzy didn't act like a "cruel parient" to her father, when he came, after uncle, to give her a welcome.

They had a merry time at Coventry that Thanksgiving,—even merrier than another smaller assemblage, that took place at Greenfield about Christmas, when Polly Mariner came over a week before-hand to make Sam a new suit throughout, and Lizzy looked prettier than anybody ever did before, in a fresh white dress, and a white rose, off grandmother's tea-rose-bush, in her hair. It is on record, that she behaved no better than she did that evening when somebody found her crying in a blue calico; for Sam was overheard to say, as Polly hustled him off to bed, that, "if ever he was married, he guessed they wouldn't catch him makin' a fool of himself by kissin' a girl right before the minister!—if he'd have been Lizzy, John Boynton's ears would have sung for one while; but girls *were* fools!"

So John Boynton got a housekeeper; and Lizzy had more than one Thanksgiving-day in her life, beside the Governor's appointments.

* * * * *

ACHMED AND HIS MARE.



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An old Arabian tale the truth conveys,
That, honor's passion avarice outweighs.

* * * * *

Brave Achmed owned a mare of wondrous speed;
He prized her much above his wife or creed.

And lest some one should steal that precious mare,
He guarded her with unremitting care.

He tied her every night before his tent;
The fastening-cord then round his pillow went.

When all in slumber lay, the robber crept,
Unloosed the cord, and on the courser leapt.

"Wake up!" he cries,—"'tis I, the thief, who call;
See now if she in flight is chief of all!"

Mount Achmed and his tribe in wrath and shame,
And chase him as a tempest chases flame.

Hot Achmed nearly to the robber came,
When thus he thought: "My mare will lose her fame.

"If I o'ertake her, she is then outrun;
But if I reach her not, I am undone.

"Oh, better she were stolen before my face
Than have her vanquished in this desperate race!"

One secret sign his mare was taught to heed,
Whenever she must try her utmost speed.

He to the robber screamed, "Quick, pinch her ear!"
The sign she felt with answering love and fear.

As like a level thunderbolt she flew,
All chase was vain, the vexed pursuers knew.

Before this self-betrayal blank surprise
Fills Achmed's comrades, and their wondering cries



Demand, "How shall thy foolish act be named?"—
"My mare is lost, her glory is not shamed."

He says: "I knew, that, if her ear he nipped,
The darling prize could never be outstripped."

CHARLES LAMB AND SYDNEY SMITH.

There were in Great Britain, soon after the commencement of the present century, three remarkable groups of young men. Distinct schools of thought, like the philosophic schools of Greece, each of the groups was marked by peculiar ideas, tastes, and sympathies. The French Revolution, with its menace of fundamental changes, clashing with sentiments and convictions which ages had rendered habitual and dear, called for an inquiry into great principles and the grounds of things. The Napoleonic age had the terrific formlessness of chaos. Did it premonish the passing away of old things, and herald the birth of a new order and a new social state? or did the trouble spring from innate madness in the "younger strengths" which were trying to overthrow the world's kingdoms? Should venerable Royalty, after howling in the wilderness and storm, be again enthroned? or should men attempt to realize the fair ideals which the word Republic suggested? Should religion be supplanted? should Protestantism be confirmed? or should, perchance, the crosier of the Old Church be again waved over Europe? These were the questions that were mooted, and they aroused unwonted activity and vigor of thought as well in literature as in politics.



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The old century left in England few celebrated names to take part in the literature of the new. The men who made the poems, romances, dramas, reviews, and criticisms for the first quarter of our century had almost all been in youth contemporaries of the Reign of Terror, and had been tried in that unparalleled period as by a fiery furnace, while their opinions were in a formative state. Crabbe and Rogers were traditions of the time of Goldsmith and Johnson; Gilford wrote with a virulence and ability which he might have learned in boyhood from Junius; but with these exceptions, English literature fifty years ago was represented by young men.

We mention, as the first group of young thinkers, the founders of the “Edinburgh Review,”—Sydney Smith, Francis Jeffrey, Francis Horner, and Henry Brougham,—whose united ages, when the first number of that review appeared in 1802, made one hundred and seven years. Members of the Whig party, possessing much learning and more vivacity and earnestness, and having among them, if not severally, abundance both of daring and prudence, they startled conservative people, evoked the best efforts of authors by their brilliant castigations, and inaugurated the discussion of measures of reform which it took thirty years to get through Parliament. The critic of the company was Francis Jeffrey, whose happiness it was to live just when he was needed. Without capacity to excel either in the realm of ideas or of facts, he was unrivalled in the power of discovering the relations between the two. He was neither a statesman, philosopher, nor poet; but while the heavens and the earth threatened to rush in confusion together, he was an admirable *cicerone* to the troubled and wandering wits of men. He had no inherent qualities, and, if other people had not existed, would not have been alive himself; his faculty was simply an eye for relations, and his mental life began when some one threw a series of thoughts across his line of vision. He could tell all about those thoughts,—how large each was, what complexion they had, how they stood in order with each other, and how they compared with other thoughts which he remembered having seen before. Such a mind might have achieved success among the technicalities of the law, but nowhere else, had not the “Edinburgh Review” been created. Jeffrey’s critical articles have little value when regarded according to their aim and as integral compositions; the arguments which they contain are often insufficient, and the literary judgments wrong. But they are full of the scattered elements of thought. Many of the best ideas of the books and men of which they treat are stated in them with admirable clearness and piquancy, and they are, therefore, pleasant secondary sources of information.

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Francis Horner died of consumption in Italy before he was forty years of age, and there is nothing of surpassing brilliancy or power in any of his writings. Yet he made a most extraordinary impression upon his contemporaries. His name is never mentioned by his associates except with unusual respect. Brougham, when he alludes to him, even in a letter, seems to check his pen into soberness, and to be as cautious as if he were speaking on a religious subject. Search through the published correspondence of Jeffrey, Sydney Smith, and Mackintosh, and Horner is found uniformly mentioned, not with peculiar affection or kindness, not with any intention of doing him honor, but as a man whose qualities were quite superior to those of other men, and whose destiny it was to be the first statesman of his country. Lord Cockburn, who was a schoolmate of Horner, relates that the latter was at one time selected by his class to present a book to the master, and adds: "As he stepped forward at the close of a recitation, and delivered the short Latin presentation-address, I thought him to be a god." This fascination is hard to be explained. The great seriousness of Horner's character may in part account for it. He could not bear trifling on important subjects, and could not help frowning on all jests which were not more wise than witty. The calm determination, the unvarying earnestness of his character, may aid in explaining it. From a boy, he never swerved from great purposes, pursued the most useful though difficult knowledge, and cultivated with equal zeal the ornaments of taste and those recondite historical and statistical studies which are the roots of political science. He was as far from being flighty as Immanuel Kant. Everything that he did was marked both by temperance and sagacity. Philosophically speaking, a personality, any personal being, is undoubtedly the most mysterious thing in the universe. How abstract ideas come together to grow and bloom in a young bosom is wholly past the comprehension of philosophy. As personality in the abstract fascinates a philosopher by its mystery, so a personality of uncommon purity, intensity, and completeness fascinates all men, and thus, perhaps, is explained the high estimation in which Horner was held. He was regarded by those who knew him, as Pythagoras was by his disciples, with the deference commanded by a superior person.

The indefatigable character of Lord Brougham, the only survivor of this group, cannot yet be sketched in a paragraph. To Sydney Smith we shall presently return.

The second group of young men was formed fifteen years later. They were the antagonists of the Edinburgh reviewers, the authors of the "Noctes Ambrosianae," the main support of "Blackwood's Magazine," almost from its beginning. Their names were John Wilson, J.G. Lockhart, James Hogg, and, for a time, William Maginn. These were very high, as well as, excepting Hogg, very young Tories. It



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would be an apotheosis of loyalty to say that they were also eminently religious, though they drank many bumpers to their religion. When they meet in the third of the “Noctes” and have taken their places at the table, North proposes: “A bumper! The King! God bless him!” and three times three are given. Then Tickler proposes: “A bumper! The Kirk of Scotland!” and the rounds of cheers are repeated. These indispensable ceremonies being over, the Blackwood council proceeds to discuss men and things over nectar and ambrosia.

Wilson was the centre and best representative of this group. At Oxford, he had been so democratic that he blacked his own boots on principle. On leaving Oxford, he had roamed for a time as a wild man in a band of gypsies. He next took a cottage in the lake district in the North of England, where he associated with Wordsworth, and occupied himself alternately with desperate gymnastic exercises and composing slight descriptive poems. Even after connecting himself with the magazine and becoming the symposiarch of the “Noctes,” and perhaps the greatest Tory in all broad Scotland, he did not renounce his home among the lakes. He was a lover of scenery, and an enthusiast and master in manly sports. He is said to have fished in every trout-brook north of the Clyde, and he wandered every season over the Highlands. In his sportsman’s accomplishments he took a truly English pride, and made fun of the Edinburgh Whigs by representing a company of them as getting by chance into the same room with himself and his associates, and then, pipes and tobacco being brought, as being fairly smoked out, sickened, and obliged to retreat by the superior smoking capacities of the Tories. He ridiculed Leigh Hunt for fancying in one of his poems that he should like a splendid life on a great estate, when (as Wilson says) he couldn’t even ride without being thrown. Yet, of all the men of this time, there was probably no one who had wider sympathies or more delightful prejudices than Professor Wilson, or who made more sagacious reflections. The centre of a literary clique, he loved to associate with all the other cliques, and was one of the first to recognize and proclaim the great merits of Wordsworth.

The third group was larger than either of the preceding, retained its *esprit de corps* longer, and may be most conveniently defined as the associates of Charles Lamb. Beside Lamb, there were Coleridge, Southey, Lovel, Dyer, Lloyd, and Wordsworth, among the earlier members of it,—and Hazlitt, Talfourd, Godwin, De Quincy, Bernard Barton, Procter, Leigh Hunt, Gary, and Hood, among the later. This group, unlike the others, did not make politics, but literature, its leading object. It was composed of literary men,—a title of doubtful import, but which certainly in civilized society will always designate a class. Political life has more of outward importance, religious life is holier, but literary life is the most humane of all the avocations.

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It is to the professions what pastoral occupations are to the trades. Politics and religion both have something to do with institutions. A mechanical man can play a part in them not very well, but passably well. But the literary man is sheer humanity, with nothing to help him but his thoughtfulness and sensibility. He is the unfelled tree, not the timber framed into the ship of state or carved into ecclesiastic grace. He lives as Nature lives, putting on the splendor of green when the air is sunny, and of crystal when the blasts sweep by; and while his roots reach down into the earth, there rises nothing above him but the heavens. Past experience shows that he may be harsh, prejudiced, and unhappy; but it shows also that the richest human juices are within him, and that not only the most peculiar and most sensitive, but also the most highly-endowed characters are named in the list of authors. The central and most admirable figure in this particular group of literary men is Charles Lamb; and as each of the other groups clustered around an organ, so at a later period Lamb and his associates supported the "London Magazine," in which the "Essays of Elia" first appeared.

If it be asked what gave that strong coherence to these associates which constituted them groups, a wise man would answer,—congeniality of character. A wiser man, however, would not overlook the element of *suppers*. The "Edinburgh Review" seems to have been first suggested over a quiet bottle of wine; and at a later day the Edinburgh reviewers, increased in number by the accession of Mackintosh and one or two others, formed an honored clique by themselves in the splendid society of Holland House. The "Noctes Ambrosianae" is the enduring monument of the way in which the Blackwood men passed their nights, and not the less so from the fact that they were for the most part written out by Wilson in sober solitude. Charles Lamb began his career of suppers with Coleridge, as the latter came up to London from the University to visit him, and the famous Wednesday-evening parties given by him and his sister Mary would occupy a large space in the literary history of this epoch. It is a true proverb, that people are but distant acquaintances till they have eaten salt together.

The sketches which we have thus given will indicate the leading tendencies that were operating in English literature, though the groups themselves did not include all the eminent literary men. Campbell, Shelley, and Byron were single lights, and did not form constellations,—unless, perhaps, Shelley and Byron may be regarded as a wayward and quickly-disappearing Gemini. Sir Walter Scott, and, in their later years, Southey, Wordsworth, and Coleridge, were of a cosmopolitan character, and served as links between different parties. And it may be added, that diplomatic relations and frequent intercommunication existed between all the groups.

Passing from the general schedule to the characters and careers of Charles Lamb and Sydney Smith, it will be our aim to show how these two most witty men were also intensely serious and dutiful,—how they were both disciplined by a great sorrow, and



obedient to a noble purpose,—and thus to relieve wit from the charge of having any natural alliance with frivolity.



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A thorn, it needs not a sage to say, vexes the side of every human being. Poetry laments the inadequacy of men to their ideals, philosophy declares an error in the figures which sum up life, religion reveals the fall of the race. The thorn is known which pierced the matchless joyousness of Charles Lamb. His family, highly gifted with wit, tenderness of feeling, and mutual love, had a tinge of madness in the blood. At twenty years of age he was himself shut up six weeks in a madhouse, his imagination in a vagary. He was not again affected; but the poison had sunk deeper into the veins of his sister. The shadow of a deed done in the dark ever pursued her. Charles devoted his life to her whose life was an intermittent madness, yet who, in her months of sanity, was a worthy sister of such a brother. His kindness to her knew no bounds. It was strange that she had premonition of the recurring fits of her disorder; and when the ghost of unreason beckoned, Charles took her by the hand and led her to the appointed home. Charles Lloyd relates, that, at dusk one evening, he met them crossing the field together on their melancholy way toward the asylum, both of them in tears. In the smiles of Charles Lamb, and they were many, his friends always remarked a prevailing expression of sadness. The "fair-haired maid," who had been the theme of his first poetizing, appears not again in his verses or in his life. He and Mary lived together, received evening visitors together, went to the theatre and picture-gallery together, visited the lakes and the poets together; and if he was ever seen in public without her, his friends knew there could be but one reason for it, and did not ask. When he left the India House, he had reserved from his income a considerable sum for her support; though the liberality of his employers, as it proved, rendered this precaution unnecessary. She was his partner in writing the Shakspearian tales, and he always affirmed that hers were better done than his own. To her he dedicated the first poems that he published; and she, too, was a poetess, excellent in her simple way. Thus was Charles Lamb's life saddened by a great affliction ever impending over it, and sanctified by a great duty which he never for a moment forgot.

It was his good-fortune, while at school at Christ's Hospital, to become acquainted with Samuel Taylor Coleridge. A timid boy, creeping around among his boisterous companions like a little monk, it was that soaring spirit which first taught him to look up. Two men whose intellects more strongly contrasted could not be found. Coleridge suffered throughout life from over-much speculation. Could he have had his eye less upon the heavens and more upon the earth, could he have been concentrated upon some human duty, he would have been a much wiser and better man. Even in his youth he was the rhapsodist of old philosophies, had resolved social life into its elements, and dreamed of putting it together again to suit himself on the



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banks of the Susquehannah. Though Lamb wondered at the speculations of Coleridge, and, loving him, loved the metaphysics which were a part of him, yet it was without changing his own essentially opposite disposition. Lamb clung to the earth. He cultivated the excellency of this life. He was concrete, and hugged the world as he did his sister. He reverently followed the discourses of Coleridge, admiring, perhaps, “the beauty of the words, but not the words themselves”; but when the Opium-Eater also began to take speculative flights before Lamb, the latter stopped him at once by jangling his metaphysics into jokes. It was in conversation with Coleridge, begun at school and continued afterward at frequent meetings, that Lamb first ventured to try his own powers and was prompted to literary activity. But for a slight defect in his speech, he would probably have followed Coleridge to the University with the intention of going into the Church. A delightful clergyman he would have been, if he had duly undertaken the office, and one would have walked far to see him in the priestly robe, to hear him chant the service, to receive pastoral advice from him; yet we fear the “Essays of Elia” would have been less admirable than now. He was roused by Coleridge; and though he could not put the aureole of the latter about his own head, he began to do the best he could in his own way.

Life is a play between accident and purpose. Why was it, that, of all the books in the world, Charles Lamb should have fixed his affections chiefly on the old English dramatists? He might have turned to old Greece, admired the fruits of the classic ages, and become one of those sparkling artistic Hellenists that are occasionally seen in modern times. He might have turned to the mediaeval period. He had an eye for cloisters and nuns. His fancy would have been struck with the grotesqueness of many of the ideas and institutions of those times. He would have got on finely with Gurth the swineherd and Burgundy the tusk-toothed, and one of his masterly witticisms would have upset Duns Scotus. Perhaps, of all the mediaeval characters, he would have been most smitten with the court fool, and, if he could have been seated at a princely table of the twelfth century, the bowl surely would not have been round many times before he and the fool would have had a few passes at each other. There was enough in the Middle Ages to have fascinated him; and could he, like some romantic Novalis, have once penetrated thither, and tasted the fruit, he would have found it a lotus, and would have wished never to depart. His soul would have clung to church architecture, —under which term may be included all the religious, political, poetical, moral, and practical life of the Middle Ages. The accident in the case, however, was, that his uncle’s library did not contain the Greeks, nor the Middle Ages, but did contain the old English authors. These he mastered; and out of these he created his



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ideals. In the affluent vigor of the Elizabethan age, in the buoyant *neglige* of the times of merry Charles, he found people that he liked. To every reflective and slightly scholastic mind, there is a charm in looking at things in the distance. The perspective fits the eye. This may have helped the enthusiasm with which he looked upon the writers and heroes of the old English literature; but its principal cause was their open-heartedness, their informality, their stout and free humanity underneath laces and uniform.

Having thus found his place in literature, he began also to be rich in friends, and his life was devoted every moment to thought and affection. The time that he passed at the desk of the India House was time in which he did not live; or perhaps, while he autographed the mercantile books, there was a higher half-conscious life of the fancy which lightly flitted round and round the steady course of his pen. He thus exults, after his emancipation from his clerkship upon a pension:—"I came home FOREVER on Tuesday in last week. The incomprehensibility of my condition overwhelmed me. It was like passing from life into eternity. Every year to be as long as three; that is, to have three times as much time that is real time—time that is my own—in it. I wandered about thinking I was happy, but feeling I was not. But the tumultuousness is passing off, and I begin to understand the nature of the gift." For this one-third of his waking time, to have and to hold unhampered by any dependence, he had most willingly consigned the rest to drudgery. The value which he set upon it appears from the following answer which he made to Bernard Barton, who thought of abandoning his place in a bank and of relying upon literary labor for support:—"Throw yourself on the world without any rational plan of support beyond what the chance employ of booksellers would afford you! Throw yourself, rather, my dear Sir, from the steep Tarpeian rock, slap-dash, headlong, upon iron spikes. If you have but five consolatory minutes between the desk and the bed, make much of them, and live a century in them, rather than turn slave to the booksellers. Hitherto you have been at arm's length from them,—come not within their grasp. I have known many authors want for bread,—some repining, others enjoying the blessed security of a counting-house, all agreeing that they would rather have been tailors, weavers,—what not?—rather than the things they were. I have known some starved, some go mad, one dear friend literally dying in a madhouse. Oh! you know not—may you never know!—the miseries of subsisting by authorship." Thus he esteemed of priceless worth honestly-earned independent time for the pursuits that were dearest to him.



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His literary and social avocations were so intimately blended that they seem to have been almost the same. He was as thoughtful in his evening parties as he was in the act of composition, and as gentle and kindly in writing as he was to his friends. He gathered about him not many of the most famous, but many of the most original and peculiar men of his time. His Wednesday-evening parties were assemblies of thinkers. They were composed in large part of men who were not balanced by a profession, who were devoted only to wit, fancy, or speculation, who cultivated each a peculiar field and cherished each peculiar tastes and opinions, who were interested in different quarters of the heavens, and yet who came together, prompted by the spirit of sociality and kindness, to lay perhaps the backs of their heads together, and to talk always sincerely and wisely, but in the form of sense or nonsense, as the case might be. Lamb and his sister were always ready to appreciate every variety of goodness, and doubtless their guests received an order something like that which was addressed to the dwellers in Thomson's enchanting castle:—

“Ye sons of Indolence! do what you will,
And wander where you list, through hall or glade;
Be no man's pleasure for another stayed:
Let each as likes him best his hours employ,
And cursed be he who minds his neighbor's trade!”

To these parties sometimes came Coleridge, who in conversation seems to have been a happy mixture of a German philosopher and an Italian *improvvisatore*. Here Hazlitt learned to utter the philosophic criticisms which he most passionately believed in; and Lloyd, whose intellect was one of peculiar refinement, discoursed modestly of metaphysical problems, analyzing to an extent that Talfourd says was positively painful. Here the social reformer Leigh Hunt came, and for the moment forgot that social reforms were needed. Here the Opium-Eater came, and his cloudy abstract loves and hates and visions were exploded by the sparks of Elia's wit. Here the philosopher Godwin developed philosophy out of whist. Here the pensive face of the Quaker poet, Bernard Barton, shed a mild light upon the scene; and here the lawyer Thomas Noon Talfourd came to admire the finest characters that he knew of.

Having thus noticed the painful experience and unfaltering devotion to noble aims which marked the career of Charles Lamb, we leave him with his friends, and pass to notice the same elements in the life of his brother wit.

Sydney Smith preferred the legal profession, and esteemed himself a victim in entering the Church. His practical wisdom informed him, that, from the beginning even until then, qualities like his had not found a happy sphere of action in the pulpit, but, on the contrary, had rusted or grown ugly in it. He had as much sentiment as Sterne, and perhaps as much political sagacity as Swift, yet the finest instincts within



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him recoiled from following in the path of either the one or the other. With a subtle and exuberant wit,—he knew that wit touches not sacred things. With great practical prudence and a brilliant speculative capacity,—in a clergyman, prudence is less than faith, and brilliancy of thought than the glow of the heart. In his rich composite character he had, indeed, the qualities which make the clergyman; his disposition was religious, his heart was tender and Christian, he could give the best advice to the people; and though his appearance was not quite saint-like, it was at least suggestive of a good man who was walking in the way which he pointed out to others. But these qualities were not those with which he was most highly endowed. Energy and sterling common-sense, which he had inherited from his father, an elastic, mercurial, and passionate nature, which had come to him from his Huguenot mother,—these were the strong points in his character, and it belongs to neither of them to take the lead in the Church. Sydney had scanned the whole field. Having questioned well his desires, examined well his blood, derived what wisdom he could from history and observation, he deliberately chose the law. Why, then, did he take to theology? We read that his father had incurred so much expense in educating his eldest son for the legal profession, and in fitting out two others for India, that he could not well furnish the means for Sydney's education, and strongly recommended him to go into the Church; and that the son sacrificed his own to his father's inclination.

We may imagine Sydney Smith's reflections. With his versatile talent, honorable ambition, and consciousness that he could have made a shining name in political life, his object now was to find a sufficient sphere for the exercise of all his powers in the Church. It was no fault of his that he was unwilling to settle as curate and have no aim beyond his parish except to go to heaven at last. With his superfluity of human nature, for him to become a saint was out of the question. What then? Should he enter the realm of dogmatics, and become a learned and redoubted champion of the faith, passing his life amid exegesis? Should he renounce thorough thinking, and become a polished and popular pastor, an ornament of the pulpit and of society? Should he signalize himself for gravity, orthodoxy, and ability, seek the earthly prizes of his profession, and perhaps become Archbishop of Canterbury? Should he become a jolly, vinous, and Friar-Tuck sort of clergyman? God forbid! he said to each of these queries, and rushed forward into his profession. Regarding himself as a lamb for the slaughter, yet tremendously in earnest not to be sacrificed, he went into the Church groping and fearing, but resolute. Trembling lest he should not do his duty both to himself and to his sacred office, he yet determined to try. Thus the thorn which troubled Sydney Smith was not an affliction, but was what he regarded as a danger; and, though less patent and pointed than that in the life of Charles Lamb, probably had not less influence in the discipline of character.



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Behold, then, the long and venerable line of the clergy opening to receive him, and behold him entering it! The clergy, the priesthood, the holy fathers, the strong bishops, the monks, the ghostly race, the retired enthusiasts, now melancholy, now rapt, now merry-making, the consolers of sorrow, the divine heroes in an earthly life,—even one of this family does Sydney propose to be. At the age of twenty-four he becomes curate in the little hamlet of Salisbury Plain,—the young graduate of Oxford sent into the country to be pastor to the inmates of half-a-dozen hovels! Then he writes his description of a curate:—“The poor working man of God,—a learned man in a hovel, good and patient, —a comforter and a teacher,—the first and purest pauper of the hamlet; yet showing that in the midst of worldly misery he has the heart of a gentleman, the spirit of a Christian, and the kindness of a pastor.” He regards himself as almost excluded from his kind, and quotes (or originates) the proverb, that there are three sexes, men, women, and clergymen. He took long solitary walks over the plains of Salisbury, reflecting upon the manifold activities of the world, in which he had no part. The only society that he had was during the occasional visits of the squire to the neighborhood, who, surprised to find the curate so interesting a person, gave him frequent invitations to dinner. Thus passed two years, when the squire consigned his son to the curate to be educated, and Sydney Smith, starting with the young man for the Continent, was driven by stress of war to Edinburgh.

There he met Horner, Jeffrey, Brougham, and others, young thinkers and full of matter, —Horner the philosopher, Jeffrey the critic, Brougham the statesman, and Sydney Smith the divine,—and the divine was unsurpassed by any of the others in wit, energy, or decision of character. While the events with which the times were rife were striking fire in all their brains, it was the divine who first turned their thoughts to account by suggesting that they should start a review. The suggestion was acted upon, and under his editorial care the first numbers of the “Edinburgh Review” appeared. His prudence and remonstrances saved it from manifold excesses; for Jeffrey was not a man to be moderate in times like those. The brilliant critic received not a few such lectures as the following:—“I certainly, my dear Jeffrey, in conjunction with the Knight of the Shaggy Eyebrows [Homer], do protest against your increasing and unprofitable skepticism. I exhort you to restrain the violent tendency of your nature for analysis, and to cultivate synthetical propensities. What is virtue? What’s the use of truth? What’s the use of honor? What’s a guinea but a d—d yellow circle? The whole effort of your mind is to destroy. Because others build slightly and eagerly, you employ yourself in kicking down their houses, and contract a sort of aversion for the more honorable, useful, and difficult task of building well yourself.”



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It was the boast of Sydney Smith in old age that he had very little to change in the opinions which he had at various times advanced,—that he had seen every important measure which he had advocated passed and become recognized as beneficent. The variety of the review suited the versatility of his talent; the problem, What worthy thing shall I employ myself in doing? was solved; and an ample public career was opened to him. When, after five years, he passes from Edinburgh to London, he is not only a poor clergyman, but a famous Edinburgh reviewer. He becomes popular in society and as a preacher, and delivers lectures on Moral Philosophy to crowded houses of the *elite* of the metropolis.

When he is again exiled as a curate, his solitude is not unbroken, but he receives and returns the visits of the most eminent people. His neighbors ran to him one day, shortly after his arrival, exclaiming, —“Please your honor, a coach! a coach! a coach!” Sydney saw in the distance the equipage of Lord Holland, and challenged the admiration of his parishioners by boldly answering,—“Well, my good friends, *stand firm*; never mind, even if there should be a coach; it will do us no harm;—let us see.” A simple pastor and an eminent man, with flashing energy he approves himself a good man. Sunday he preached, Monday he doctored the sick, Tuesday Sir James Mackintosh visited him for a week, Wednesday he read Ariosto, Thursday he began an article, Friday he reviewed his patients, Saturday he repaired his barn. Now he is laying down a rule that no day shall pass in which he will not make somebody happy; now he is fixing a bar whereon it shall be convenient for his cows to scrape their backs; now he is watching by the side of his sleeping baby, with a rattle in hand to wake the young spirit into joyousness the moment its sleep breaks. He goes through the parish as doctor, wit, and priest, guide, philosopher, and friend, studying the temper and needs of the simple congregation to which he preaches on Sunday, while his brain is racking with great thoughts. With these higher thoughts he has to do as he sits at his desk and writes an article for the larger parish of the United Kingdom. With a wild play of wit and fancy and laughter he graces the sturdy column of his virtue and fidelity. He lived in what was said to be the ugliest and most comfortable house in England, admired by every visitor for his independence, manliness, refinement, and liveliness. When he visited London, as he often did, and when in later years he lived there and was *lionne*, his simplicity of character remained. To the last he was one of the sincerest and most active of clergymen and of men.



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It is probable that there were not living at the time two more serious men than the two wits whose careers we have outlined. Indeed, it is quite a mistake to suppose that wit has anything to do with temper or sentiment at all. A man may be perpetually sulky, and yet habitually witty,—may smile, and smile, and smile, and yet be a most melancholy individual. Wit is simply a form of thought, and is as intellectual as scientific study. It differs from other thought only in being a little *outré*,—a little in excess; it overdoes the thing only because it has so much energy in it. It is what Charles Lamb said a pun was, —“a sole digest of wisdom.” All great thoughts are at first witty, and afterward come to be common and flat. When Pythagoras discovered the theorem of the squares erected on the sides of a right-angled triangle, it had the effect on him of a most preposterous joke. The apple dropping on the head of Newton struck him like a very far-fetched pun. Show a child the picture of a wild Tartar, and his first motion will be to laugh at it. We have seen a man while reading Kant, the dryest of metaphysicians, slap his knee, leap upon his feet, and swear, in exuberance of mirth, that Kant had said a good thing. If it were discovered to-morrow to be a scientific truth that this world is wrong side out, and if inventive genius should discover a way to put the other side out, we should all of us think it a funny thing, but our transversed descendants would regard the matter as a commonplace. New proposals in the arts, and new discoveries in the sciences are always at first laughed at. Thus wit is only thought that is beyond the present capacity of the listeners, thought of whose meaning they can catch only a glimpse; it is the forerunner of what our very stupid race, which is always a little behind the times, is wont to call wisdom. If the race should ever become completely sage, nothing less than a joke would ever be uttered.

The likenesses of Charles Lamb and Sydney Smith make them both very severe-looking men. Like marble, which in costume takes the appearance of the finest lace, so that it seems as if it would yield to the touch of a finger, their delicate fancies and sentiments were but the surface of a solid and thorough character.

They lived in different spheres, corresponding to the difference in their genius. Sydney Smith had the more versatile and fruitful mind. With restless energy he supported various characters, being equally famous as a wit, Whig, Edinburgh reviewer, eloquent preacher, brilliant man of society, and canon of Saint Paul's. His biographer well describes him as a rough rider of subjects, and with surpassing good sense he overran every problem with which the public mind was occupied. He was a reformer, but it was after the English and not the French fashion. He had unbounded respect for existing human blessings, believed in things substantially as they were, and couldn't have been persuaded to try an experiment



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that had much of hazard in it. A Frenchman is always at home amid earthquakes and volcanoes and hurricanes, and the immediate prospect of an end to everything that is and a beginning of something the like of which never has been. The spirit of the great French Revolution was to exterminate all the results of time up to that point, and, having made a clear field, to begin over again. Hence heads went off, religion was proscribed, thrones were burned, the calendar was changed; even the heavenly bodies should no longer bear down their freight of old associations, and Orion received the name of Napoleon. Could the earth have in any way been transformed, could grass possibly have been made blue and the heavens green, or could man have been done over into any other sort of animal, there is not the slightest doubt that those Frenchmen would have undertaken it. In comparison with such men, Sydney Smith sank into insignificance as a reformer. He lived under a religion, government, and system of manners, all of which he was desirous to retain. He did not wish for his children any institutions very much more comfortable than England offered at the moment. He regarded the advantages of life with great complacency, thinking, doubtless, that men had better opportunities than they availed themselves of; and the chief intensity of his purpose was not to make better opportunities, but to improve them better. He probably did not approve of all the men and customs that he saw, was decidedly opposed both to wickedness and stupidity; but he did not propose, like a Frenchman, at the first fault, to blot out the heavens and the earth. He demonstrated in his life how genial, under existing institutions, a clergyman could be, how discreet a young enthusiast could be, how widely active a curate could be, how acceptable in society an honest man could be, how brilliant a plain Englishman could be. A great reformer he was, —but the spirit of his reform consisted chiefly, not in changing, but in making better use of the blessings which we already possess. Compared with this prevailing spirit of personal reform, the reformatory public measures which he was prominent in advocating were of slight consequence. Merry on the surface, with an iron core of stubborn resolution within, he equally delighted his most homely and his most elegant friends, and while he sympathized with humble life, he had a profound respect for the technically best society.

Charles Lamb lived within a narrower and peculiar range. With more of concentration, he had a less abounding energy than Sydney Smith. His character was an odd and elegant miniature, while that of Sydney Smith was voluminous. He loved a particular sort of men, and that sort was honest men; while the merry divine could deal with politicians and even with Talleyrand himself. Sydney was playing a part in the Whig party, among the advocates of reforms; the sympathies of Elia went for the reform of the United Kingdom,



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and of the universe, too, if possible,—but he was more interested in a profound thought, brought forth from the struggling breast of Hazlitt, than in any bill introduced into Parliament. He was occupied with his old books, his sincere friends, his beloved sister. He cared little for the *beau monde*, would rather not look upon a duke or a duchess without a grating between; but, turning from the current into an eddy, content with the many thoughtful and original persons whom he had about him, he delighted to fish for the shyest tenants of the stream and to dive for strange pearls. He loved remote thoughts, quaint expressions, fantastic ideas. He especially attached himself to any violent symptoms of human nature. Being in a picture-gallery, he observed a stout sailor in towering disgust at one of the old masters, spit his tobacco-juice at it, and swear, with an expletive, that he could do better himself. The honest opinion honestly expressed, the truth and vigor of the man, delighted Lamb, and he rushed up to him to shake hands. Whenever the sailor, after that, wrote to his friends in London, he wished to be particularly remembered to Mr. Charles Lamb, who wouldn't be humbugged about that old painting.

It was this strong sympathy with human character which made Elia rather a contemner of the worship of Nature. He liked things that were as definite as the works of men, and found great difficulty in sympathizing with a landscape. There was nothing on Fleet Street for which he did not feel a personal attachment; all the hurry and majestic order of a great city, all the little by-ways and hedges of city life, the wealth, the poverty, the splendor, the rags, the men and women, all acting under the stern discipline of an immense society, the boys, the beggars, the chimney-sweeps, the hilarious and the sorrowful, the fine ladies and noble lords, were all duly appreciated by him. If he had been taken up to the pinnacle of a mountain, instead of entertaining one of Wordsworth's sublime contemplations, he would have been very likely to flap his arms and crow like chanticleer. Indeed, in middle age he was accustomed to boast that he had never seen a mountain. Born in London, and always residing in London till the last years of his life, esteeming man the crown and purpose of the universe, he was much inclined to regard the love of Nature, which figures so largely in modern literature, as a popular delusion. He would have sympathized with the French philosopher who, after accompanying a young lady to the Highlands of Scotland, surprised her raptures by saying to her,—“*Aimez-vous les beautés de la nature? Pour moi, je les abhorre.*”



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The diverse religious character of these two men may be illustrated by an allusion to their different habits with respect to Art. Sydney Smith, visiting Paris, satisfied himself by a fifteen-minutes' observation in the galleries of the Louvre. His mind, almost orbicular in its various capacity, took in the scene at a glance. There were pictures from almost every country, statues from almost every age, representations of the finest imaginations of the mind and of the noblest labors of history. He was not a barbarian with respect to the Louvre, but understood all about it, and knew its excellence and value; yet he mingled his sentiment and common-sense well together, and took a rapid walk from chamber to chamber. He probably entertained large views of Art during his impetuous progress through the ages, from battle-field to battle-field, from saint to saint, from philosopher, poet, and hero, to landscape, shepherdess, and domestic scene. He took in thought with lightning swiftness, and lived for fifteen minutes amid statues and paintings which collected scenes from all the universe. He went forth, satisfied that the Louvre was a fine gallery of Art, that Art was a very fine thing, that painters and sculptors ought to be encouraged, and that he had been looking at many things which were worthy a man's consideration. If he had been called upon at once to preach a sermon, there is no doubt that he would have made very judicious reflections upon the spectacle which he had beheld.

Charles Lamb, too, visited Paris, and though it is not recorded that he went into the Louvre, yet we can hardly be mistaken in conjecturing that he did, and the thoughts with which he went. He would have entered those galleries with timid ecstasy. He would at first have shrunk away from the full splendor, and made acquaintance with some modest painting in a corner. Happy would some friend near him be to hear the half-tender, half-witty, yet most appreciative conceit which should first come stammering from his lips. He would have advanced slowly, and only after much delay would have ventured to stand before the great masters, and to look up eye to eye at the spirit of the Louvre. After taking his departure, he would never have thought familiarly of the scene, but it would have remained in his mind as terrible and sacred an episode as was the descent into Hades to Virgil's hero.

Not only in the Louvre, but in the world, Charles Lamb was the more timid worshipper. The whole character of his mind, the intensity of his thought within a narrow sphere, made him reverent of the Infinite. The thought of departure from the life which he now lived was to him a very solemn one. Religious ideas were so sacred to him that he never referred to them lightly, and seldom at all. When he did mention them, it was with peculiar impressiveness. No one can read the account of his share in a conversation on "persons one would like to have seen," without admiring the energy and pathos with which



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he alluded to one Person, whose name, however, he did not utter. Discussions on religious subjects he never tolerated in anybody but Coleridge. One evening, after he and Leigh Hunt had returned from a visit to Coleridge, Hunt began to express his surprise that a man of so much genius as the Highgate sage should entertain such religious opinions as he did, and mentioned one of his doctrines for especial reprobation. Lamb, who was preparing the second bowl of punch, answered, hesitatingly, with a gentle smile,—“Never mind what Coleridge believes; he is full of fun.” He was an humble, sinful worshipper, and while he bowed his head tremblingly before Heaven, he poured out the stream of his affections to his sister and his friends.

The religious character of Sydney Smith was less peculiar than that of Elia. An earnest Christian, with a will too resolute to allow the aid of the punch-bowl in vanquishing trouble, professionally wielding the religious and moral ideas, and habitually obeying them, he stood erect and looked at the life to come with a firm eye. “The beauty of the Christian religion,” he says, “is that it carries the order and discipline of heaven into our very fancies and conceptions, and, by hallowing the first shadowy notions of our minds, from which actions spring, makes our actions themselves good and holy.” This central and vital beauty he had cultivated in a very diversified life, and he looked with confidence for the prize which is laid up for the well-doer.

Probably, if any successful life were examined, it would be found to consist of a series of hairbreadth escapes. Every movement would be the crossing of the Rubicon. That man is of little account who at every step that he has taken has not been weighing matters as nicely as if he were matching diamonds. How narrowly did Coleridge escape being the greatest preacher, philosopher, poet, or author of his time! Almost everything was possible to him; and one can but marvel how he went through life avoiding in turn each of his highest possibilities. It is the glory of Charles Lamb and Sydney Smith, that, as far as it can be said of any men, they did the best that was possible with their circumstances and endowments. The old fancy which says of every person, that there is an ideal character which he can attain, in which he shall be peculiar and unsurpassed, was in their cases realized.

Their characters were projected into literature, where they remain as permanent blessings. The style of writing of both of them approaches to the simplest way of saying things. Elia employed the choicest language of the seventeenth century, and the divine used the plainest English of the day. The perpetual danger of literature is of becoming rhetorical; and hardly fares vigor of thought when long words and periods are preferred to short ones, and when the native shape and properties of ideas are less cared for than the abundant drapery. The style of the “Essays



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of Elia” is as admirable as their fancy. The author hated a formal sentence as much as he disliked stately and insipid society. Unlike Thomas Carlyle, in avoiding the faults of rhetorical culture, he did not become a literary barbarian. In refusing to comb his hair like a prig, he did not go to the extreme of making himself horridly uncomely. His sentences are unsurpassed for neatness, are as graceful as they are quaint and clear. The writings of Sydney Smith rarely attain the perfect grace which uniformly distinguishes Elia; yet he never attempts magnificence, and he so unites brilliancy and plainness as to make his statements seem equally felicitous to the rude and the scholarly ear. His Peter Plymley letters are remarkable examples of the way in which one yeoman speaks to another. His literary bequest, however, is neither so valuable nor so charming as that of Charles Lamb. His powers were too various, and he engaged in too many fields of labor, to attain supreme success in any direction. The best result of his life is his own exuberant and unresting character, which harmonized all the diversities in his career; and adequately to behold this there is needed a fuller and more philosophical biography of him than has yet been written.

BULLS AND BEARS.

[Continued.]

CHAPTER XV.

On the morning of the day which brought the downfall of Stearine and his indorsers, Sandford and Fayerweather, with the Vortex, whose funds they had misappropriated, Monroe came to the counting-room unusually cheerful. His anxiety respecting his little property was relieved, for he thought the monetary crisis was past, and that thenceforth affairs would improve. He had reasoned with himself that such a pressure could not last always, and that this had certainly reached its limit. The clear, bracing air of the morning had its full influence over his sensitive nature. All Nature seemed to rejoice, and he, for the time, forgot the universal distress, and sympathized with it. But the thermometer fell rapidly as he caught the expression which the face of his employer wore. Mr. Lindsay, of the house of Lindsay & Co., was usually a reserved, silent man—in business almost a machine, honest both from instinct and habit, and proud, in his quiet way, of his position and his stainless name. He had a wife and daughter, and therefore was presumed to have affections; but those whom he met in the market never thought of him, save as the systematic merchant. Well as Monroe knew him, being his confidential clerk, he never had seen more than the case in which the buying, selling, and note-paying machinery was inclosed. He respected the evident integrity and worth of the head of the house, but never dreamed of a different feeling; he could as easily have persuaded himself into cherishing an affection for the counting-house clock.



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This morning, Mr. Lindsay's face wore an unusually sleepless, anxious look. The man of routine was but a man, after all, and, in his distress, he longed for some intelligent, friendly sympathy. Monroe recognized the mute appeal, but, from long habits of reticence, he was at a loss how to approach his stately chief. Determined, however, to give him an opportunity to speak, if he chose, Monroe asked after the news, the day's failures, and the prospects of business. The merchant needed only a word, and broke out at once,—

"Prospect? there is no prospect but ruin. If a whirlwind would bury the city, or a conflagration leave it a heap of ashes, it would be better for all of us."

"But don't you think the darkest time has past?"

"Not at all; the pressure will continue until scores more are brought down. Better fail at once than live in dread of it."

"You surprise me! Why, you are not in danger?"

"Did you ever consider? Look at the bales of goods in our lofts,—goods which nobody will buy and nobody can pay for. And our acceptances have been given to the manufacturers for them,—acceptances that are maturing daily. Up to this time I have taken up all our paper, as it became due; but God knows how the next payments are to be made."

"I had not thought of that."

"The house of Lindsay & Co. has never known dishonor"—

The merchant wiped his spectacles,—but it was the eyes that were dim, not the glasses. His lips quivered and his breath came hard, as he continued,—

"But the time has come; the house must go down."

"I hope not," said Monroe, fervently. "Can nothing be done?"

"Nothing. Every resource has been used. The banks won't discount; and I suppose they can't; they are fully as weak as their customers."

"I don't know but the offer may be useless, contemptible, even; but I have a small sum, in good notes, that may be available."

The merchant shook his head.

"Whatever it is, you are welcome to it. Perhaps ten thousand dollars"—



“Ten thousand dollars!” exclaimed Mr. Lindsay,—“*you* have that sum?”

“Yes,—the little property that was my father’s. Let me go and get the notes, and see if I can’t get some money upon them.”

Mr. Lindsay rose and took the clerk’s hand with a heartiness that astonished him.

“God bless you, Monroe,” he said. “I may be saved, after all. Ten thousand dollars will be enough for the present pinch, and before the next acceptance is due some relief may come.”

“Don’t speak of thanks. I’ll get the notes in a moment.”



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Tears stole silently down the unaccustomed furrows; the gateway of feeling was open, but the tremulous lips refused to speak. Before he could recover his self-possession, Monroe was gone. Mr. Lindsay tried to read the newspapers, but the print before his eyes conveyed no idea to his preoccupied brain. Then his thoughts turned to his beautiful villa in Brookline, and he remembered how that morning his daughter stepped lightly into the brougham with him at the back piazza, rode down the winding path between the evergreen-hedges, and, after giving him a kiss, sprang out when they reached the gate. He knew, that, when he returned in the evening, he should find her in her place under the great horse-chestnut, at the foot of the hill, ready to ride to the house. How could he meet her with the news he would have to carry? how crush the spirits of his invalid wife? Humiliating as the idea of failure was when considered in his relations with the mercantile world, the thought of home, with its changed feelings and circumstances, and the probable deprivation of habitual indulgences, was far more poignant.

It was not long before Monroe returned, but with a less buoyant air. Mr. Lindsay's spirits fell instantly. "I see it all," said he, "you can't do anything."

"Perhaps I may, yet. The notes I spoke of, though due to me, are in the hands of Mr. Sandford, Secretary of the Vortex Insurance Company. I have been there, and cannot see him. His shutting himself up, I am afraid, bodes me no good. However, I'll go again an hour hence."

"No harm in trying. Did you indorse the notes to him?"

"No. They were merely left with him for convenience' sake, as he was my agent in loaning the money."

"Then he can't make way with them,—honestly."

Monroe seemed hurt by the implied suspicion, but did not reply, thinking it best, if possible, to change the subject of conversation.

Mr. Lindsay sat in silence, a silence that was broken only once or twice during the morning, and then by some friend or business acquaintance asking, in hurried or anxious tones, "Anything over to-day?" A mournful shake of the head was the only answer, and the merchant sunk into a deeper gloom.

Again Monroe went to see Mr. Sandford, but with no better success. The third time he naturally spoke in a peremptory tone, and, giving his name and business, said, that he must and would see Mr. Sandford, or get the notes. The weight of his employer's trouble rested on him, and gave an unwonted force to his usually kind and modest temper. The clerk, not daring to break his instructions, and seeing that it was not far from two o'clock, intimated, in a half-confidential tone, that he would do well to ask Mr.



Tonsor, the broker, about them. Nervous with apprehension, Monroe walked swiftly to Tonsor's office. At the door he met Fletcher coming out with exultation in every feature. Within stood Bullion, his legs more astride than usual, his chin more confidently settled over his collar, and the head of his cane pressed against his mouth. As Monroe entered, Tonsor ceased the conversation, and, looking up, said, blandly, "My young friend, can I do anything for you?" Bullion at the same time turned the eyes that might have been only glittering petrifications, and pointed the long eyebrow at him inquiringly.



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"I hope so," was the reply. "Have you some notes in your possession payable to Walter Monroe?"

"Who asks the question?"—very civilly.

"My name is Monroe."

"Ah! Mr. Sandford is your agent, I presume?"

"Yes. I left the notes with him."

"And you wanted to raise some money on them?"

"Yes, that is what I wish."

"Then you'll be pleased to know that Mr. Sandford has anticipated you. I loaned him eight thousand dollars upon them this morning."

"Loaned *him* eight thousand dollars?"

"Certainly. Is it extraordinary that your agent has done what you desired?"

"I never asked him to borrow for me; and I never authorized him to transfer the notes."

"He hasn't transferred them; he has only pledged them."

"He couldn't pledge them; he had no legal right in them."

"But he *has* pledged them, and they are in my safe, subject to the repayment of the sum I loaned."

"If you have loaned Mr. Sandford money, that is your affair."

"And yours, too, my friend, you will find, if he doesn't pay it."

"You haven't a right to detain the notes a moment."

"I have the possession, which will answer as well as the right. And let me advise you, —don't get excited and conclude that everything is wrong. You are not so well posted as you might be. Go and see Mr. Sandford, and I haven't a doubt you'll find the money ready for you."

"I shall go. But I wish you to understand, that, if I am not 'posted,' as you say, I do know my rights, and I shall take proper measures to get possession of my property. You have no more hold upon it than a pawnbroker has upon a stolen spoon."



Trembling with the unusual excitement, and despairing of being able to aid his employer, Monroe did not wait for a reply, but rushed to the Vortex again. Mr. Sandford had gone out on business, was the answer. He had not gone far, if the truth were known; for his position commanded the office-door, and he saw every visitor.

Time did not lag that eventful day; the hands seemed to sweep round the dial on the Old State House as though they had been swords in pursuit of some dilatory debtor. It now lacked only fifteen minutes of two, and Monroe, sick at heart, turned his steps towards Milk Street, to announce the utter failure of his plan. Mr. Lindsay received the intelligence with more firmness than might have been expected.

“Monroe, my friend,—for I can truly call you so,—you have done what you could. It was not your fault that your agent deceived and swindled you. You generously offered me your all. I shall never forget it. I can’t say more now. Please stay and inform the notary, when he comes, that he must take the usual course. Tell John, when he comes with the brougham, that he may drive back. I shall take the cars to-day, and shall not be at home, probably, until after tea. I pray God, Monroe, that you may never go home as I do now. O Clara, my daisy, my darling! how can I tell you?”



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Still murmuring to himself, Mr. Lindsay slowly walked out of the counting-room.

It was not strange, that, under the pressure of his own calamity, Mr. Lindsay had no thought for the losses of others. He forgot that Monroe was really in a far worse position, since, if the ten thousand dollars were lost, it was his all. Neither did Monroe, at first, reflect upon his own impending misfortune; he had been so intent upon preserving the credit of the house, that his own interest had been lost sight of.

Presently the notary came with the inevitable demand. He was a cheerful fellow in his sorry business, blithe as an old stager of an undertaker at a first-class funeral. He chatted about the crisis, and, as a matter of course, brought all the latest news from State Street. Monroe listened to one piece of news, but had ears for no more. "Sandford and Fayerweather had failed, and the old Vortex, which they had managed, was dead broke, cleaned out."

Mr. Lindsay was not the only heart-stricken man who left the counting-room that day.

CHAPTER XVI.

Monroe was walking sorrowfully homeward, when he met Easelmann near the corner of Summer Street. He was in no humor for conversation, but he could not civilly avoid the painter, who evidently was waiting to speak to him.

"Glad to see one man that isn't a capitalist. You and I, Monroe, are independent of banks and brokers."

Monroe faintly smiled.

"This is a deadly time here in Boston,—a horrible stagnation. Every man avoids his neighbor as though he had the plague; and we have no Boccaccio to tell us stories while the dead-carts go by."

"The dead-cart went through our street to-day."

"You don't tell me! Who is the lucky corpse that is out of his misery?"

"Mr. Lindsay. Our house is shut up, and I am a vagrant."

"A pair of us! For the last month I have performed the Wandering Jew all by myself. Now I have company. What shall we do to be jolly?"

"Jolly!"—with a tone of melancholy surprise.



“When should a man be jolly, if he can’t when he’s nothing to do? I am the slave of gold, you understand. If any rich magician rubs his double-eagles before me, woe is me, if I don’t paint! When the magicians send their eagles on other errands, I am free from their drudgery. Meanwhile, I live on air, flattened out and packed away, like a Mexican horned-frog, or a dreaming toad, in a fissure of a preadamite rock.”

“I am sorry I haven’t your art of making misfortune comfortable.”

“Misfortune? My philosophical friend, there isn’t any such thing. The true man is superior to circumstances or accidents. (Some old fellow, I believe, has said that; somebody always says my good things before me; but no matter.) Nothing can happen amiss to the wise and good.”

“Then I am neither wise nor good, for I have lost my all, and it comes confoundedly amiss to me.”



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“Your all? That’s what the shoemaker said; but he bought a new one for six-pence. But, how happened it?”

“By my folly.”

“I knew that, of course; but I wanted to know what folly in particular.”

“I trusted it to a man whom I thought not only honest, but my friend, and he has proved a scoundrel.”

“You shouldn’t have led him into temptation. You are *particeps criminis*, and the partaker is as bad as the thief. Don’t trust without taking security, my friend; it’s offering a premium to crime. Consider your guilt now! Think of the family into whose innocent bosom you have brought sin and remorse! Who is the luckless person?”

“Sandford!”

“I knew it. I expected it. He was too good by half. I didn’t blame him for his widow-and-orphan business; somebody must do it; but I made up my mind some time ago that he would come to grief.”

“Prophets are always plenty after the event.”

“True, my friend. But just think! He passed by my pictures in the Exhibition, and bought the canvas of my friend Greenleaf,—a man of genius, doubtless, but young, you understand, young. Can you conceive of the wickedness? I felt sure from that moment, that, if he were not totally depraved, he at least had a moral inability, as the preachers call it, that would be his ruin.”

“Well, he is ruined effectually; but the worst of it is, that he has dragged innocent people down with him.”

“‘Innocent,’—yes, you have the word. A man that cares for money at all, and trusts all he has without security to any fair-spoken financier, is an innocent, truly.”

“Well, there is no use in lamenting, and just as little in the consolation of thinking how the loss might have been avoided.”

“I don’t know. I don’t admit that. I am not to be deprived of the rights of a freeborn American. The ‘I told-you-so’ is a fine balm for all sorts of wounds,—rather more soothing to physician than patient, perhaps. Combined with the ‘You-might-have-known-it,’ it gets up a wholesome blister in the least possible time, especially where ‘a raw’ has been established previously.”

“I don’t think I was prudent.”



“Of course not; if you had been, you wouldn’t have lost. There are no such things as mistakes in the world.—But to look at affairs. *Imprimis*.—Lindsay smashed, house closed, salary stopped.”

“I suppose so.”

“*Item*,—private funds gone; owner taken in by the patent-safe game.

“*Item*,—dwelling-house standing; so much gain,—but

“*Item*,—the dweller is not alone, having other mouths to feed.

“But don’t be discouraged. I don’t doubt you will find something to do in good time.”

“But when is the good time coming? I must earn something at once.”

“The danger of being made to work isn’t pressing. Ships will have time to get well rested. Truckmen are actually growing civil with a little starvation. The beggars don’t hold out their hands for coppers; they make more money by hauling out their old stockings and lending at five per cent. a month.”



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“You will laugh me out of my misery in spite of myself.”

“I hope so; but I am not sure that a man can be laughed out of a thing he wasn't laughed into. Now, Monroe, I am going to surprise you. I am going to bore you, annoy you; for I am to see you every day for the next week. Can you bear it? I shall be worse than the balm of 'I-told-you-so.'”

Monroe pressed his friend's hand.

“Come, by all means. And now we are near my house; go in and take tea with us.”

“No, not to-day. It is *dies nefastus*. Good-bye!”

Twirling his grizzly moustaches and humming to himself, Easemann turned back. He did not go to his room, however, but went down a quiet street, apparently guided by instinct, and rang the bell at a well-known door.

“Is Mr. Holworthy at home?”

The servant-girl nodded and smiled, and Easemann entered. Mr. Holworthy was emphatically at home, for he was on all-fours, his three children riding cock-horse, with merry shouts, varied by harmless tumbles and laborious clamberings up. Mr. Holworthy rose with a flushed and happy face, and the children rushed at once to clasp the knees of their familiar old friend.

“We all have to come down at times, I believe,” said Mr. Holworthy, smoothing the few thin hairs on his handsomely arched crown.

“Certainly; a man that can't be a boy with his children deserves to have none. Now the reason I am a bachelor is that I feared I could never unbend, being somewhat remarkable for my perpendic”—

The word was cut off by a sudden movement; the children in their playful struggles had, in fact, thrown him down. In a moment more they were on his back and he trotting round the room with the grace of an elephant.

“Come, children,” said the father, “that was a rough joke. Get off, now, and go for your bread and milk.”

Rather reluctantly they obeyed, casting wishful glances backward to the grown-up boy with whom they had hoped to have a frolic.

“Glad to see you,” said Mr. Holworthy. “You have been unsocial, lately.”



“Yes; all the effect of the panic. I am such a butterfly that I seem out of place in a work-a-day community. I am constantly advised, like the volatile person in the fable, to learn wisdom from my aunt; but I can’t, for the soul of me.”

“You ought to visit the more, to cheer the wretched and downcast.”

“Oh, but it’s a fearful waste of magnetism. Five minutes’ talk with a man who has notes to pay draws all the virtue out of me. It lowers my vital tone like standing in an ice-house. You feel such a man from afar like a coming iceberg. *You* don’t have notes to pay? I thought not. I should go at once.”

“No, my little shop pays its way. I buy for cash. I pay my hands when they bring in their work, and I have customers enough who ask me for no credit.”

“Happy man! most fortunate of tailors!—I have been thinking, Holworthy, among your many benevolent projects, why you never devised some means of relieving people who are supposed to be in good circumstances,—a society for ameliorating the condition of the rich.”



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“Bless me! the poor are quite numerous enough, and are in unusual straits just now.”

“I know, and for that reason they are better off than usual. People say, ‘How the poor must suffer in these pinching times!’ So they double their charities.”

“Poverty is an ocean without bottom, my friend. All that is given is like emptying stones into the sea; the waves swallow them and sweep over as before.”

“True, you can’t satisfy the beggars till you drown ’em. Wouldn’t a gentle asphyxia by water, now, be the best thing for some of the Broad-Street cellarers?”

“Very likely; but they would probably object to the remedy.”

“But to return to my project. I see some forms of distress that seem to me far more painful than utter poverty. I won’t expatiate, but state a case. I know a man of good sense and culture, able and willing to do his part in the world. His employer has failed, so that his salary will stop. He is unmarried, but has a mother, an invalid, who never stirs out of doors; and besides has some poor relation or other to support. He has a house, it is true; so they needn’t sleep in the street; but how are the mouths to be fed, the backs to be clothed?”

“Let him sell his house and wait till better times for employment.”

“It is easy to say *sell*; but who will buy? A house won’t fetch half its value, and there isn’t any money to be had. Besides,—and this is the hardship,—the pride and the feelings of association cling round a house that has been consecrated by years of affection and by the memory of the dead.—I believe I am making an oration; but I despair of expressing myself.”

“I understand you perfectly; it is sad, indeed.”

“Excuse me, you don’t understand me. Some men put off old houses and put on new ones, like their clothes, without a thought. Others grow into their habitations and become a part of them. You might as well say to a lobster, ‘Get out of your shell,’ when you know that the poor wretch will die when his naked, quivering members are exposed to the sharp-edged stones. A delicate nature, proud, but gentle, too sensitive to accept charity, and doubtful of a friendly service even, suffers more anguish in one hour, under such circumstances, than your brazen beggar feels from his dirty cradle to his nameless grave.”

Mr. Holworthy mused.

“He has nothing to do, then?”

“Nothing, but to suck his thumbs.”



“Is he willing to work, even if the task should appear irksome?”

“I haven’t a doubt. He has no *false* pride. Anything honorable would be welcome.”

“Perhaps I can find something for him to do; it will be temporary, but its continuance will depend upon himself.”

“And what is it?”

“In visiting the district which has been allotted to me, I have found an unusual number of ignorant, vicious boys, cared for by no one, growing up for the prison or the gallows. I have thought of making some effort to gather them together and start a ragged school. Some friends have agreed to provide the means. But the pay would necessarily be small, and the labor and difficulty great.”



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“A teacher of tatterdemalions! It *isn't* an inviting field of labor.”

“No, to a refined man it must be repulsive. Nothing but the idea of doing good would make it a pleasure or even endurable.”

“I confess myself utterly without any such motive. I hate poor people, and ragged children, and sick women, the forlorn wives of drunken brutes. I shut my eyes to all such odious sights. They say, in a hotel you must never go into the kitchen, if you would keep your appetite; and I am sure one must avoid these wretches in the cellar, if he would have a cheerful view of life in his attic.”

“You are not so hard-hearted as you would have me believe. Somebody must relieve their distresses.”

“Somebody, too, must cut off legs, and sew up spouting arteries, and extirpate cancers. Ugh! but I shan't. I leave such jobs to the doctors, whose ears are familiar with shrieks, and whose appetites are not disturbed by the sight of blood.”

“So the Levite left the wounded man by the wayside, in disgust at his bruises: but still the good Samaritan who helped him hadn't a doctor's degree.”

“Oh, I know. You have me, I acknowledge. But I can't change my temper, and I shrink from suffering as from death. I would rather bear it than see it. Society always provides its good Samaritans; and you are one of them. Don't look modest. I went once through some of those damnable alleys near Half-Moon Court, the agreeable place where you spend so much of your leisure. I was looking for a subject to paint. For curiosity, I asked an urchin if he knew you. He flung his ragged cap twenty feet into the air, turned a somerset, and came up smiling as well as he could through the dirt,—‘Don't I, though? He brung us meal an' 'taters when dad broke his leg, and he fetched oranges in his pocket when marm had the fevers. He's one of 'em, he is.’—Don't interrupt me. —An old woman, whom I asked, said, ‘Do I know Mister 'Olworthy? A blished saint in the flesh; my poor ol' bones would 'ave hached many a cold night but for the blankets he brought me. God in 'eaven reward 'im for that same!’ I spare you the rest of the answers. Oh, you are a saint, without robe or wings.”

“Hadn't we better come back to the subject,” said Mr. Holworthy, in a mild voice. “We shan't aid your friend in this way.”

“Right, my considerate Mentor. But talk is tempting. I believe I should forget my errand and let a friend hang, if I got into an argument with the Governor while he was filling out the pardon.”

“I hope the gentleman you speak of is not so much afraid of contact with what is disagreeable as you are?”



“Perhaps not; he has an artistic temperament, and therefore loves what is comely; but he would go through fire to what he thought his duty.”

“And wouldn’t you?”

“What a question! Go through fire? No, I should bawl for the engine.”

“It’s plain, then, that he will answer better than you for the place.”



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“No doubt. I shouldn’t answer at all. I tell you I never talk with these creatures. I can’t. If an old woman stops me, with her dried-apple face and whining voice, I give her a sixpence and tell her to hush up and go about her business. I fling coppers to the boys with slit breeches before they ask me, for I know they will tell me of mothers sick with consumption. Their devilish tears are contagious; and I can’t cry; it chokes me. So I buy apples and oranges from the imploring-looking girls; it’s the easiest way of getting rid of them. The little change don’t amount to much in a day, and I save my nerves and my digestion at a cheap rate.”

Mr. Holworthy smiled at Easelmann’s notion of his own hard-heartedness, and said, hesitatingly,—

“I am afraid that some professedly charitable persons don’t do so much.”

“Of course they don’t. I don’t mean that I do anything. It’s pure selfishness on my part, as I told you. But you may feel pretty sure, that, if a man’s name is always in the papers, as ‘our estimable fellow-citizen, President This, Director That, and Treasurer T’other,’ he ‘does not give indiscriminate alms’:—I believe that is the phrase. Perhaps he won’t rob, like my friend Sandford; but his ‘disinterested labors’ are an economical substitute for substantial charity, and his desire for a place in the public eye is the mainspring of all his actions.”

“Most of the distress in the community is relieved by organized effort; individual charities, however well meant, would be entirely inadequate. Besides, you should not be severe upon all because one prominent person has proved unworthy.”

“Sandford is a type of the class. If there is anybody I hate worse than a sick beggar, it is a man who makes a trade of philanthropy.”

“And yet you are consenting to your friend’s earning a living by teaching a ragged school.”

“True, one may stop at any place in a storm, just for shelter.”

“And you can console yourself further with the assurance that your friend won’t make enough in this place to induce him to take up the ‘trade,’ as you call it.”

“I hope not. Starve him judiciously. If he should come out, after a year or so, with a white neckcloth, spectacles, and a sanctified face, soliciting aid for his school, in Pecksniffian tones, I should regret that I hadn’t furnished him with a cord and a bag of stones to drop himself into the dock with.”

“I don’t know why a teacher or a street-missionary may not be a gentleman.”

“Sure enough, why not? Whatever Walter Monroe is, he will always be a gentleman.”



“Suppose you bring him to see me to-morrow or next day; we will talk about this.”

“I will. Now, good-bye! My regrets to the children that we couldn’t finish our romp.”

“Good-bye,” said Holworthy. “Come again; the children will be glad to see you.”

CHAPTER XVII.

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As Mr. Sandford walked homeward, the streets seemed to close up behind him; he was shut out from the scenes of his activity, no more to return; State Street was henceforth for him a thing of memory. He had played his game there, while admirers and friends watched his far-seeing moves. He had lost; and now, after checkmate, he must resign his place. How he struggled against the idea! He could not bring himself to acknowledge that the past was irretrievable. His spirit seemed in prison, shut in as by the bars of a dungeon, against which he might tug and rage in vain.

At home, dinner was on the table, waiting for him. As he entered the hall, he met his sister-in-law. She saw the fatal news in his face, and with a sinking heart gave him her usual greeting. Marcia took her place at the table, but with less animation than usual. Charles sat down with his studied indifference. Each one seemed to be absorbed in separate spheres of thought, and the courses came on and were removed in painful silence. At last Mr. Sandford spoke.

"I suppose I need not tell you that it is all over."

"All over!" exclaimed Marcia.

"Yes,—I have failed; so has Fayerweather; so has Stearine."

"Failed?" said Marcia, in an incredulous tone. "I thought it was the great people,—I mean people in business, or with estates, that failed."

"Well, have I not been in business?"

"Yes,—as secretary, and you have a salary. How can a man with a salary fail?"

"Quite easily. Suppose the Vortex fails? My salary would stop."

"That isn't failing, is it? Then Pompey might fail, if he didn't get his pay for brushing your boots."

Mr. Sandford gave a contemptuous look.

"That shows how much you know about business."

"I never did know about your business; nor does anybody, I believe. I never could understand how, with your little property, you had these 'transactions,' as you call them, where you owed people and people owed you so many thousands."

"It is not necessary for you to know. Women can't understand these things."

"But women feel their effects, and it's a pity they could not learn about what concerns them."



“Will it change your situation at once?” asked Mrs. Sandford of her brother.

“I can’t say; probably not at once; but without some aid, all I have must go.”

“What! the house?” exclaimed Marcia.

“Yes,—the house, Marcia, and the furniture. We shall be stripped.”

“The deuse!” said Charles.

“Heaven help us! what shall we do?”

“I haven’t had time to form any plan. I trust, indeed, that Heaven will help us, as you rather lightly wished.”

His face wore a touching look of faith and resignation, while at the same time his hand rested with secret satisfaction upon his pocket-book.

The conversation was disagreeable to Charles, and he sauntered off to the drawing-room.



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Mrs. Sandford inwardly determined to return to her home, or at least to go elsewhere in the city, so as not to be a burden to her brother-in-law; but she remained silent. Mr. Sandford balanced his knife, sliced his bread into figures, then hummed and beat a tattoo upon the table,—sure indications of forgetfulness in one so scrupulous as he. At length, with a bland voice, but a sharp, inquiring eye, he said,—

“How is it about this painter, Marcia? Are you going to marry him?”

She looked fixedly, as she replied,—

“Why do you ask? You know I am going to marry him.”

“Oh, it’s settled, is it? You know, sister, you have had similar intentions before,—several times, in fact,—intentions that haven’t come to much.”

She did not answer further; a flush of anger came, then went, leaving her pale face with a rather sterner expression.

“While I was prosperous, I was not disposed to be mercenary; though I did think you were not worldly-wise. Now that I am destitute, you can see that to marry a man not worth a dollar, and with a precarious profession, is not what it would have been.”

“Mr. Greenleaf earns a good income, doesn’t he?”

“He hasn’t sold a picture, except to friends whom I persuaded to buy.”

“You have friends and influence still?”

“I don’t know; a man’s friends don’t last long after his money is gone. Besides, nobody wants to buy now. Raphael himself couldn’t sell a picture here till times improve. A painter is a pretty butterfly for fine weather; what is he to do with his flimsy wings in such a hurricane as this?”

“I think I understand you, Brother Henry. You begin afar off; but I know what you are coming to. You want to bring up that odious Denims again,—a man whom I hate, and whom you yourself would show out of doors, like a vagrant, if it were not for his money!”

The effort exhausted her, and she breathed painfully.

“You think yourself quick. I haven’t mentioned Denims. In fact, you have treated him in such a way that I am quite sure he would never trouble himself to be even civil to you again.”

“I am glad of it,—the fool!”



“Sister Marcia, I have borne much from your turbulent temper. You are a spoiled child. Fortune has let you have your own way hitherto; so much the worse for you. But circumstances have changed. I can no longer supply you as though you were a duchess. In fact, I don’t know what may be before us. I hope no actual want. [*Another grip of the pocket-book.*] But I advise you to consider whether it is for the interest of a dependent woman to go out of her way to thwart and insult me.”

“You would compel me, then, and threaten starvation as the alternative?”

“What odiously blunt language you use!”

“I only translated your roundabout phrases as I understood them.”

“You need not be violent.”



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“You cannot cajole me by soft words, when your purposes are so obvious. You think Denims may save the wreck of your fortune; and you are willing to sacrifice me, if he were ten times the brute he is, to further your ends. But I shall marry Greenleaf.”

“Greenleaf will be a powerful protector! I doubt if he can raise money enough to pay the clergyman for marrying you! He will be without a shilling in a month, if he is not now. Go to him, Sister Marcia. I would, now. You can live in his attic studio, you know. In such a romantic place you would never be hungry, of course.”

Mrs. Sandford interposed,—

“Don’t, Henry! This is not the way.”

Marcia’s eyes flashed through her tears, as she answered,—

“You say *you* are ruined,—that the house and furniture must go. How much better off shall I be here?”

“Well, you have your choice.”

“And when the time comes, I shall take it.”

Sobs and tears followed, but her lips were firm and her hands clenched.

“As you please, sister.”

“You come home ill-tempered, and the rage which you could not or dared not give vent to in the street you pour out here.”

“Perhaps you would have been pleased, if I had not come home at all?”

“I’m sure we should have been quite as happy without you.”

“Very well. I may leave you, yet.”

“I don’t care how soon.”

New sobs and a firmer pressure of the lips.

Oddly enough, at that moment, Mr. Sandford was summoned to the drawing-room, where a man was waiting for him. Fearful of the result, he went to his own room, first, and left the precious pocketbook, and then descended to the hall.

Notwithstanding the words she had spoken, Marcia waited with breathless anxiety her brother’s return; for the sound of voices, in earnest, if not angry, conversation, rose



through the house. Presently he came back with a look his face seldom wore,—a fierce look that transformed his handsome features to a fiend's.

“You have your wish, Sister Marcia,”—and the words were shot out like fiery arrows,—“I am to leave you, and go to jail.”

“To jail?” exclaimed both at once, in terror.

“Yes,—to jail. Gratifying to you, I suppose. 'Tis to me,—very.”

“What is the meaning of this?” asked Mrs. Sandford.

“It means, that one of my creditors pretends to believe that I am about to abscond, and has had me arrested, that I may give bail not to run away with an empty pocket.”

“Can't you get out?”

“Some time, undoubtedly; but not till I give bail.”

“For how much?”—

“Twenty thousand dollars.”

“Can't you get some one to become security?”

“I don't know. Perhaps I might get Greenleaf!”

Marcia winced, but did not answer the taunt.

“Good-bye, my dear and independent sister!”



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Marcia turned her back upon him, confounded between sorrow and resentment.

Crowding his hat over his eyes, Mr. Sandford left his house and walked with the officer towards Cambridge Street.

“Gone to jail!” exclaimed Charles, returning, “How doosid awkward! What a jolly wow it will make when it gets about town! By gwacious, if you aren’t cwying! Go to bed, both of you; I’ll go to the club.”

He went accordingly; and the women, who could ill console each other, were about to go to their own rooms when the door-bell rang again.

“What next, I wonder?” asked Marcia, in despair.

“Please, Ma’am,” said the servant, “there’s a man at the door, who looks quare, and says, if he can’t see Mr. Sandford, he must see you.”

“Tell him I am ill,—and besides, I don’t transact my brother’s business.”

“Yes’m.”

But she soon returned with a new message. The man would not go. Mrs. Sandford at once went to the hall to learn what was the matter, leaving Marcia trembling in every limb. The conversation was not carried on in whispers; in fact, Marcia heard every word.

“Sorry to disturb you, Ma’am, especially as Mr. Sandford isn’t at home; but duty is duty, and must be ’tended to. My orders is, to ’tach the furnitur’, and stay till I git a receipter.”

Mrs. Sandford’s reply was inaudible. The voice proceeded:—

“Can’t help it, Ma’am. Won’t be back to-night, won’t he? Bad, cert’in. But duty is duty, as I said afore. I’ll bunk here on the sofy, an’ to-morrow we’ll see what’s to be done.”

Another pause.

“Oh, you won’t run off ‘ith anythin’? I s’pose not. But duty is duty, as I said afore, and I must mind orders. ‘Stick by till you git a receipter,’ sez he. ‘I will,’ sez I,—an’ I must.—Never mind about bedclose. I c’n sleep jest ez I be. You jest go up-stairs. I’ll make myself ’t home.”

Glad to be out of the society of the officer, Mrs. Sandford started to go upstairs, but was recalled by the voice.

“I say, Ma’am! A long night afore a chap, all by himself.”



Mrs. Sandford trembled with mingled terror and rage.

“No 'bjection to light the gaas, I 'spose, so's't a feller can read a paper? Thought o' that, and brought the 'York Herald' and 'Clipper.' If you don't like tobarker, you c'n shet your doors and the smell won't git in.”

“Do what you like. I can't prevent you.”

“Oh, well, no 'fence, I hope? Good-night, Ma'am.”

Mrs. Sandford found Marcia walking about the room in great excitement.

“The odious wretch!” exclaimed Marcia. “If Henry were only here, or even Charles, he should be horsewhipped, pitched out of the house. To sleep with his dirty clothes on my sofa! I'm glad it's to be sold. I never could touch the filthy thing again. Then his pipe! Good heavens, what is to be done? The abominable wretch! I smell the tobacco now, worse than an Irishman's. The smoke will be all through the house. Faugh! it suffocates, nauseates me!”



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“Be calm, Marcia. We will go to the upper chambers, shut the doors, and open the windows for fresh air. It’s only for one night. We can’t go away, you know; and we can’t get the fellow away, of course.”

“I wish I had died when I was sick. This disgrace, this infamy, this shocking barbarity, is worse than death. What are we to do? and where are we to go? Ruin is a light thing to talk about, I have read of ruin in the papers, until it has become a matter of course;—I begin to know what it means.”

It was a changeful, terrible beauty that beamed on her face. She looked like an inspired priestess before the altar,—then like Norma in her despair,—then like the maddened Medea in Rachel’s thrilling impersonation. Then disgust and fright overcame her, and her sensitive womanly nature bore sway. It was more than she could bear, this accumulation of misfortune, disgrace, and insult. Her soul rebelled, contended desperately with fate, till, overcome, she sank into her chair, and suffered herself to be led to her room.

Shut up in their retreat, the women waited for the morning with sleepless eyes, or with only transient lapses of consciousness. Sometime after midnight, they were startled by the sound of a body falling heavily in the hall, and, an instant after, by the shout of “Burglars! thieves!” They rushed to the staircase in extreme fright, and soon learned the cause. The wary officer evidently did not believe the tale that had been told him respecting the absence of Mr. Sandford; and, that nobody should go out or in without his knowledge, he had drawn the sofa across the hall, completely cutting off all passage. A small jet of gas was left burning. Charles, returning late from the club in a mild stage of inebriation, entered the house by means of his latch-key, not without difficulty, and at once fell headlong over the sofa, and the worthy official sleeping thereon. When he heard the cry of “Burglars!” it occurred to him that he must have been knocked down by one of the gang; and he joined his own voice to the uproar,—

“BuggLARS! buggLARS!”

An instant after, there was a grip on his collar.

“Now I got ye, ye vill’in! What ye doin’ on here?”

“What *you* doin’ on, you rasc’l, inagen’l’m’n’shouse thistim’o’night?”

“Arnsver me, you scoundrel, breakin’ into a peaceful dwellin’!”

“Tha’swhat_I_wan’to know.—How’d *you* com’ere? What’syerbusiness? Le’gomycollar. I’l sen’forp’lice. Le’go!”

Tipsy as he was, he managed to give his assailant a pretty substantial token of regard under the ear, with his knuckles.



“Now young’un, you’re drunk! I won’t hit you back, ’cause a case for manslaughter might be expensive. How’d you break in here, when you are so drunk you can’t stand? I don’t see how you could get in with the door open.”

“Noneo’yerimp’r’ence! Cl’out! Adecen’bugglar’sbad’nough; yousmokerot’nt’baccah. G’off! youdirtybugg_lar!_”



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“Young chap, it’s time to stop this nonsense, or I’ll have you in the watch-house in no time. Who are you? and how came you here?”

“Tha’sit; who *are* you? tha’swhat_I_wan’know.”

“Charles!” (*from above.*)

“WhocallsCh’rl’s? Herelam. Igott’afellah, the bugg_lar_. Callp’lice! P’LICE!”

“Charles!” (*once more.*)

“Do you belong here, young chap?”

“B’long’ere? ’vcourseI do; wherethe devilsh’dlb’long?”

“You are not Mr. Sandford?”

“Howd’yeknowla’n’t? I *am* Mis’rr-Sanf’d.”

“You are Mr. Sandford’s brother, are you?”

“No, Mis’rr Sanf’d’s *my* bro’rr.”

“Well, if you’ve got brains enough to understand, listen to me.”

“I’m all ’tensh’n, ‘s Balaam said to th’ass. G’on, ol’ fellah!—an’ then g’off!”

“I am an officer, sent to ‘tach your brother’s furnitur’ and stuff; and as there’s nobody here to go bail, I hed to stay and look arter things.”

“H’mushbailyawant? I’llgi’bail. An’ I’ll plankzemoney. I’vegotsev’ndollars’n’alf.”

“Charles!” (*the third time.*)

“Wha’nyewant?”

“They want you to go to bed, where you b’long.”

“Gotobed? ’llseeyoudam’f’st! Leave’nofficer’nth’ouse? Guessnot!”

“Young’un, I say, take your hand out of my neckhan’kercher! Hold up! None o’ yer chokin’ games! Quit, I say! or, by hokey, I’ll settle ye!”

“*Thoughtsh’dmakeyesquawk, ol’t’bacc’worm! Go’n’tocl’out? Go’n’tovacatepremscs?*”



“Ooo-arr-awkk!” said the man, under the pressure of a tightening cravat, at the same time giving the assailant “a settler,” as he had threatened. The two unfortunate women had hitherto looked down upon the conflict, as celestial beings might upon the affairs of men, with no small degree of interest, but clad in robes too ethereal to descend. But when they saw Charles felled to the floor, and a deathlike silence ensued, they forgot their fears, and rushed down the stairs. The officer had already raised Charles up. He was stunned, senseless, and his face was covered with blood.

“You brute! you have murdered him!” exclaimed Marcia.

“Guess not, Ma’am. Wet his head in col’ water, put him to bed, an’ he’ll sleep it off.”

“It’s useless to talk to such a fellow,” whispered Mrs. Sandford; “besides, we want his aid to carry Charles upstairs.”

“Ye see, I couldn’t help it, Ma’am. He nigh about choked me to death, and I give him fair warnin’.”

“Never mind now about the quarrel,” said Mrs. Sandford; “you help him upstairs to his room, and we’ll bathe his head.”

While the officer was carrying the young man up-stairs, Mrs. Sandford put on a shawl, and, by the time he had reached the second flight, she opened a door, and lighted the gas with a taper, saying,—

“In here, if you please. My brother Henry’s room is the most convenient.”



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The officer's eyes twinkled.

"So this is Mr. Sandford's room?"

"Yes, but he is absent, as you were told before. Lay Charles on the bed, if you please. There, that will do. I will attend to him now. You can return to the lower story."

"In a minit, Ma'am. Duty is duty, and this 'ere accident saves some trouble," casting sharp glances around the room.

The facts, that Sandford had drawn from the bank, and that he had borrowed from Tonsor, were known to the creditors. The officer had determined, therefore, to make what search he could for the money. The unlooked-for accident had given him the opportunity he wanted.

"What do you mean, Sir? Go back to your place."

"Softly, Ma'am, softly! Duty is duty; an' 'f any damage is done, I'm responsible."

His eyes fastened upon a dressing-case that lay on a table near the mirror,—apparently the last article handled by the occupant of the room.

"No robbery, Ma'am," said he, opening the case, and taking out its contents. "Razors and brushes, and such like, is personal, and not subject to levy; but these, Ma'am, you see, air."

He held up a pocket-book full of bank-notes.

"I'll count 'em before you, Ma'am, if you please, so's there'll be no mistake. Thirteen thousand! A pretty good haul! I'll go down, now. If anythin's wantin' for the chap when he comes to, jest le'me know."

With a gleam of intense satisfaction on his sharp and vulgar features, the officer descended the stairs.

CHAPTER XVIII.

John Fletcher sat by his fireside, reading the evening papers. The failures of the day, of course, engaged his attention; among them, those of Sandford and his associates were not unexpected. His little wife sat by him, fondling the weakly baby.

"Old Sandford has gone by the board, ducky. Good enough for him! He's come to grief, as he deserved. He'll never trouble me any more."



“I’m afraid a good many more’ll come to grief, as you say, before this panic is over.”

“Some, of course; the dead trees, and the worm-eaten, powder-posted ones, will fall in the high winds, naturally. But old Bullion is safe. No rotten hollow in his old white-oak trunk;—sound as a ship’s mainmast.”

“Is it Bullion who owes you?”

“Yes. I have his notes for ten thousand dollars; and our next settlement, I calculate, will give me as much more.”

“Why don’t you get your pay?”

“What should I do with it, my duck? I couldn’t lend it to anybody safer. If I deposit, the bank is as likely to fail as he. As long as he has the whole capital to swing, he will make the more for us both.”

“I would rather have the money.”

“That shows how little you know about it.”

“I know, if you had it, and didn’t lend it nor speculate with it, you couldn’t lose it.”



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“Now, ducky, don’t interfere. You take care of babies nicely. Let me manage my own affairs.”

“You always treat me like a child that has to be petted with sugar-plums.”

“That’s because you are a child. What the devil does a woman know about business?”

The “ducky” cried a little, and was quite sure that John would go on and risk what he had, till he lost all.

“Little woman, none of your blubbering! It annoys me. Am I to be harassed by business all day, and have no peace when I come home?”

He settled himself to read the papers, once more, and the wife picked up the fretful, puny infant, and retreated to the kitchen, where she could indulge her sorrow without rebuke or interruption.

Presently, Bullion entered, though not unexpected; for he had given Fletcher an intimation, that, in order to have a private interview, he would endeavor to see him at home.

“Nice little box,” said the capitalist, looking around. “Any babies?”

“One,” said Fletcher.

“Boy or girl?”

“A girl.”

“Bad. Girls always an expense. Dress, piano, parties, and d—d nonsense. Boys, you put ’em into harness and work ’em till they’re willing to *eat* their wild oats; he! he!”

The eyebrow flourished over the jocose idea; the stony eye glittered a moment like a revolving light, and then relapsed into darkness.

“However, I have but one, and I think I can make her comfortable.”

“Yes, my boy, quite comfortable. Let me see, I owe you ten thousand. How does the new account stand?”

“Here are the figures, taken from Tonsor’s book,” said Fletcher. “Seventy-nine thousand eight hundred and forty-three. Ten per cent. to me is seven thousand nine hundred and eighty-four.”

“A big pile of money, Fletcher.”



“Yours, you mean? Yes, seventy thousand and odd is a big pile.”

“Yours,—I meant yours.”

“Why, yes,” replied Fletcher, indifferently, “a good fair sum, for a man that hadn’t any before.”

“Don’t you think, now, Fletcher, that the ten thousand pays you for all you’ve done? Isn’t it enough for a month or two’s work?”

“I think I am paid when I get what was agreed on,” replied Fletcher, stoutly.

The eyebrow was raised with a deprecatory, inquiring look.

“Why, Fletcher, sharp’s the word, is it?”

“That’s what you said, when we started.”

“Suppose I pay you the notes and a thousand or two more, and we call it square? Then you salt down what you got.”

“And you propose to haul off from operating?”

“Well, no, I can’t say I do. I may try the bulls another fall or two. But you haven’t anything else. If we lose, you are smashed. I have other property to fall back on.”

“So it’s merely to do me a kindness and make me safe and snug that you propose to keep back the six thousand that belong to me?”



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"You put it rather strong, youngster. I didn't agree to pay till the scheme was carried out. But we've done better than we 'xpected, and, to take you out of danger, I offered to pay part down. In a business as ticklish as stocks, you don't expect a man to come down with the ready without a consideration?"

"You know you could never have kept the run of the market, if it hadn't been for me; and the ten per cent. is no more than a fair share. This isn't a matter of dollars altogether, though dollars are useful, but of information, activity, brains."

"Well, remember, young man, I offer you now twelve thousand. If anything happens, don't squawk nor play baby."

"Why, you're not going to fail?"

"No,—not if the world don't tip over."

"And you're going on with your operations?"

"Yes,—till the wind shifts. It's due east yet."

"Well, I think the ship that carries you is safe enough for me. Make me the notes, and let the operations go on another week."

With an increased respect for his agent, when he found that he could neither humbug nor frighten him, Bullion filled out and signed the notes. Next they reviewed the stock-market, and decided upon the course to be pursued. Bullion then fell into a profound meditation, and did not speak for five minutes, though the busy eyebrow showed that his mind was not lost in vacancy. At last he started up, saying,—

"I must go. But, Fletcher, any *reason* why you particularly wanted to pay Sandford that thousand, to-day?"

Fletcher turned pale, and his heart rose in his mouth.

"No,—no reason,—that is—he wanted it—I—I was willing to oblige"—

"No matter about reasons," said Bullion, with a quiet air. "I never tread on people's corns. Only when it's wanted let me know. You see he went by the board. He begged me to save him. How could I? I've done enough for other people. Must take care of number one, now. Kerbstone, he begs, too. I shan't help him."

Fletcher felt relieved; at the same time he determined without delay to make a new effort to get the fatal evidence of his former crime into his own possession.

"Oh," said Bullion, as if he had forgotten something, "the wife and baby, let's see 'em."



Fletcher called his wife, who came in timidly, and shrank from the fierce look of the man of money.

“How d’e do, Ma’am? Your servant, Ma’am. Glad to see you. But the baby?”

“Fetch the baby, lovey,” said Fletcher.

Baby was brought, smiling with as little reason as possible, and winking very hard in the light.

“Pretty dear!” said Bullion, chucking her under the chin.

“I wonder what the devil this means,” thought Fletcher.

How was his surprise increased when, after a moment, Bullion inquired,—

“Teeth cut yet? Some of ’em, I see. More to come. Want something to bite, little one?”



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He pulled out his purse and gave the child three or four large gold pieces. The little hands could not hold them, and they fell on the carpet, rolling in different directions. Bullion left hastily, with a quick nod and a clipped "Good-bye."

"Well, I vow!" said Fletcher, with a long breath. "It's well he didn't stay to pick 'em up; they'd 'ave stuck to his fingers like wax. He couldn't have let 'em alone."

"What a good man he is!" said the overjoyed little woman.

"*Good* man! He's crazy. Old Bullion giving away gold pieces to a baby! He's lost his wits, sure. He never gave away a sixpence before in his life. Oh, he's cracked, without a doubt. I must keep watch of him. When *he* grows generous, there's something wrong."

[To be continued.]

THE WATERFALL.

Down across the green and sunny meadow,
Where the grass hangs thick with glistening dew,—
In the birch-wood's flickering light and shadow,
Where, between green leaves, the sun shines through,—

Plunging deeper in the wood's dark coolness,
Where the path grows rougher and more steep,
Where the trees stand thick in leafy fulness,
And the moss lies green in shadows deep:—

Hark! the wind amid the tree-tops rushing
In a sudden gust along the hills!—
No,—the leaves are still,—'tis water gushing
From some hidden haunt of mountain-rills.

Upward through the rugged pathway struggling,
Loud and louder yet the music grows;
Near and nearer still, the water's gurgling
Guides me where o'er moss-grown rocks it flows.

Breathless, for its welcome coolness thirsting,
On I haste, led by the rushing sound,
Till upon my full sight sudden bursting,
Lo, the forest's hidden treasure found!



See the gathered waters madly leaping,
Plunging from the rocks in headlong chase,
Boiling, eddying, whirling, downward sweeping
All that meets them in their foaming race!

From the broken waters riseth ever,
Fresh and cool, a soft and cloud-like spray;
And where through the boughs slant sunbeams quiver,
On the mist the sudden rainbows play.

On a branch high o'er the torrent swinging
Sits a bird, with joyful-swelling throat;—
Only to the eye and heart he's singing;
Through the roar below I hear no note.

All the forest seems as if enchanted,
Seems to lie in wondrous stillness bound;
Hushed its voices, silenced and supplanted,
Interwoven with this ceaseless sound.

Gazing on the whirl of waters meeting,
Dizzy with its rush, I stand and dream,
Till it almost seems my own heart's beating,
And no more the voice of mountain-stream.

THE WINTER-BIRDS.

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We are prone to set an extraordinary value upon all sources of pleasure that arrive in a season when they are few and unexpected. Hence the peculiar charm of the early flowers of spring, and of those equally delightful flowers that come up to cheer the short and melancholy days of November. The winter-birds, though they do not sing, are, on the same account, particularly interesting. The Chickadees and the little speckled Woodpeckers, that tarry with us in midwinter, and make the still cold days lively and cheerful by their merry voices, are, in animated nature, what flowers would be in inanimate nature, if they were found blooming under the snow. Nature does not permit, at any season, an entire dearth of those sources of enjoyment that spring from observation of the external world; and as there are evergreen mosses and ferns that supply in winter the places of the absent flowers, in like manner there are chattering birds that linger in the wintry woods; and Nature has multiplied the echoes at this season, that their few and feeble voices may be repeated by their lively responses among the hills.

To those who look upon Nature with the feelings of a poet or a painter, we need not speak of the value of the winter-birds as enliveners of the landscape. Any circumstance connected with scenery, that exercises our feelings of benevolence, adds to the picturesque charms of a prospect; and no man can see a little bird, or any other animal, at this time, without feeling a lively interest in its welfare. The sight of a flock of Snow-Buntings descending, like a shower of meteors, upon a field of grass, and eagerly devouring the seeds contained in its drooping pannicles that extend above the snow-drifts,—of a company of Crows rejoicing with noisy sociability over some newly-discovered feast in the pine-wood,—of the party-colored Woodpeckers winding round the trees and hammering upon their trunks,—all these, and many other sights and sounds, are associated with our ideas of the happiness of these creatures; and while our benevolent feelings are thus agreeably exercised, the objects that cause our emotions add a positive charm to the dreary aspects of winter. These reflections have always led me to regard the birds and other interesting animals as having a value to mankind not to be estimated in dollars and cents, and which is entirely independent of any services they may render to the farmer or the orchardist by preventing the over-multiplication of noxious insects.

The greater number of small birds that remain in northern latitudes during winter, except the Woodpeckers and their congeners, are such as subsist chiefly upon seeds. Those insectivorous species that gather their food chiefly from the ground are under a particular necessity of migrating. Hence the common Robin, living entirely on insects and a little fruit, that serves him rather as a dessert than as substantial fare, a bird that never feeds upon grain or seeds of

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any kind, but devours the insects that are found upon the surface of the soil, cannot subsist in our latitude, except in open winters. During such favorable seasons, the Robins are able to collect vast quantities of dormant insects from the open ground. These birds always endeavor to keep on the outside of extensive snows; and if in any year, very early in November, a large quantity of snow should fall in the latitude of New Jersey and Pennsylvania, while north of it the ground remained uncovered, the Robins would be retarded in their journey and tarry with us in unusual numbers. A great many of them must perish of hunger, or be reduced to the necessity of feeding on the berries of the Viburnum and Juniper, should they be overtaken by an extensive and enduring snow that cuts off their journey of emigration.

The Woodpeckers and their allied species, though insectivorous, are not thus affected by the winter. Gathering all their food, consisting of larvae and insects, from the bark and wood of trees, the snow cannot conceal it or place it beyond their reach. The quantity of this kind of food is less than in summer, but the birds can obtain it with about the same facility at all times, because other species of birds are diminished, which in summer divide with them this spoil. Hence, Woodpeckers, Creepers, and Tomtits do not migrate. They simply scatter more widely over the country, instead of keeping in the woods, and thus accommodate themselves to their more limited supplies of food. The Swallow tribes, that catch their food in the air, are the first to migrate, because the swarms of insects are vastly diminished by the early frosts of autumn.

It is not often that we are led to reflect upon the extreme loneliness that would prevail in all solitary places in winter, were all the birds to migrate at this season to a warmer climate, or to sink into a state of torpidity, like frogs, dormice, and other small animals. But Nature, to preserve the pleasantness of this season, has endowed certain birds with power to endure the severest cold, and with the faculty of providing for their wants at a time when it would seem that there was not sustenance enough among the hidden stores of the season to keep them from starvation. The woodman, however insensible he may be to the charms of all such objects, is gladdened and encouraged in his toils by the sight of these sprightly creatures, some of which, like the Jay and the Woodpecker, are adorned with the most beautiful plumage, and are all pleasantly garrulous, filling the otherwise silent woods with constant and vociferous merriment.



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In my early days, for the supposed benefit of my health, I passed a winter in Tennessee, and, being unoccupied, except with my studies, I spent a great portion of my time in botanical and zoological excursions in the woods adjoining the city of Nashville. It was during that season I experienced the full power of the winter-birds to give life and beauty to the scenes of Nature; for, though not one was heard to sing, they seemed as active and as full of merriment as in the early summer. The birds that most particularly attracted my attention at this time were the Woodpeckers, of which several species were very numerous. Conspicuous among them was the Pileated Woodpecker, (*Picus pilcaius*,) a bird with rusty-black plumage, a red crest and moustaches, and a white stripe on each side of the neck,—one of the largest of the tribe. His loud croaking note was heard at all times in the deep woods, and his great size and his frequent hammering upon the resounding boles of the trees attracted every one's attention.

A more beautiful, but smaller species, was the Redheaded Woodpecker, (*P. erythrocephalus*,) with head, neck, and throat of crimson, and other parts of his plumage variously marked with white and changeable blue. This species, though never seen in Eastern Massachusetts, is a common resident in this latitude, west of the Green-Mountain range. The birds of this species were very numerous, during my excursions, and the woods were constantly flushing with their bright colors as they flitted among the trees. They were sometimes joined by another species, hardly less beautiful, the Redbreasted Woodpecker (*P. Caroliniensis*).

It is impossible to describe the charm which these birds afforded to the otherwise solitary woods. The loud croaking of the Log-cock, the cackling screams of the Redheaded Woodpecker, and the solemn, tolling note of the Redbreast, blended with the occasional cooing of Turtle-doves, formed a sylvan charm, that made my winter-rambles, at this period, as interesting as any I ever pursued in summer or autumn.

In our latitude, after the first flight of snow has covered the ground, the winter-birds, pressed by hunger, are compelled to make extensive forages in quest of food. Hence our attention is more closely attracted to them at this time, as many parties of them will visit our neighborhood in the course of the day, when if no snow had fallen, they would have confined themselves to a more limited range. One of the most attractive sights on such occasions is caused by the flocks of Snow-Buntings, which are particularly gregarious in their habits. In Sweden they are called "Bad-Weather-Birds," because they are mostly seen when the fallen snow has caused them to roam from place to place, in quest of their subsistence. They are far from being birds of ill-omen, however, as we see them commonly when the storm is past. Few sights are more picturesque than these flocks of Snow-Buntings, whirling with the



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subsiding winds, and moving as if they were guided by an eddying breeze, now half-concealed by the direction in which they meet the rays of the sun, then suddenly flashing with a simultaneous turn they present the under white side of their wings to the light of heaven. The power which these diminutive creatures seem to possess, of enduring the cold of winter, and of contending with the storm, attaches to their appearance a quality which is allied to sublimity. I cannot look upon them, therefore, in any other view than as important parts in that ever-changing picture of light, motion, and beauty, with which Nature benevolently consoles for those evils which are assigned by fate to all the inhabitants of the earth.

The common Snow-Birds (*Fringilla nivalis*) are more interesting as individuals, but they are never seen in compact flocks. They go usually in scattered parties, and appear in Massachusetts about the middle of autumn, arriving from Canada and Labrador, where they spend the summer. They have many of the habits of the common Hair-Bird, (*Fringilla socialis*.) assembling around our houses and barns, and picking up crumbs of bread and other fragments of food. They differ entirely from the Buntings in their appearance, the latter being called White Snow-Birds, to distinguish them from the others, which are slate-colored. These birds are quite as remarkable, however, for their power of enduring the cold, and of sustaining the force of the tempest. In the midst of a snow-storm, they may often be seen sporting, as it were, in the very whirlpool of the driving snows, and alighting upon the tall sedges and weeds, and eagerly gathering the produce. The Hemp-Bird often joins their parties, and his cheerful and well-known twitter may be heard, as he hurriedly flits from one bush to another, hunting for the seeds of the golden-rods and asters.

The cause of the migration of these birds from their native northern latitudes is not, probably, the severe cold of those regions, but the deep snows that bury up their cereal stores at a very early period. But even if the grounds in those cold latitudes were only partially covered, these birds must scatter themselves over a wide extent of territory, in proportion as their food becomes less abundant. They live principally upon seeds, and hence their forages are made chiefly in the tilled lands, where the weeds afford them an abundance of food. The negligence of the tiller of the soil is, therefore, a great gain to the small birds, by leaving a supply of seeds in the annual grasses that grow thriftily with his crops.



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Among these flocks of Snow-Birds, a few individuals of the common Hair-Bird (*Fringilla socialis*) may frequently be seen. The majority of this species migrate to a more open clime; but sufficient numbers remain to entitle them to be included with other Snow-Birds of the Finch tribe. He is one of the smallest of the Sparrows, of a brownish ash color above, and grayish white beneath. He wears a little cap or turban of brown velvet on his head, and by this mark he is readily distinguished from his kindred Sparrows. Relying on his diminutive size for his security, he comes quite up to our door-step, mindless of the people who are assembled round it, and, fearless of danger, picks up the crumbs that are scattered there. He may be seen at all seasons of the year, though his voice is not heard in the spring so early as that of the Song-Sparrow or the Blue-Bird. He lives chiefly on seeds, though, like other granivorous birds, he feeds his young with grubs and small insects. This is a general practice with the granivorous tribes, in order to provide their young with soft and digestible food before they are strong enough to digest the hard, coriaceous seed. Nature has formed an exception in the Pigeon tribe; but has compensated them by providing that the parent bird shall soften the food in her own crop before it is given to the tender young. From the peculiar manner in which the young are fed comes the epithet, "sucking doves."

It is common to speak disparagingly of the little Hair-Bird, as if he were good for nothing, without beauty and without song, and, what is of still more consequence in the eyes of the sordid epicure, too small to be eaten, his weight of flesh not being worth a charge of powder and shot. We can never sufficiently rejoice that there are some birds too small to excite the avaricious feelings of these knights of the fowling-piece and the rifle. The Hair-Bird is not to be despised, except by epicures. Though he is contemptuously styled the "Chipping-Sparrow,"—a name which I will never consent to apply to him,—his voice is no mean accompaniment to the general chorus which may be heard every still morning before sunrise, during May and June. His continued trilling note is to this warbling band what the octave flute is to a grand concert of artificial instruments. The voices of numbers of these birds, which are the very first to be heard and the last to become silent in the morning, serve to fill up the pauses in this sylvan anthem, like a running *appoggiatural* accompaniment in certain admired musical compositions. How little soever the Hair-Bird may generally be valued as a songster, his voice, I am sure, would be most sadly missed, were it never more to be heard charmingly blending with the other louder voices of the feathered choristers.



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How often, on still, sultry nights in July, when scarcely a breath of air is stirring among the foliage of the trees, when the humming of the Moth might be plainly heard, as it glided by my open window, have I been charmed with the voice of this little bird, uttered in a low, trilled note, from the branch of some neighboring tree! He seems to be the sentinel whom Nature has appointed to watch for the first gleam of dawn, which he always faithfully announces before any other bird has begun to stir. Two or three strains from his octave pipe are the signal for a general awakening of the birds, and one by one they join the song, until the whole air resounds with an harmonious medley of voices. The Hair-Bird has a singular habit of sitting upon the ground, while chirping in the early morning. His nest is placed commonly upon an apple-tree, sometimes in a bush, but never on the ground. It is very neatly constructed of the fibres of roots closely woven together, and beautifully lined with fine soft hair, whence he has obtained his name. It is not surpassed in neatness and beauty by the nest of any other bird.

I will leave the granivorous birds to speak of another class, equally hardy, but of habits more like those of the Woodpecker. I allude to the Chickadees, to whose lively notes we are indebted for a great part of the cheerfulness of a winter's walk. These notes are not a song; but there is a liveliness in their sound, most frequently uttered during a pleasant winter-day, causing them to be associated with these agreeable changes in the weather. The Chickadees are not seen, like Snow-Birds, most numerous during a snow-storm, or after a fall of snow. Their habits are nearly the same in all weathers, except that they are more prone to be noisy and loquacious on pleasant, sunny days.

The sounds from which the Chickadee has derived his name appear to be his call-notes, like the crowing of a Cock or the gobbling of a Turkey, and are probably designed by Nature to enable the birds, while scattered singly over the forest, to signalize their presence to others of the same species. Hence it may be observed, that, when the call is rapidly repeated, a multitude of his kindred will immediately assemble around the one that gave the alarm. When no alarm is intended to be given, the bird utters these notes but seldom, and only as he passes from one tree to another. He is probably accustomed to hearing a response, and, if one is not soon heard, he will repeat his call until it is answered; for as these birds do not forage the woods in flocks, this continual hailing is carried on between them to satisfy their desire for each other's company. A similar conversation passes between the individuals of a flock of Chickens, when scattered over a farmyard; one, on finding itself alone, will chirp until it hears a response, when it seems immediately satisfied. The call-notes of the Chickadee are very lively, with a mixture of querulousness in their tone, that renders them the more pleasing.



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The Chickadee is the smallest of the birds that remain with us during the winter. He is a permanent resident, and everybody knows him. He is a lively chatterer and an agreeable companion; and as he never tarries long in one place, he does not tire one with his garrulity. He is our attendant in all our pleasant winter-walks, in the orchard or the wood, in the garden or by the rustic wayside. We have seen him, on still winter-days, flitting from tree to tree, with the liveliest motions and in the most engaging attitudes, examining every twig and branch, and winding over and under and in and out among them, and, after a few lively notes, hopping to another tree to pass through the same manoeuvres. Even those who are confined to the house are not excluded from a sight of these birds; one cannot open a window, on a bright winter's morning, without a greeting from one of them on the nearest tree.

Beside the note from which the Chickadee derives his name, he sometimes utters two very plaintive notes, which are separated by a regular musical interval, making a fourth on the descending scale. They slightly resemble those of the Pewee, and are often supposed to come from some other bird, so different are they from the common note of the Chickadee. I have not been able to ascertain the circumstances under which the bird repeats this plaintive strain, but it is uttered both in summer and winter. Indeed, there is such a variety in the notes uttered at different times by this bird, that, if they were repeated in uninterrupted succession, they would form one of the most agreeable of woodland melodies.

The Chickadee is not a singing-bird. He utters his usual notes at all times of the year; but in the early part of summer he is addicted to a very low but pleasant kind of warbling, considerably varied, and wanting only more loudness and precision to entitle him to a rank with the singing-birds. This warbling does not seem intended to cheer his partner, but it is rather a sort of soliloquizing for his own amusement. If it was uttered by the young birds only, we might suppose them to be taking lessons in music, and that this was a specimen of their first attempts. I have often heard the Golden Robin warbling in a similar manner.

In company with the Chickadees in their foraging excursions, we often see two Speckled Woodpeckers, differing apparently only in size, each having a sort of red crest. The smaller of the two (*Picus pubescens*) is the Downy Woodpecker. The birds of this species are called "Sap-Suckers," from their habit of making perforations in the sound branches of trees through the bark without penetrating the wood, as if they designed only to obtain the sap. These perforations are often made in a circle round the branch, and it is highly probable that they follow the path of a grub that is concealed underneath the bark. Our farmers, who suspect every bird of some mischievous designs, accuse them of boring into the tree for the purpose of drinking the sap.

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The Woodpecker is a more restless, though not a more industrious bird than the Chickadee, and seldom gives the branches so thorough an examination as the latter. He searches for grubs that are concealed in the wood of the tree; he examines those spots only where he hears their scratchings, bores the wood to obtain them, and then flies off. But the Chickadee looks for insects on or near the surface, and does not confine his search to trees. He examines fences, the under part of the eaves of houses, and the woodpile, and destroys, in the course of his foraging, many an embryo moth and butterfly which would otherwise become the parent of noxious larvae. The Woodpecker is often represented as the emblem of industry; but the Chickadee is more truly emblematical of this virtue, and the Woodpecker of perseverance, as he never tires when drilling into the wood of a tree in quest of his prey.

Another of the companions of the Chickadee is the Brown Creeper, (*Certhia familiaris*), of similar habits, and commonly seen moving in a spiral direction around the trunks and branches of trees, and, when he is conscious of being observed, keeping on the further side of the branch. He is more frequently seen in the winter than in the summer, when he confines himself to the seclusion of the pine forest. The different birds which I have named, as companions of the Chickadee, often assemble by seeming accident in large numbers upon one tree, and meeting with more company than is agreeable to them, they will often on these occasions make the wood resound with their noisy disputes. They may have been assembled by some accidental note of alarm, and on finding no particular cause for it, they raise a shout that reminds one of the extraordinary vociferation with which young men and boys conclude a false alarm of fire in the early part of the night. These different birds, though evidently social, are not gregarious, and seldom, without vexation, endure the presence of more than two or three companions.

The Nut-Hatch (*Sitta Caroliniensis*) is often found among these assemblages, and may be recognized by his piercing trumpet-like note. This bird resembles the Woodpeckers in the shape of the bill, but has only one hinder toe, instead of two; and is said to have derived its name from a habit of breaking open or hatching nuts, to obtain the kernel. He is a permanent inhabitant of the cold parts of the American continent, resembling the Titmouse in his diligence and activity, and in the various manoeuvres he performs while in quest of his insect-food.

There are times when even this class of birds, that collect their food from the bark and wood of trees, are driven to great extremities. When the trees are incased with ice, which, though not impenetrable by their strong bills, prevents their laying hold of the bark with their claws for support, they are in some danger of starving. It is at such times that the gardens and barnyards are frequented by large numbers of Woodpeckers, Creepers, and Nut-Hatches, driven by this necessity from their usual haunts. A piece of suet fastened to the branch of a tree, at any time of the winter, would soon be discovered by these birds and afford them a grateful repast. I have frequently assembled them under my windows by this allurements.



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I will leave the Chickadees and their companions to speak of another class of birds of different character and habits: these are the Jays, and their sable-plumed congeners of the Crow family. In all parts of the country that abound in woods of any description, we are sure to be greeted by the loud voice of the Blue Jay, one of the most conspicuous tenants of the forest. He has a beautiful outward appearance, under which he conceals an unamiable temper and a propensity to mischief. Indeed, there is no other bird in our forest that is arrayed in equal splendor. His neck of fine purple, his pale azure crest and head with silky plumes, his black crescent-shaped collar, his wings and tail-feathers of bright blue with stripes of white and black, and his elegant form and vivacious manners, combine to render him attractive to all observers.

But with all this beauty, he has, like the Peacock, a harsh voice; he is a thief, and a disturber of the peace. He is a sort of Ishmael among the sylvan tribes, who are startled at the sound of his voice, and fear him as a bandit. The farmer, who is well acquainted with his habits, is no friend to him; for he not only takes what is required for his immediate wants, but hoards a variety of articles in large quantities for future use. It would seem as if he were aware when he was engaged in an honest and when in a dishonest expedition; for while searching for food in the the wood or open field, he is extremely noisy,—but when he ventures into a barn, to take what does not belong to him, he is silent and stealthy, and exhibits all the peculiar manners of a thief.

It would be no mean task to enumerate all the acts of mischief perpetrated by this bird; and I cannot but look upon him as one the most guilty of the feathered tribe. He plunders the cornfield both at seed-time and harvest; he steals everything that is eatable, and conceals it in his hoarding-places; he destroys the eggs of smaller birds and devours their young; he quarrels with all other species, and his life is a constant scene of contentions. He is restless, pugnacious, and irascible, and always seems like one who is out on some expedition. Yet, though a pest to other birds, he is a watchful parent and a faithful guardian of his off-spring. It is dangerous to venture near the nest of a pair of Jays, as they immediately attack the adventurer, aiming their blows at his face and eyes with the most savage determination.

Like the Magpie, the Jay has considerable talent for mimicry, and in a state of domestication may be taught to articulate words like a Parrot. At certain times I have heard this bird utter a few notes resembling the tinkle of a bell, and which, if syllabled, might form such a word as *dilly-lily*; but it is not a musical strain. Indeed, there is no music in his nature, and in all his imitations of other sounds he prefers the harsh to the melodious, such as the voice of the Hawk, the Owl, and other unmusical birds.



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The Blue Jay is a true American; he is known throughout this continent, and never visits any other country. At no season is he absent from our woods, and he is an industrious consumer of the larger insects and grubs, atoning in this way for some of his evil deeds. In this respect, however, his services are not to be compared to those of the Robin and the Blue-Bird. Yet I am not prepared to say that I would consent to his banishment, for he is one of the most cheering tenants of the groves, at a season when they have but few inhabitants; and I never listen to his voice without recalling a crowd of charming reminiscences of pleasant winter excursions and adventures at an early period of my life. The very harshness of his voice has caused it to be impressed more forcibly upon the memory, in connection with these scenes.

The common Crow may be considered the representative, in America, of the European Rook, which he resembles in many of his habits, performing similar services, and being guilty of the same mischievous deeds. It is remarkable that in Europe, where land is more valuable than in this country, and where agriculture is carried on with an amount of skill and nicety that would astonish an American farmer, the people are not so jealous of the birds. In Great Britain rookeries are regular establishments, and the Rooks, notwithstanding the mischief they do, are protected, on account of their services to agriculture. The farmers of Europe, having learned by repeated observation, that, without the aid of mischievous birds, the work of the farmer would be sacrificed to the more destructive insect-race, forgive them their trespasses, as we forgive the trespasses of cats and dogs. The respect shown to birds by any people seems to bear a certain ratio to the antiquity of the nation. Hence the sacredness with which they are regarded in Japan, where the population is so dense that the inhabitants would feel that they could ill afford to divide the produce of their fields with the birds, unless they were convinced of their usefulness.

The Crow is one of the most unfortunate of the feathered tribe in his relations to man; for by almost all nations he is regarded with hatred, and every man's hand is against him. He is protected neither by custom nor superstition; the sentimentalist cares nothing for him as an object of poetical regard, and the utilitarian is blind to his services as a scavenger. The farmer considers him as the very ringleader of mischief, and uses all means he can invent for his destruction; the friend of the singing-birds bears him a grudge as the destroyer of their eggs and young; and even the moralist is disposed to condemn him for his cunning and dissimulation.



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Hence he is everywhere hated and persecuted, and the expedients used for his destruction are numerous and revolting to the sensibilities. He is outlawed by acts of Parliament and other legislative bodies; he is hunted with the gun; he is caught in crow-nets; he is hoodwinked with bits of paper smeared with bird-lime, in which he is caught by means of a bait; he is poisoned with grain steeped in hellebore and strychnine; the reeds in which he roosts are treacherously set on fire; he is pinioned by his wings, on his back, and is made to grapple his sympathizing companions who come to his rescue; like an infidel, he is not allowed the benefit of truth to save his reputation; and children, after receiving lessons of humanity, are taught to regard the Crow as an unworthy subject when they carry their precepts into practice. Every government has set a price upon his head, and every people holds him up to public execration.

As an apology for these atrocities, might be enumerated a long catalogue of misdemeanors of which he is guilty. He pillages the cornfield, and pulls up the young shoots of maize to obtain the kernels attached to their roots; he destroys the eggs and the young of innocent birds which we should like to preserve; he purloins fruit from the garden and orchard, and carries off young ducks and chickens from the farmyard. Beside his mischievous propensities and his habits of thieving, he is accused of cunning, and of a depraved disposition. He who would plead for the Crow will not deny the general truth of these accusations, but, on the other hand, would enumerate certain special benefits which he confers upon man.

In the catalogue of the services of this bird we find many details which should lead us to pause before we consent to his destruction. He consumes, in the course of the year, vast quantities of grubs, worms, and noxious vermin; he is a valuable scavenger, and clears the land of offensive masses of decaying animal substances; he hunts the grass-fields, and pulls out and devours the underground caterpillars, wherever he perceives the signs of their operations, as evinced by the wilted stalks; he destroys mice, young rats, lizards, and the smaller serpents; lastly, he is a volunteer sentinel about the farm, and drives the Hawk from its inclosures, thus preventing greater mischief than that of which he himself is guilty. It is chiefly during seed-time and harvest that the depredations of the Crow are committed; during the remainder of the year we witness only his services; and so highly are these services appreciated by those who have written of birds, that I cannot name an ornithologist who does not plead in his behalf.

Let us turn our attention, for a moment, to his moral qualities. In vain is he accused of cunning, when without this quality he could not live. His wariness is really a virtue, and, under the circumstances in which he is placed, it is his principal means of self-preservation. He has no moral principles, no creed, to which he is under obligations to offer himself as a martyr. His cunning is his armor; and I am persuaded that the persecutions to which he has always been subjected have caused the development of an amount of intelligence that elevates him many degrees above the majority of the feathered race.



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There are few birds that equal the Crow in sagacity. He observes many things that would seem to require the faculties of a rational being. He judges with accuracy, from the deportment of the person approaching him, if he is prepared to do him an injury; and seems to pay no regard to one who is strolling the fields in search of flowers or for recreation. On such occasions, one may get so near him as to observe his manners, and even to note the varying shades of his plumage. But in vain does the sportsman endeavor to approach him. So sure is he to fly at the right moment for his safety, that one might suppose he could measure the distance of gunshot.

The voice of the Crow is like no other sound uttered by the feathered race; it is harsh and unmelodious, and though he is capable, when domesticated, of imitating human speech, he cannot sing. But Aesop mistook the character of this bird when he represented him as the dupe of the fox, who gained the bit of cheese he carried in his mouth by inducing him to exhibit his musical powers. The Crow could not be fooled by any such appeals to his vanity.

The Crow is commonly regarded as a homely bird; yet he is not without beauty. His coat of glossy black with violet reflections, his dark eyes and sagacious expression of countenance, his stately and graceful gait, and his steady and equable flight, combine to give him a proud and dignified appearance. The Crow and the Raven have always been celebrated for their gravity, a character that seems to be the result of their black sacerdotal vesture, and of certain manifestations of intelligence in their ways and general deportment. Indeed, any one who should watch the motions of the Crow for the space of five minutes, either when he is stalking alone in the field, or when he is careering with his fellows around some tall tree in the forest, would acknowledge that he deserves to be called a grave bird.

Setting aside the services rendered by the Crow to agriculture, I esteem him for certain qualities which are agreeably associated with the charms of Nature. It is not the singing-birds alone that contribute by their voices to gladden the husbandman and cheer the solitary traveller. The crowing of the Cock at the break of day is as joyful a sound, though not so musical, as the voice of the Robin who chants his lays at the same early hour. To me the cawing of the Crow is cheering and delightful, and it is heard long before the majority of birds have left their perch. If not one of the melodies of morn, it is one of the most notable sounds that herald its approach. And how intimately is the voice of this bird associated with the sunshine of calm winter-days,—with our woodland excursions during this inclement season,—with the stroke of the woodman's axe,—with open doors in bright and pleasant weather, when the eaves are dripping with the melting snow,—and with all those cheerful sounds that enliven the groves during that period when every object is valuable that relieves the silence or softens the dreary aspect of Nature!

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If we leave the open fields and woods, and ramble near the coast to some retired and solitary branch of the sea, our meditations may be suddenly startled by the harsh voice of the Kingfisher, like the sound of a watchman's rattle. This bird is seldom seen in winter in the interior; most of his species migrate southwardly and to the sea-coast, just so far as to be within reach of the open waters. As they subsist on the smaller kinds of fishes, they would perish with hunger, after the waters are frozen, if they did not migrate. But the Kingfisher often remains on the coast during open winters, and may therefore be considered one of our winter-birds.

This bird is the celebrated Alcedo, or Halcyon, of the ancients, who attributed to him many apparently supernatural powers. He was supposed to construct his nest upon the waves, on which it was made to float like a skiff. But as the turbulence of a storm would be likely to cause its destruction, Nature had gifted him with the extraordinary power of stilling the motions of the winds and waves, during the period of incubation. Hence the serene weather that accompanies the summer solstice was supposed to be occasioned by the benign influence of this bird, and the term "halcyon days" was applied to this period. It is remarkable that the fable should add to these supernatural gifts the power of song, as one of the accomplishments of the Kingfisher. These superstitions must have been very general among the ancients, and were not confined to the Greeks and Romans. Some of the Asiatic nations still wear the skin of the Kingfisher about their persons, as a protection against both moral and physical evils; the feathers are used as love-charms; and it is believed, that, if the body of the Kingfisher be evenly fixed upon a pivot, it will turn its head to the north, like the magnetic needle.

This bird is singularly grotesque in his appearance, though not without beauty of plumage. With his long, straight, and quadrangular bill, his short and diminutive feet and legs, and his immense head, his plumage of a handsome dusky blue, with a bluish band on the breast and a white collar around the neck,—when this mixture of the grotesque and the beautiful is considered in connection with the singularity of his habits, we need not marvel at the superstitions connected with his history. He sits patiently, like an angler, on a post at the head of a wharf, or on a branch of a tree that extends over the bank, and, leaning obliquely, with extended head and beak, he watches for his finny prey. There, with the light blue sky above him and the dark blue waves beneath, nothing on the surface of the water can escape his penetrating eyes. Quickly, with a sudden swoop, he seizes a single fish from an unsuspecting shoal, and announces his success by the peculiar sound of his rattle.

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It may not have been observed by all that the most interesting periods or situations for rambling are not those which most abound with exciting scenes and objects. There must be a certain dearth of individual objects that draw the attention, intermingled with occasional remarkable or mysterious sights and sounds, to yield an excursion its greatest interest. The hunter (unless he be a purveyor for the market) understands this philosophy, and knows that there is more pleasure in chasing a single deer or a solitary fox over miles of pasture and moorland, than in hunting where these animals are abundant, and slaughtering them as fast as one can load his gun. The pleasures attending a rural excursion in the winter are founded on this fact, and may be explained by this principle. There, amid the general silence, every sound attracts attention and is accompanied by its echo; and since the trees and shrubs have lost their leafy garniture, every tree and other object has its own distinct shadow, and we fix our attention more easily upon anything that excites our interest than when it is distracted by the confusion of numbers.

Hence it is in the winter that the picturesque character of the flight of birds is particularly noticeable. In summer, and in autumn, before the fall of the leaf, birds are partially concealed by the foliage of trees, so that the manner of their flight does not become so readily apparent. But in winter, if we start a flock of birds from the ground, we can hardly avoid taking notice of all the peculiarities of their movements. I have alluded to the descent of Snow-Buntings upon the landscape as singularly picturesque; but the motions of a flock of Quails, when suddenly aroused from a thicket, are not less so. When a Pigeon, or any other bird with strong and large wings, takes flight, the motions of its wings are not vibratory, and its progress through the air is so rapid as to injure the pleasing effect of its motions, because we obtain no distinct perception of the bird during its flight. It is quite otherwise with the Quail. The body of this bird is plump and heavy, and his wings are short, and have a peculiar concavity of the under surface when expanded; their motions are very rapid, and, having but little sweep, the bird seems to sail on the air, carried along by a gentle but rapid vibration of the wings, which describe only a very small arc of a circle. Hence we observe the entire shape of the bird during its flight. The Partridge, and other gallinaceous birds, fly in a similar manner; but, on account of their larger size, their motions are less attractive.

The Humming-Bird has proportionally larger wings than the Quail, and, when flying, his wings describe almost a complete circle in their rapid vibrations. If we look upon one during his flight, he seems to have no wings, but rather to be encircled by a semi-transparent halo. There are other birds that seem to be wings only, their bodies being hardly perceptible, on account of their small proportional size; such are the Swallow, the Pigeon, the Cuckoo, and the Night-Hawk.



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Birds of prey are remarkable for their steady and graceful flight; the motion of their wings is slow, while, like the Pigeon, they are capable of propelling themselves through the air with great rapidity. The circumgyrations of a Hawk, when reconnoitring far aloft in the air, are singularly graceful. The flight of the Crow and the Raven is slow and apparently difficult, and they are easily overtaken and annoyed by the King-Bird and other small birds. They are not formed, like the Falcon, to catch their prey upon the wing, and, though their wings are large and powerful, they are incapable of performing those graceful and difficult evolutions which we observe in the flight of birds of prey. The flight of Herons resembles that of the Raven.

Small birds, with the exception of a few species, move in an undulating course, alternately rising and sinking. Birds that move in this manner are, I believe, incapable of making a long journey on the wing without rest, and commonly perform their migrations by short daily stages.

The flight of the little Sand-Pipers, which frequent the salt marshes in numerous flocks, is particularly worthy of study. It is not unlike the flight of Quails, but more evenly sustained, on account of the greater length and power of their wings. These birds are capable of holding an even flight in a perfectly horizontal line, only a few inches above the surface of the ground. When they alight, they seldom make a curve or gyration, but descend in a straight and oblique course. Snow-Buntings usually turn about, just before they reach the ground; and I have seen them perform the most intricate changes, like the movements of a cotillon-party, executed with the rapidity of arrows, when suddenly checked in their flight by the discovery of a good tract of forage.

With these observations, which might be indefinitely extended, I take leave of the subject, simply remarking, that to the motions of birds, no less than to their beauty of plumage and the sounds of their voices, are we indebted for a great part of the picturesque attractions of landscape; and the more we study them, the more are we convinced, that, in whatever direction we turn our observations, we may extend them to infinity. There is no limit to any study of Nature, and even one so apparently insignificant as the flight of birds leads to an endless series of interesting facts, and opens the eyes to new beauties in the aspect of Nature and new sources of rational delight.

“THE NEW LIFE” OF DANTE.

[Concluded.]

III.

The year 1289 was one marked in the annals of Florence and of Italy by events which are still famous, scored by the genius of Dante upon the memory of the world. It was in



this year that Count Ugolino and his sons and grandsons were starved by the Pisans in their tower prison. A few months later, Francesca da Rimini was murdered by her husband. Between the dates of these two terrible events the Florentines had won the great victory of Campaldino; and thus, in this short space, the materials had been given to the poet for the two best-known and most powerful stories and for one of the most striking episodes of the "Divina Commedia."



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In the great and hard-fought battle of Campaldino Dante himself took part. "I was at first greatly afraid," he says, in a letter of which but a few sentences have been preserved, [A]—"but at the end I felt the greatest joy,—according to the various chances of the battle." When the victorious army returned to Florence, a splendid procession, with the clergy at its head, with the arts of the city each under its banner, and with all manner of pomp, went out to meet it. There were long-continued feasts and rejoicings. The battle had been fought on the 11th of June, the day of St. Barnabas, and the Republic, though already engaged in magnificent works of church-building, decreed that a new church should be erected in honor of the Saint on whose day the victory had been won.

[Footnote A: See Lionardo Aretino's *Vita di Dante*.]

A little later in that summer, Dante was one of a troop of Florentines who joined the forces of Lucca in levying war upon the Pisan territory. The stronghold of Caprona was taken, and Dante was present at its capture; for he says, (*Inferno*, xxi. 94-96,) "I saw the foot-soldiers, who, having made terms, came out from Caprona, afraid when they beheld themselves among so many enemies." [B]

[Footnote B: Landino, and most of the commentators after him, state that Dante refers in this passage to the fear of the garrison taken in the place when it was recaptured the next year by the Pisans. But as Florence and Pisa continued at desperate enmity, Dante could hardly have witnessed this latter scene.]

Thus, during a great part of the summer of 1289, Dante was in active service as a soldier. He was no lovesick idler, no mere home-keeping writer of verses, but was already taking his part in the affairs of the state which he was afterwards to be called on for a time to assist in governing, and he was laying up those stores of experience which were to serve as the material out of which his vivifying imagination was to form the great national poem of Italy. But of this active life, of these personal engagements, of these terrible events which took such strong possession of his soul, there is no word, no suggestion even, in the book of his "New Life." In it there is no echo, however faint, of those storms of public violence and private passion which broke dark over Italy. In the midst of the tumults which sprang from the jealousies of rival states, from the internal discords of cities, from the divisions of parties, from the bitterness of domestic quarrels,—this little book is full of tenderness and peace, and tells its story of love as if the world were the abode of tranquillity. No external excitements could break into the inner chambers of Dante's heart to displace the love that dwelt within them. The contrast between the purity and the serenity of the "Vita Nuova" and the coarseness and cruelty of the deeds that were going on while it was being written is complete. Every man in some sort leads a double life,—one real and his own, the other seeming and the world's,—but with few is the separation so entire as it was with Dante.



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But in these troubled times the “New Life” was drawing to its close. The spring of 1290 had come, and the poet, now twenty-five years old, sixteen years having passed since he first beheld Beatrice, was engaged in writing a poem to tell what effect the virtue of his lady wrought upon him. He had written but the following portion when it was broken off, never to be resumed:—

“So long hath Love retained me at his hest,
And to his sway hath so accustomed me,
That as at first he cruel used to be,
So in my heart he now doth sweetly rest.
Thus when by him my strength is dispossessed,
So that the spirits seem away to flee,
My frail soul feels such sweetness verily,
That with it pallor doth my face invest.
Then Love o’er me such mastery doth seize,
He makes my sighs in words to take their way,
And they unto my lady go to pray
That she to give me further grace would please.
Where’er she sees me, this to me occurs,
Nor can it be believed what humbleness is hers.”

“Quomodo sedet sola civitas plena populo! facta est quasi vidua domina gentium!” [How doth the city sit solitary that was full of people! how is she become as a widow, she that was great among the nations!][C]

[Footnote C: *Lamentations*, l. 1.]

“I was yet engaged upon this Canzone, and had finished the above stanza, when the Lord of justice called this most gentle one unto glory under the banner of that holy Queen Mary whose name was ever spoken with greatest reverence by this blessed Beatrice.[D]

[Footnote D: There is among the Canzoni of Dante one beginning,

“Morte poich’ io non truovo a cui mi doglia,”

which seems to have been written during the illness of Beatrice, in view of her approaching death. It is a beautiful and touching poem. Death is besought to spare that lady, “who of every good is the true gate.”—“If thou extinguishest the light of those beautiful eyes, which were wont to be so sweet a guide to mine, I see that thou desirest my death.”

“O Death, delay not mercy, if ’tis thine!
For now I seem to see the heavens ope,



And Angels of the Lord descending here,
Intent to bear away the holy soul
Of her whose honor there above is sung.”]

“And although it might give pleasure, were I now to tell somewhat of her departure from us, it is not my intention to treat of it here for three reasons. The first is, that it is no part of the present design, as may be seen in the proem of this little book. The second is, that, supposing it were so, my pen would not be sufficient to treat of it in a fitting manner. The third is, that, supposing both the one and the other, it would not be becoming in me to treat of it, since, in doing so, I should be obliged to praise myself,—a thing altogether blameworthy in whosoever does it,—and therefore I leave this subject to some other narrator.



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“Nevertheless, since in what precedes there has been occasion to make frequent mention of the number nine,[E] and apparently not without reason, and since in her departure this number appeared to have a large place, it is fitting to say something on this point, seeing that it seems to belong to our design. Wherefore I will first tell how it had place in her departure, and then I will assign some reason why this number was so friendly to her. I say, that, according to the mode of reckoning in Italy, her most noble soul departed in the first hour of the ninth day of the month; and according to the reckoning, in Syria, she departed in the ninth month of the year, since the first month there is Tismim, which with us is October; and according to our reckoning, she departed in that year of our indiction, that is, of the years of the Lord, in which the perfect number[F] was completed for the ninth time in that century in which she had been set in the world; and she was of the Christians of the thirteenth century.[G]

[Footnote E: In the earlier part of the *Vita Nuova* there are many references to this number. We translate in full the passage given above, as one of the most striking illustrations of Dante’s youthful fondness for seeking for the mystical relations and inner meanings of things. The attributing such importance to the properties of the number nine, though it might at first seem puerile and an indication of poverty of feeling, was a portion of the superstitious belief of the age, in which Dante naturally shared. The mysterious properties of numbers were a subject of serious study, and were connected with various branches of science and of life.

“Themistius vero, et Boethius, et Averrois Babylonius, cum Platone, sic numeros extollunt, ut neminem absque illis posse recte philosophari putent. Loquuntur autem de numero rationali et formali, non de materiali, sensibili, sive vocali numero mercatorum.... Sed intendunt ad proportionem ex illo resultantem, quem numerum naturalem et formalem et rationalem vocant; ex quo magna sacramenta emanant, tam in naturalibus quam divinis atque coelestibus.... In numeris itaque magnam latere efficaciam et virtutem tam ad bonum quam ad malum, non modo splendidissimi philosophi unanimiter docent, sed etiam doctores Catholici.”—Cornelii Agrippae *De Occulta Philosophia*, Liber Secundus, cc. 2, 3.]

[Footnote F: The perfect number is ten.]

[Footnote G: Thus it appears that Beatrice died on the 9th of June, 1290. She was a little more than twenty-four years old.]

“One reason why this number was so friendly to her may be this: since, according to Ptolemy and the Christian truth, there are nine heavens which move, and, according to the common astrological opinion, these heavens work effects here below according to their relative positions, this number was her friend, to the end that it might be understood that at her generation all the nine movable heavens were in most



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perfect conjunction.[H] This is one reason; but considering more subtilely and according to infallible truth, this number was she herself,—I speak in a similitude, and I mean as follows. The number three is the root of nine, since, without any other number, multiplied by itself, it makes nine,—as we see plainly that three times three are nine. Then, if three is the factor by itself of nine, and the Author of Miracles[I] by himself is three,—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who are three and one,—this lady was accompanied by the number nine that it might be understood that she was a nine, that is, a miracle, whose only root is the marvellous Trinity. Perhaps a more subtile person might discover some more subtile reason for this; but this is the one that I see for it, and which pleases me the best.”

[Footnote H: Compare with this passage Ballata v.,

“Io mi son pargoletta bella e nova,”

and Sonnet xlv.,

“Da quella luce che 'l suo corso gira”;

the latter probably in praise of Philosophy.]

[Footnote I: The point is here lost in a translation,—*factor* and *author* being expressed in the original by one word, *fattore*.]

After thus treating of the number nine in its connection with Beatrice, Dante goes on to say, that, when this most gentle lady had gone from this world, the city appeared widowed and despoiled of every dignity; whereupon he wrote to the princes of the earth an account of its condition, beginning with the words of Jeremiah which he quoted at the entrance of this new matter. The remainder of this letter he does not give, because it was in Latin, and in this work it was his intention, from the beginning, to write only in the vulgar tongue; and such was the understanding of the friend for whom he writes,—that friend being, as we may suppose, Guido Cavalcanti, whom Dante, it may be remembered, has already spoken of as the chief among his friends. Then succeeds a Canzone lamenting the death of Beatrice, which, instead of being followed by a verbal exposition, as is the case with all that have gone before, is preceded by one, in order that it may seem, as it were, desolate and like a widow at its end. And this arrangement is preserved in regard to all the remaining poems in the little volume. In this poem he says that the Eternal Sire called Beatrice to himself, because he saw that this world was not worthy of such a gentle thing; and he says of his own life, that no tongue could tell what it has been since his lady went away to heaven.



Among the sonnets ascribed to Dante is one which, if it be his, must have been written about this time, and which, although not included in the "Vita Nuova," seems not unworthy to find a place here. Its imagery, at least, connects it with some of the sonnets in the earlier portion of the book.

"One day came Melancholy unto me,
And said, 'With thee I will awhile abide';
And, as it seemed, attending at her side,
Anger and Grief did bear her company.



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“Depart! Away!” I cried out eagerly.
Then like a Greek she unto me replied;
And while she stood discoursing in her pride,
I looked, and Love approaching us I see.

“In cloth of black full strangely was he clad,
A little hood he wore upon his head,
And down his face tears flowing fast he had.

“Poor little wretch! what ails thee?’ then I said.
And he replied, ‘I woful am, and sad,
Sweet brother, for our lady who is dead.’”

About this time, Dante tells us, a person who stood to him in friendship next to his first friend, and who was of the closest relationship to his glorious lady, so that we may believe it was her brother, came to him and prayed him to write something on a lady who was dead. Dante, believing that he meant the blessed Beatrice, accordingly wrote for him a sonnet; and then, reflecting that so short a poem appeared but a poor and bare service for one who was so nearly connected with her, added to it a Canzone, and gave both to him.

As the months passed on, his grief still continued fresh, and the memory of his lady dwelt continually with him. It happened, that, “on that day which completed a year since this lady was made one of the citizens of eternal life, I was seated in a place where, remembering her, I drew an Angel upon certain tablets. And while I was drawing it, I turned my eyes, and saw at my side certain men to whom it was becoming to do honor, and who were looking at what I did; and, as was afterward told me, they had been there now some time before I perceived them. When I saw them, I rose, and, saluting them, said, ‘Another was just now with me, and on that account I was in thought.’ When these persons had gone, I returned to my work, that is, to drawing figures of Angels; and while doing this, a thought came to me of saying words in rhyme, as for an anniversary poem for her, and of addressing them to those who had come to me. Then I said this sonnet, which has two beginnings:—

FIRST BEGINNING.

“Unto my mind remembering had come
The gentle lady, with such pure worth graced,
That by the Lord Most High she had been placed
Within the heaven of peace, where Mary hath her home.”

SECOND BEGINNING.



“Unto my mind had come, indeed, in thought,
That gentle one for whom Love’s tears are shed,
Just at the time when, by his power led,
To see what I was doing you were brought.

“Love, who within my mind did her perceive,
Was roused awake within my wasted heart,
And said unto my sighs, ‘Go forth! depart!’
Whereon each one in grief did take its leave.

“Lamenting they from out my breast did go,
And uttering a voice that often led
The grievous tears unto my saddened eyes.

“But those which issued with the greatest woe,
‘O noble soul,’ they in departing said,
‘To-day makes up the year since thou to heaven didst rise.’”

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The preceding passage is one of the many in the “Vita Nuova” which are of peculiar interest, as illustrating the personal tastes of Dante, and the common modes of his life. “I was drawing,” he says, “the figure of an Angel”; and this statement is the more noticeable, because Giotto, the man who set painting on its modern course, was not yet old enough to have exercised any influence upon Dante.[J] The friendship which afterwards existed between them had its beginning at a later period. At this time Cimabue still held the field. He often painted angels around the figures of the Virgin and her Child; and in his most famous picture, in the Church of Sta. Maria Novella, there are certain angels of which Vasari says, with truth, that, though painted in the Greek manner, they show an approach toward the modern style of drawing. These angels may well have seemed beautiful to eyes accustomed to the hard unnaturalness of earlier works. The love of Art pervaded Florence, and a nature so sensitive and so sympathetic as Dante’s could not but partake of it in the fullest measure. Art was then no adjunct of sentimentalism, no encourager of idleness. It was connected with all that was most serious and all that was most delightful in life. It is difficult, indeed, to realize the delight which it gave, and the earnestness with which it was followed at this period, when it seemed, as by a miracle, to fling off the winding-sheet which had long wrapped its stiffened limbs, and to come forth with new and unexampled life.

[Footnote J: In this year, 1291, Giotto was but fifteen years old, and probably a student with Cimabue. Benvenuto da Imola, who lectured publicly at Bologna on the *Divina Commedia* in the year 1378, reports, that, while Giotto, still a young man, was painting at Padua, Dante visited him. And Vasari says, that it was a tradition, that Giotto had painted, in a chapel at Naples, scenes out of the *Apocalypse*, from designs furnished him by the poet. If we may believe another tradition, which there seems indeed little reason to doubt, Giotto went to Ravenna during the last years of Dante’s life, that he might spend there some time in company with his exiled friend.]

The strength and the intelligence of Dante’s love of Art are shown in many beautiful passages and allusions in the “Divina Commedia.” There was something of universality, not only in his imagination, but also in his acquisitions. Of the sources of learning which were then open, there was not one which he had not visited; of the fountains of inspiration, not one out of which he had not drunk. All the arts—poetry, painting, sculpture, and music—were alike dear to him. His Canzoni were written to be sung; and one of the most charming scenes in the great poem is that in which is described his meeting with his friend Casella, the musician, who sang to him one of his own Canzoni so sweetly, that “the sweetness still within me sounds.”[K]



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[Footnote K: This Canzone, to the exposition of which the third Trattato of the *Convito* is devoted, has been inimitably translated by the Reverend Charles T. Brooks. We believe it to be the happiest version of one of Dante's minor poems that exists in our language, —and every student of the poet will recognize the success with which very great difficulties have been overcome. It appeared in the *Crayon*, for February, 1853.]

“Dante took great delight in music, and was an excellent draughtsman,” says Aretino, his second biographer; and Boccaccio reports, that in his youth he took great pleasure in music, and was the friend of all the best musicians and singers of his time. There is, perhaps, in the whole range of literature, no nobler homage to Art than that which is contained in the tenth and twelfth cantos of the “Purgatory,” in which Dante represents the Creator himself as using its means to impress the lessons of truth upon those whose souls were being purified for the final attainment of heaven. The passages are too long for extract, and though their wonderful beauty tempts us to linger over them, we must return to the course of the story of Dante's life as it appears in the concluding pages of the “New Life.”

Many months had passed since Beatrice's death, when Dante happened to be in a place which recalled the past time to him, and filled him with grief. While standing here, he raised his eyes and saw a young and beautiful lady looking out from a window compassionately upon his sad aspect. The tenderness of her look touched his heart and moved his tears. Many times afterwards he saw her, and her face was always full of compassion, and pale, so that it reminded him of the look of his own most noble lady. But at length his eyes began to delight too much in seeing her; wherefore he often cursed their vanity, and esteemed himself as vile, and there was a hard battle within himself between the remembrance of his lady and the new desire of his eyes.

At length, he says, “The sight of this lady brought me into so new a condition, that I often thought of her as of one who pleased me exceedingly,—and I thought of her thus: ‘This is a gentle, beautiful, young, and discreet lady, and she has perhaps appeared by will of Love, in order that my life may find repose.’ And often I thought more amorously, so that my heart consented in it, that is, approved my reasoning. And after it had thus consented, I, moved as if by reason, reflected, and said to myself, ‘Ah, what thought is this that in so vile a way seeks to console me, and leaves me scarcely any other thought?’ Then another thought rose up and said, ‘Now that thou hast been in so great tribulation of Love, why wilt thou not withdraw thyself from such bitterness? Thou seest that this is an inspiration that sets the desires of Love before thee, and proceeds from a place no less gentle than the eyes of the lady who has shown herself so pitiful toward thee.’ Wherefore, I, having often thus combated with myself, wished to say some words of it. And as, in this battle of thoughts, those which spoke for her won the victory, it seemed to me becoming to address her, and I said this sonnet, which begins, ‘A gentle thought’; and I called it *gentle* because I was speaking to a gentle lady,—but otherwise it was most vile.



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“A gentle thought that of you holds discourse
Cometh now frequently with me to dwell,
And in so sweet a way of Love doth tell,
My heart to yield unto him he doth force.
“Who, then, is this,’ the soul says to the heart,
‘Who cometh to bring comfort to our mind?
And is his virtue of so potent kind,
That other thoughts he maketh to depart?’
“O saddened soul,’ the heart to her replies,
‘This is a little spirit fresh from Love,
Whose own desires he before me brings;
“His very life and all his power doth move
Forth from the sweet compassionating eyes
Of her so grieved by our sufferings.”

“One day, about the ninth hour, there arose within me a strong imagination opposed to this adversary of reason. For I seemed to see the glorified Beatrice in that crimson garment in which she had first appeared to my eyes, and she seemed to me young, of the same age as when I first saw her. Then I began to think of her, and, calling to mind the past time in its order, my heart began to repent bitterly of the desire by which it had so vilely allowed itself for some days to be possessed, contrary to the constancy of reason. And this so wicked desire being expelled, all my thoughts returned to their most gentle Beatrice, and I say that thenceforth I began to think of her with my heart possessed utterly by shame, so that it was often manifested by my sighs; for almost all of them, as they went forth, told what was discoursed of in my heart,—the name of that gentlest one, and how she had gone from us.... And I wished that my wicked desire and vain temptation might be known to be at an end; and that the rhymed words which I had before written might induce no doubt, I proposed to make a sonnet in which I would include what I have now told.”

With this sonnet Dante ends the story in the “Vita Nuova” of the wandering of his eyes, and the short faithlessness of his heart; but it is retold with some additions in the “Convito” or “Banquet,” a work written many years afterward; and in this later version there are some details which serve to fill out and illustrate the earlier narrative.[L] The same tender and refined feeling which inspires the “Vita Nuova” gives its tone to all the passages in which the poet recalls his youthful days and the memory of Beatrice in this work of his sorrowful manhood. In the midst of its serious and philosophic discourse this little story winds in and out its thread of personal recollection and of sweet romantic sentiment. It affords new insight into the recesses of Dante’s heart, and exhibits the permanence of the gracious qualities of his youth.

[Footnote L: The differences in the two accounts of this period of Dante’s experience, and the view of Beatrice presented in the *Convito*, suggest curious and interesting

questions, the solution of which has been obscured by the dulness of commentators. We must, however, leave the discussion of these points till some other opportunity.]



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Its opening sentence is full of the imagery of love. "Since the death of that blessed Beatrice who lives in heaven with the angels, and on earth with my soul, the star of Venus had twice shone in the different seasons, as the star of morning and of evening, when that gentle lady, of whom I have made mention near the close of the "New Life," first appeared before my eyes accompanied by Love, and gained some place in my mind. ... And before this love could become perfect, there arose a great battle between the thought that sprang from it and that which was opposed to it, and which still held the fortress of my mind for the glorified Beatrice."[M]

[Footnote M: *Convito*, Tratt. ii. c. 3.]

And so hard was this struggle, and so painful, that Dante took refuge from it in the composition of a poem addressed to the Angelic Intelligences who move the third heaven, that is, the heaven of Venus; and it is to the exposition of the true meaning of this Canzone that the second book or treatise of the "Convito" is directed. In one of the later chapters he says, (and the passage is a most striking one, from its own declaration, as well as from its relation to the vision of the "Divina Commedia,")—"The life of my heart was wont to be a sweet and delightful thought, which often went to the feet of the Lord of those to whom I speak, that is, to God,—for, thinking, I contemplated the kingdom of the Blessed. And I tell [in my poem] the final cause of my mounting thither in thought, when I say, 'There I beheld a lady in glory'; [and I say this] in order that it may be understood that I was certain, and am certain, through her gracious revelation, that she was in heaven, whither I in my thought oftentimes went,—as it were, seized up. And this made me desirous of death, that I might go there where she was."[N] Following upon the chapter in which this remarkable passage occurs is one which is chiefly occupied with a digression upon the immortality of the soul,—and with discourse upon this matter, says Dante, "it will be beautiful to finish speaking of that living and blessed Beatrice, of whom I intend to say no more in this book.... And I believe and affirm and am certain that I shall pass after this to another and better life, in which that glorious lady lives of whom my soul was enamored."[O]

[Footnote N: *Convito*, Tratt. ii. c. 8.]

[Footnote O: Id. c. 9.]

But it is not from the "Convito" alone that this portion of the "Vita Nuova" receives illustration. In that passage of the "Purgatory" in which Beatrice is described as appearing in person to her lover the first time since her death, she addresses him in words of stern rebuke of his fickleness and his infidelity to her memory. The whole scene is, perhaps, unsurpassed in imaginative reality; the vision appears to have an actual existence, and the poet himself is subdued by the power of his own imagination. He tells the words of Beatrice with the same feeling with which he would have repeated them, had they fallen on his mortal ear. His grief and shame are real, and there is no



element of feigning in them. That in truth he had seemed to himself to listen to and to behold what he tells, it is scarcely possible to doubt. Beatrice says,—



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“Some while at heart my presence kept him sound;
My girlish eyes to his observance lending,
I led him with me on the right way bound.
When of my second age the steps ascending,
I bore my life into another sphere,
Then stole he from me, after others bending.
When I arose from flesh to spirit clear,
When beauty, worthiness, upon me grew,
I was to him less pleasing and less dear.”[P]

[Footnote P: Purgatory, c. xxx. vv. 118-126.—CAYLEY’S Translation.]

But although Beatrice only gives utterance to the self-reproaches of Dante, we have seen already how fully he had atoned for this first and transient unfaithfulness of his heart. The remainder of the “Vita Nuova” shows how little she had lost of her power over him, how reverently he honored her memory, how constant was his love of her whom he should see never again with his earthly eyes. Returning to the “New Life,”—

“After this tribulation,” he says, “at that time when many people were going to see the blessed image which Jesus Christ left to us as the likeness of his most beautiful countenance,[Q] which my lady now beholds in glory, it happened that certain pilgrims passed through a street which is almost in the middle of that city where the gentlest lady was born, lived, and died,—and they went along, as it seemed to me, very pensive. And thinking about them, I said to myself, ‘These appear to me to be pilgrims from a far-off region, and I do not believe that they have even heard speak of this lady, and they know nothing of her; their thoughts are rather of other things than of her; for, perhaps, they are thinking of their distant friends, whom we do not know.’ Then I said to myself, ‘I know, that, if these persons were from a neighboring country, they would show some sign of trouble as they pass through the midst of this grieving city.’ Then again I said, ‘If I could hold them awhile, I would indeed make them weep before they went out from this city; for I would say words to them which would make whoever should hear them weep.’ Then, when they had passed out of sight, I proposed to make a sonnet in which I would set forth that which I had said to myself; and in order that it might appear more pity-moving, I proposed to say it as if I had spoken to them, and I said this sonnet, which begins, ‘O pilgrims.’

[Footnote Q: The most precious relic at Rome, and the one which chiefly attracted pilgrims, during a long period of the Middle Ages, was the Veronica, or representation of the Saviour’s face, supposed to have been miraculously impressed upon the handkerchief with which he wiped his face on his way to Calvary. It was preserved at St. Peter’s and shown only on special occasions. Compare with this passage the lines in the *Paradiso*, c. xxxi. 103-8:—



“As one that haply from Croatia came
To see our Veronica, and no whit
Could be contented with its olden fame,
Who in his heart saith, when they’re showing it,
'O Jesu Christ! O very Lord God mine!
Does truly this thy feature counterfeit?”
CAYLEY.



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G. Villani says, that in 1300, the year of jubilee, for the consolation of Christian pilgrims, the Veronica was shown in St. Peter's every Friday, and on other solemn festivals. viii. 36.]

"I called them *pilgrims* in the wide sense of that word; for pilgrims may be understood in two ways,—one wide, and one narrow. In the wide, whoever is out of his own country is so far a pilgrim; in the narrow use, by pilgrim is meant he only who goes to or returns from the house of St. James.[R] Moreover, it is to be known that those who travel in the service of the Most High are called by three distinct terms. Those who go beyond the sea, whence often they bring back the palm, are called *palms*. Those who go to the house of Galicia are called *pilgrims*, because the burial-place of St. James was more distant from his country than that of any other of the Apostles. And those are called *romei* who go to Rome, where these whom I call pilgrims were going.

[Footnote R: The shrine of St. James, at Compostella, (contracted from *Giacomo Apostolo*,) in Galicia, was a great resort of pilgrims during the Middle Ages,—and Santiago, the military patron of Spain, was one of the most popular saints of Christendom. Chaucer says, the Wif of Bathe

"Had passed many a straunge streem;
At Rome sche hadde ben, and at Boloynes,
In Galice at Seynt Jame, and at Coloyne."

And Shakspeare, in *All's Well that Ends Well*, makes Helena represent herself as "St. Jacques's pilgrim."]

"O pilgrims, who in pensive mood move
slow,
Thinking perchance of those who absent
are,
Say, do ye come from land away so far
As your appearance seems to us to show?"

"For ye weep not, the while ye forward go
Along the middle of the mourning town,
Seeming as persons who have nothing
known
Concerning the sad burden of her woe.

"If, through your will to hear, your steps ye
stay,
Truly my sighing heart declares to me
That ye shall afterwards depart in tears.



“For she[S] her Beatrice hath lost: and ye
Shall know, the words that man of her
may say
Have power to make weep whoever
hears.”

[Footnote S: The city.]

Some time after this sonnet was written, two ladies sent to Dante, asking him for some of his rhymes. That he might honor their request, he wrote a new sonnet and sent it to them with two that he had previously composed. In his new sonnet, he told how his thought mounted to heaven, as a pilgrim, and beheld his lady in such condition of glory as could not be comprehended by his intellect; for our intellect, in regard to the souls of the blessed, is as weak as our eyes are to the sun. But though he could not clearly see where his thought led him, at least he understood that his thought told of his lady in glory.



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“Beyond the sphere that widest orbit hath
Passeth the sigh that issues from my
heart,
While weeping Love doth unto him impart
Intelligence which leads him on his path,

“When at the wished-for place his flight he
stays,
A lady he beholds, in honor dight,
And shining so, that, through her splendid
light,
The pilgrim spirit upon her doth gaze.

“He sees her such that his reporting words
I understand not, for he speaketh low
And strange to the sad heart which makes
him tell;

“He speaketh of that gentle one, I know,
Since oft he Beatrice’s name records;
So, ladies dear, I understand him well.”

This was the last of the poems which Dante composed in immediate honor and memory of Beatrice, and is the last of those which he inserted in the “Vita Nuova.” It was not that his love grew cold, or that her image became faint in his remembrance; but, as he tells us in a few concluding and memorable words, from this time forward he devoted himself to preparation for a work in which the earthly Beatrice should have less part, while the heavenly and blessed spirit of her whom he had loved should receive more becoming honors. The lover’s grief was to find no more expression; the lamentations for the loss which could never be made good to him were to cease; the exhibition of a personal sorrow was at an end. Love and grief, in their double ministry, had refined, enlarged, and exalted his spirit to the conception of a design unparalleled in its nature, and of which no intellectual genius, unpurged by suffering, and impenetrated in its deepest recesses by the spiritualizing heats of emotion, would have been capable of conceiving. Moreover, as time wore on, its natural result was gradually to withdraw the poet from the influence of temporary excitements of feeling, resulting from his experience of love and death, and to bring him to the contemplation of life as affected by the presence and the memory of Beatrice in its eternal and universal relations. He tells us in the “Convito,” that, “after some time, my mind, which neither such consolation as I could give it, nor that offered to it by others, availed to comfort, determined to turn to that method by which others in grief had consoled themselves. And I set myself to read that book, but little known, of Boethius, in which in prison and exile he had consoled himself. And hearing, likewise, that Tully had written a book, in which, treating of friendship, he had offered some words of comfort to Laelius, a most excellent man,



on the death of Scipio, his friend, I read this also. And although at first it was hard for me to enter into their meaning, I at length entered into it so far as my knowledge of language, and such little capacity as I had, enabled me; by means of which capacity, I had already, like one dreaming, seen many things, as may be seen in the 'New Life.' And as it might happen that a man seeking silver should, beyond his expectation, find gold, which a hidden chance presents to him, not, perhaps, without Divine direction, so I, who sought for consolation, found not only a remedy for my tears, but also acquaintance with authors, with knowledge, and with books."



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Nor did these serious and solitary studies withdraw him from the pursuit of wisdom among men and in the active world. Year by year, he entered more fully into the affairs of state, and took a larger portion of their conduct upon himself.

His heart kept fresh by abiding recollections of love, his faith quickened by and intermingled with the tenderest hopes, his imagination uplifted by the affection which overleaped the boundaries of the invisible world, and his intellect disciplined by study of books and of men, his experience enlarged by constant occupation in affairs, his judgment matured by the quick succession of important events in which he was involved,—every part of his nature was thus prepared for the successful accomplishment of that great and sacred design which he set before himself now in his youth. Heaven had called and selected him for a work which even in his own eyes partook somewhat of the nature of a prophetic charge. His strength was to be tested and his capacity to be approved. Life was ordered for the fulfilment of his commission. The men to whom God intrusts a message for the world find the service to which they are appointed one in which they must be ready to sacrifice everything. Dante looked forward, even at the beginning, to the end, and saw what lay between.

The pages of the “New Life” fitly close with words of that life in which all things shall be made new, “and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away.” The little book ends thus:—

“Soon after this, a wonderful vision appeared to me, in which I saw things which made me purpose to speak no more of this blessed one until I could more worthily treat of her. And to attain to this, I study to the utmost of my power, as she truly knoweth. So that, if it shall please Him through whom all things live, that my life be prolonged for some years, I hope to speak of her as never was spoken of any woman. And then may it please Him who is the Lord of Grace, that my soul may go to behold the glory of its lady, the blessed Beatrice, who in glory looks upon the face of Him, *qui est per omnia saecula benedictus* [who is Blessed forever]!”

In 1320, or perhaps not till 1321, the “Paradiso” was finished; in 1321, Dante died.

* * * * *

THE DOUBLE-HEADED SNAKE OF NEWBURY.

“Concerning ye Amphisbaena, as soon as I received your commands, I made diligent inquiry: he assures me y’t it had really two heads, one at each end, two mouths, two stings or tongues.”

Rev. Christopher Toppan to Cotton Mather.



Far away in the twilight time
Of every people, in every clime,
Dragons and griffins and monsters dire,
Born of water, and air, and fire,
Or nursed, like the Python, in the mud
And ooze of the old Deucalion flood,
Crawl and wriggle and foam with rage,
Through dusk tradition and ballad age.
So from the childhood of Newbury town
And its time of fable the tale comes down
Of a terror which haunted bush and brake,
The Amphisbaena, the Double Snake!



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Thou who makest the tale thy mirth,
Consider that strip of Christian earth
On the desolate shore of a sailless sea,
Full of terror and mystery,
Half-redeemed from the evil hold
Of the wood so dreary and dark and old,
Which drank with its lips of leaves the dew
When Time was young and the world was new,
And wove its shadows with sun and moon
Ere the stones of Cheops were squared and hewn;
Think of the sea's dread monotone,
Of the mournful wail from the pine-wood blown,
Of the strange, vast splendors that lit the North,
Of the troubled throes of the quaking earth,
And the dismal tales the Indian told,
Till the settler's heart at his hearth grew cold,
And he shrank from the tawny wizard's boasts,
And the hovering shadows seemed full of ghosts,
And above, below, and on every side,
The fear of his creed seemed verified;—
And think, if his lot were now thine own,
To grope with terrors nor named nor known,
How laxer muscle and weaker nerve
And a feebler faith thy need might serve;
And own to thyself the wonder more
That the snake had two heads and not a score!

Whether he lurked in the Oldtown fen,
Or the gray earth-flax of the Devil's Den,
Or swam in the wooded Artichoke,
Or coiled by the Northman's Written Rock,
Nothing on record is left to show;
Only the fact that he lived, we know,
And left the cast of a "double head"
In the scaly mask which he yearly shed.
For he carried a head where his tail should be,
And the two, of course, could never agree,
But wriggled about with main and might,
Now to the left and now to the right;
Pulling and twisting this way and that,
Neither knew what the other was at.

A snake with two heads, lurking so near!—
Judge of the wonder, guess at the fear!



Think what ancient gossips might say,
Shaking their heads in their dreary way,
Between the meetings on Sabbath-day!
How urchins, searching at day's decline
The Common Pasture for sheep or kine,
The terrible double-ganger heard
In leafy rustle or whirr of bird!
Think what a zest it gave to the sport
In berry-time of the younger sort,
As over pastures blackberry-twined
Reuben and Dorothy lagged behind,
And closer and closer, for fear of harm,
The maiden clung to her lover's arm;
And how the spark, who was forced to stay,
By his sweetheart's fears, till the break of day,
Thanked the snake for the fond delay!

Far and wide the tale was told,
Like a snowball growing while it rolled.
The nurse hushed with it the baby's cry;
And it served, in the worthy minister's eye,
To paint the primitive Serpent by.
Cotton Mather came posting down
All the way to Newbury town,
With his eyes agog and his ears set wide,

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And his marvellous inkhorn at his side;
Stirring the while in the shallow pool
Of his brains for the lore he learned at school,
To garnish the story, with here a streak
Of Latin, and there another of Greek:
And the tales he heard and the notes he took,
Behold! are they not in his Wonder-Book?

Stories, like dragons, are hard to kill.
If the snake does not, the tale runs still
In Byfield Meadows, on Pipestone Hill.
And still, whenever husband and wife
Publish the shame of their daily strife,
And, with mad cross-purpose, tug and strain
At either end of the marriage-chain,
The gossips say, with a knowing shake
Of their gray heads, "Look at the Double Snake!
One in body and two in will,
The Amphisbaena is living still!"

A PLEA FOR THE FIJIANS;

OR, CAN NOTHING BE SAID IN FAVOR OF ROASTING ONE'S EQUALS?

It is with a feeling of no mean satisfaction, that, in this year of 1859, the philosopher can calmly propose the investigation of a subject, the mere mention of which would have created universal disgust, and even horror, at a period not long past. Thanks to the progress of liberal ideas and sound criticism, we are able, in the middle of the ever-memorable Nineteenth Century, serenely to examine anew those questions which for entire centuries stolid prejudice and narrow dogmatism considered settled, and adjudicated in the High Court of Humanity for all times to come. However signal the progress of our age may be in the useful arts and in aesthetics, especially in upholstery, in chemistry, in the government of large cities, and in the purity of commerce, in pottery, pills, and poetry, and in the dignity of politics, nothing, we may venture to say, will so distinctly and so broadly characterize the period in which we happily live, when the future historian shall sweep with his star-seeker over the past, as the joyful fact, that we, above all others, have divested ourselves of long-cherished errors, hugged by our forefathers as truths full of life and vigor, and have, indeed, so to speak, founded a *Novum Organon* in fact and reality, while the great Bacon proposed one in mind and theory. To our enlightened age it was reserved to return to polygamy, after nearly three



thousand dragging years of dull adhesion of our race to tiresome monogamy, leaping back by one bound over the whole European Past into ancient and respectable Asia. *Ex Oriente lux; ex Oriente gaudia seraglii!* It is in our blessed epoch that atheism, by some, and pantheism, by others, are boldly taught and vindicated, as once they were by Greeks or Orientals, and with an earnestness and enthusiasm very different from the sneer with which Encyclopaedists of Voltaire's time attacked Christianity and Deism. To prove, however, the magnificent many-sidedness of our noble times, it is we that have returned once more to pictures of the Virgin Mary with winking and with weeping eyes,



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or to her apparitions talking *patois*, as that of La Valette, and to a hundred things in the Church, cautiously passed over *sub silentio* in the last century, but now joyously proclaimed and sustained with defiant erudition by English and German *doctores graces*, and by the Parisian “Univers,” which, openly rejoicing in the English blood spilt by the Sepoys,—for it is but Protestant blood, and that of hateful freemen,—heralds the second or third advent of universal love and Papacy. It is in our age that representative, and indeed all institutional government, for the first time, is called effete parliamentarism, a theatrical delusion, for which, according to the requirements of advanced civilization, the beneficent, harmonious, and ever-glorious Caesarism, *pur et simple*, must be substituted, as it was once sublimely exhibited in the attractive Caesars of Rome, those favorites of History and very pets of Clío. In the time of Tiberius, as President Troplong beautifully and officially expressed it, “Democracy at last seated herself on the imperial throne, embodied in the Caesars,”—those worshipful incarnations of democracy, brought to our view in the *tableaux* of Suetonius and by the accounts of Tacitus. We have at last returned to Caesarism, or Asiatic absolutism, improved by modern light, and making the emperor a Second Providence, opening and shutting the mouths of the universal-suffrage people, for words or bread, as imperial divinity finds best. This is the progress of our age in Europe, while we, in this hemisphere, have taken, for the first time in history, a rational view of party strife, and with unclouded intelligence maintain that judges and presidents are, and ought to be, party exponents, doing away with those once romantic, but certainly superannuated ideas of Country, Justice, Truth, and Patriotism. All real progress tends toward simplification; and how simple are the idea of party and the associations clustering around this sacred word, compared with the confusing and embarrassing unreality of those ideas and juvenile feelings we have mentioned last!

But we have not done yet with the glory of our age. It is this, the decennium we are soon going to close, that has risen to that enviable eminence whence slavery is declared a precious good of itself, a hallowed agent of civilization, an indispensable element of conservatism, and a foundation of true socialism. From this lofty eminence the seer-statesman—rising far above the philosophical sagacity displayed by Aristotle and Varro, when they discussed the sacred topic—proclaims that Capital ought to own, and has a divine right to own, and always more or less does own, Labor; and that, since Labor constitutes the whole humanity of the laboring man, it clearly follows that he himself must be owned, if his labor be owned. Would you own the bird without its cage? Generous gospel of the rich! Blessed are the wealthy!



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It is the destiny of the middle of the nineteenth century—well may we be forgiven, if we pronounce it with some pride—unhesitatingly to defend the African slave-trade, and to smile at what sickly philanthropists used to consider the unutterable woe, the unmeasured crime, and the diabolical hard-heartedness of that traffic. We have changed all this; and, to say the truth, it was high time to discover that the negro-trade forms a charming chapter in the history of Europe, and that the protracted efforts to put it down were unchristian and unstatesmanlike. Pitt, Roscoe, Wilberforce, Burke, Washington, Franklin, Madison, Adams, Lowndes,—puny names! short-sighted men! By the African slave-trade, creatures that are hardly deserving the name of men, on account of organic, intellectual, and moral incapacity, are forcibly carried into the regions of Christian religion and civilization, there to become civilized in spite of their unfitness for civilization. The mariners, usually occupied in risking life or health merely for the sake of base traffic and filthy lucre, are suddenly transformed into ministering agents of civilization and religion. It gives a priestly character to the captain of a slave-ship,—to him that is willing to break the laws of his country, even daring the gallows, for the benefit of the sable brother, and of his law-abiding conservative society. How different from those dark times when the poet could say, _—Homo ignoto homini lupus est!_ The missionary only endeavors to carry the Church to Africa; the slave-trader carries Africa to the Church, to civilization, and to the auction-table.

There are but two more returns to truth and justice necessary,—the Inquisition and the Witch-Trials. These restored, we may safely congratulate ourselves on having regained the ground on which our race stood before the Reformation, that untoward event, whence all the mischief dates that has befallen man in the shape of human rights, liberty, and other deplorable things, as lately a grave writer—not a Catholic, nor a Jew either—gravely assured us. Gentle readers, let us not be impatient. Progress has been of late so rapid, that many of you, it is to be hoped, will yet have an opportunity of hailing the return of those two noble institutions, *pro majore gloria Dei*, for which they always existed, as long as chill and misty skepticism did not extinguish their glowing poetry. Ah! happy times! poetic age! when there existed not only “words that burn,” but also laws that burned!

In the mean time, it may not be inappropriate to commence the consideration of a topic somewhat farther removed from us, but which, according to our humble opinion, ought not to remain wholly beyond the limits of a candid, liberal, and unprejudiced examination,—we mean the important question, Whether the choicest of all substances, the most delicate of all muscular texture, that substance of which kings, philosophers, policemen, and supporters of crinoline are fashioned



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by the plastic hand of Nature, ought forever to be excluded from the reproductive process of wasted energy and proportionably consumed nervous and cerebral fibre. Reader, do not shrink; grant us a patient ear. You do not know how rapidly you may change your own opinion and feelings. Do you not remember with what awe we first read in the "Almanach des Gourmands," that a certain *sauce piquante* was so fine that with it a man would eat his own mother? This was only twenty years ago; yet all of us, now, are helping a high-bred gentleman, trading, on a gigantic scale, in the bones of his great ancestor. What sublimity of peddling!

To those who say, It is unnatural to eat our friends, we would answer, that it is the office of civilization to remove us farther and farther from Nature. Analyze the present magnitude called Lady, and you can arithmetically state it, how little of it is nature-woman, and how much is hoop-civilization. To those, again, who object, that it is too primitive, we would reply, that the highest civilization is always a return to Nature, which is likewise exemplified by many of our ladies in the ball-room,—we mean by their upper portion.

But *revenons a nos moutons*. The Rev. Messrs. Williams and Calvert, missionaries, for many long years, among the Fijians, state, in their recently published work, that those unsophisticated children of Nature eat "long pig,"—as they call, with graceful humor, roast-man, in contradistinction to "short-pig," by which they designate our squealing fellow-roasters,—from three different motives.—When a chief has a gala-day, or desires to signal his arrival by a right royal feast, it is considered befitting to slaughter some men, to let the blood run in the path of royalty, and to have on the table some *roast-homme*. Our Captain Wilkins told us, years ago, that, for this *roast-homme*, a plump Fijiana, of some twelve or thirteen years, is preferred. They know very well what is good!—The second motive is hatred. When a Fijian mortally hates a person, he endeavors to kill him; and having killed the enemy, why should the victim not be eaten?—Lastly, it would seem that affectionate regard, especially for a favorite wife, sometimes rises to a mordant passion and an unconquerable longing for material assimilation,—so much so, that the loving husband roasts his Penelope, and neighbors are invited to participate in his better fourth or fifth, as the polygamic case may be. Perhaps, years after, when with less demonstrative nations the memory of the beloved one would have passed away, the Fijian Fidelio may smack his lips, and exclaim, with Petrarch's fervor,

"Perche Morte fura
Prima i migliori, e lascia star i rei:
Questa aspettata al regno degli Dei
Cosa bella mortal passa e non dura."



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Now we are very anxious not to be misunderstood by our readers. In writing this paper, we do not mean to urge the reintroduction of Cannibalism among us at once. The public mind may not yet be ripe for it; but we desire to assist in placing the subject in its proper light, and in showing that an enlightened impartiality can find very much in defence of the Fijians,—more, indeed, than the Rev. Mr. Froude has been able to accumulate in favor of his wife-devouring hero,—or than Mr. Spratt can say in favor of humanization in general, and the breaking-up of the Union in particular, by the reopening of the African slave-trade,—or than our venerable chief-justice has contrived to say in favor of reintroducing slavery in conquered territory, where positive law had abolished or excluded it, by the abstract Constitution itself, *proprio vigore*, (not quite unlike a wagoner, it seems to us, that carries the soil of distant parts, *ipsa adhesione*, as it sticks to his boots, into the tavern-room,) without special law, which even the ancient civilians very stupidly declared to be necessary. First, you will remember, it was passionately maintained that the Constitution of the United States does not know the Common Law; and now it is insisted that Common Law (so far as slavery is concerned) is as inherent in the Constitution as the black pigment is in the negro. You cannot wash it out; it inheres physiologically in the Constitution. I tell you, reader, we are *fast* people indeed; we travel fast in our opinions, with now and then a somerset for the delectation of the philosopher.

Let us sit down, and have a philosophical conversation; above all, let us discard sentiment, feeling,—what you call heart, and all that sort of thing. You know how much mischief Las Casas has done by allowing his feelings to interfere when the Spaniards roasted Indians, from what he chose to call diabolical lust of gold, and sheer, abstract cruelty. Poor Bishop! He belonged to the softs. Let us be philosophers, economists, and, above all, Constitutionalists. Some philosophers, indeed, have said that all idea of Right and Wrong, and the idea that there is a difference between the two, must needs, first of all, start from sentiment; but leave, I implore you, such philosophic foggyism behind you.

First, then, as to the principle of Right. It is a fact, that most tribes and races, probably all nations in their earliest days, have killed old and useless parents, and have eaten enemies, once slain,—perhaps friends, too. Some nations carried the eating of human flesh far down into their civilized periods and into recent times. The Spaniards found the civilized Aztecs enjoying their *petits soupers* of babes *a la Tartare*, or gorgeous dinners on fattened heroes *aux truffes*. Have you forgotten that from that fine Introduction to Prescott's "Conquest of Mexico" a flavor of roast "long pig" steams into our nostrils as from a royal kitchen? Eating our equals, therefore,



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is sound Common Law of all mankind, even more so than slavery, for it exists before slavery can be introduced. Slavery is introduced when the prisoner of war may be made to work,—when the tilling of the soil has commenced; though then not always; for we now know that slavery was introduced among the Greeks at a comparatively late period: but killing parents and eating enemies exists in the hunter's state, and at those periods when people find it hard work to obtain food, each one for himself, to keep even a starved body and a little bit of soul together. Chewing our neighbor is even better, for it is older Common Law, than the universal buying of a wife and consequent selling of daughters which exists even now over far the greater portion of the globe. We take it that our species began with eating itself without paying for the fare. Partaking of our neighbor precedes all *lex scripta*, all statute law, all constitutions. As to ourselves in particular, whose law is the English law, we know that the Druids sacrificed human beings to their gods; and every one knows full well, that man, when in gastronomic contact with the gods, always appropriates the most savory morsels and the largest portions of the sacrifice to himself, leaving to the ethereal taste of Jove or Tezcatlipoca the smell of some burnt bones or inwards. Yet there is no law on record abolishing human sacrifices. We know, indeed, that some Teutonic tribes, when they adopted Christianity, positively prohibited the eating of horse-flesh, but no law ever forbade to honor our fathers and mothers by making them parts of our feasts; so that no lawyer of the true sort will deny, that, to this day, the right of sacrificing fellow-men, and the reasonable concomitant of eating the better portion of the sacrifice, still exists. Greeks and Romans have sacrificed men; why should not we? That men have their individual rights is no valid objection. Rights depend exclusively upon the law; and the law, we have shown, does not grant equal rights (at least, not equal destinations) to the Eater and the Eatee; for it seems to be one thing to eat, and another to be eaten. It was a very silly maxim of the ancient Civil Law, That the law, the *regula*, is derived from the right (*jus*), not the *jus* from the law. Has not a Supreme Court in one of our States lately denied to a negro even the right to choose between liberty and slavery,—the choice being left to him by his deceased master,—because the creature (which, when doing wrong, is responsible and has a will imputed to him) has no will to choose, because it cannot have any, says the Supreme Court of that State?



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However, it will doubtless be objected by some, that it is simply disgusting to eat our fellow-creatures of the same species,—that it is unnatural and against our religion,—and that so remarkable a diversity of taste can be explained only on the ground of our belonging to different races. We do not believe that the Fijians belong to a different race. Fijian, or Fijician, results, by a slight change of letters, from the word Phoenician; and there can be no doubt that the Fijians are descendants of those Phoenicians who, according to Herodotus, sailed, in the reign of the Egyptian King Necho, from the Persian Gulf round the Cape of Good Hope, and entered the Mediterranean through the Pillars of Hercules. How they came to be wafted to the opposite hemisphere is not for us to explain, nor do we know it. Suffice it to say, that Fijician and Phoenician are the same word. Possibly old Admiral Hanno preceded Captain Cook. Who can prove the contrary?

As to the first of these objections, we admit that some people may feel a degree of aversion to *roast-homme*; but so does the Mahometan abominate roast “short pig”; and a Brahmin, taken to Cincinnati and its environs, at the sanguinary hog-murder time, would die outright, of horror. We almost died, ourselves, at the sickening sight of that porcian massacre. *De gustibus non est disputantibus*, as our colonel used to say. Disgust, is the result of a special treaty of amity and reciprocity between the stomach and the imagination, differing according to difference in the contracting parties. We have known many persons who would not touch mutton, and others who would rather starve than eat oysters; while we ourselves revolt at sourkrout, which, nevertheless, millions of Germans, French, and Americans consider delicious. Disgust is arbitrary; it does not furnish us with a philosophical ground for argumentation. The Fijian does not feel disgust at the flavor of a well-roasted white sailor; and as long as he does not insist upon our relishing his fare, what right have we to ask him to feel disgusted? When the panther-tailed Aztec priest fattened his prisoner, or carried along the children decked with wreaths, soon to be smothered in their own juice, he cannot have felt disgust, any more than the Malay, of whom Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles tells us, that, with epicurean refinement, he cut the choicest bits from his living prisoner, in order to baste them to a turn and season them with choice pepper.

Is it unnatural? We have once seen, with our own eyes, a very large unroasted “small pig” devour one of her own piglets, whilst the others lustily drew nourishment from the grunting mother. It took our appetite away for forty-eight hours; yet it was nature; and in some portions of Europe, people express the highest degree of fondness by the expressive phrase,—“I could eat you.” We may rely upon it, that, as Mr. Agassiz says, —“There is no difference in kind, but only in degree.”



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With reference to religion, we readily acknowledge that dining *a la Fijienne* does not appear exactly to be a divine institution, as slavery has recently been discovered to be. From olden times it used to be the belief of superstitious man that there was a divine afflatus in liberty; but our profound theological scholars and Biblical critics have found out that the divinity is on the other side. Neither Tertullian nor Austin, neither St. Bernard nor any Pope, good or bad, neither Luther, Bossuet, Calvin, nor Baxter, no commentator, exegetist, or preacher, ever found out, what these profoundest inquirers have at length discovered, that slavery is divine, like matrimony. Had they discovered this great truth before the Catholic Church settled the number of sacraments, there must have been eight instead of seven. Why was their advent so late?

Possibly these grave and candid, deep and fervent theologians, whose opinions on theology are quoted everywhere, whose works are spread over the globe, and whose lore is stupendous, may yet discover that there is a divine flavor even in a soup *a la Mexicaine*. One thing, however, is quite certain, namely,—that there is no prohibition of digestively assimilating our neighbor with ourselves, from one end of the Bible to the other. Was not Fielding's parson logical, who preferred punch to wine, because it is nowhere spoken ill of in Scripture? When Baron Viereck was rebuked by a friend for having given his daughter in marriage to the King of Denmark, the Queen, undivorced, continuing to occupy the throne, the shrewd father replied, that he had found no passage in the Bible that prohibits a King of Denmark from having two wives; and has not the democratic Fijian as good a right to that logic as the noble Baron had?

To say the truth, all these objections are founded mainly upon sentiment, and we trust that morbid sentimentality will have no weight in an age which ridicules the horror of the British Commons at the descriptions of the middle passage, and demands calm judgment when the question arises, how to increase the number of representatives and the profits on sugar and cotton,—in our poetic age, in which republican senators have openly declared their chivalrous allegiance to the sovereign substance of which night-caps are made, and petticoats,—to His Majesty, King Cotton,—not a very merry king, it must be owned, as young King Charles was, or old King Cole, but still a worthy sovereign; for, after all, he is but a new and most bulky avatar of Almighty Dollar.

No objection whatsoever can be made to the *deglutatio Fijiana* on the score of utility. The islands of the Fijians are but small; no Fijian Attila can lead forth his hosts into neighboring countries; no Fijian Goths can pour down from Polynesian Alps into an Oceanic Italy; no Athenians can there send sons and gods to a Coreyra: and no Fijian Miles Standish can there walk up and down before his pipe-clayed bandoleers



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in foreign colonies. How, then, can an over-increase of population be more harmoniously prevented than by making the young and sleek furnish the starving with a plump existence? Is it not, economically viewed, the principle of Dr. Franklin's smoke-consuming pipe applied to the infinitely more important sphere of human existence? The festive table, to which, according to the great Malthus, Nature declines inviting a large portion of every well-peopled country, will never be known by the happy Fijian Say or Senior, so long as wise conservatism shall not change its old and sacred laws, and shall allow Nature to invite one happy portion as guests, and another happy portion as savory dishes. It is Nature in modest simplicity, as it is exhibited in half-a-dozen mice in a deep kettle, of whom one survivor and material representative remains. The Chinese expose female infants, and lawful infanticide has been abolished in some districts of the British East Indies within these thirty years only. Would it not be wiser to reassimilate the tender dear ones, and think of them ever after with smacking memory?

It is true, indeed, that, upon the whole, Fijian gastronomy leers more toward the tender sex than toward that which in our country wears the trousers uncrinolined. But, we submit, is this a fair objection? Why *is* the tender sex more *tender*? Lately, when an orator had strongly expressed himself against the maxim of patriotic office-hunters,—“To the victor belong the spoils,” he was very logically asked,—“And pray, Sir, to whom should the spoils belong, if not to the victor?” So we would ask, should any one complain of girls being thus economized by men,—“Who, in the name of common sense, should, if not men? Would you have them perform that sacrificial duty for one another?”

But whatever may be thought, by some of our lovely readers, of this last argument, (which henceforth may be termed *argumentum marcianum*,) and which, in the case before us, will always be an *ex parte* argument, all will agree that no objection can be taken to making repasts on *porcus longus* once fairly killed,—for instance, on heroes stretched on the battle-field. This was the cogent argument of the New Zealander, after baptism,—used in discussing the topic with the Rev. Mr. Yale. Willing to give up slaughtering fellow-men for the sake of eating them, he could not see why it was not wicked to waste so much good food.

If it were objected, that, admitting the making of your enemy's flesh flesh of your own flesh would necessarily lead to skirmishes, “surprise-parties,” and battles for the sole purpose of getting a dinner,—to a sort of pre-prandial exercise, as in fishing,—we would simply answer, “Too late!” Our friends who desire the reopening of the African slave-trade declare that they wish to buy slaves only. When statesmen, and missionaries, and simple people with simple sense and simple hearts, cry out to them, “Stop!



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for the sake of our common Father, stop! By reopening the slave-trade, you revive the vilest crimes, and, for every negro ultimately sold to you on the coast, you cause the murder of at least ten in the interior, not to speak of those that are coolly massacred in the barracoon, when no demand exists,”—the satisfactory reply is: “We have nothing to do with all that; we do not travel beyond the record. We buy the negro who is a slave; what made him a slave we do not care to know. The pearl in the market does not show the toil of the fisher.” And so the Fijian would properly reply: “Do not mix up different subjects. I rescue my departed brother from ignominious decay, and remake a man of him. How he came to depart,—that belongs to quite a different chapter.”

This utilitarian view acquires a still greater importance when applied to criminals under sentence of capital punishment. Soon after Beccaria, it was asked, if we mistake not, by Voltaire: “Of what use is the dead body of a criminal? You cannot restore the victim to life by the execution of the murderer.” And many pardons in America have been granted on the assumption that no satisfactory answer could be given to the philosophical question: “What use can the swinging body of the poor creature be to any one?” The Fijian alone has a perfectly satisfactory reply.

The missionaries, already named in this paper, give a long account of the execution of a supposed Fijian conspirator, which ends with these words: “At last he was brought down to the ground by a club; after which he was eaten.”

We can discern many advantages to be derived from the introduction of what we will call “*pates penitentiaires*.”

There would be no waste of food.

The sentence of the judge would sound more civilized; for, instead of hearing the odious words, “You shall be hanged by the neck until you are dead,” words would be pronounced somewhat like these: “You shall be taken to Delmonico, and there and by him be served up on such a day, as *scelerat en papillotes*.”

There would be a greater readiness in jurors to convict interesting criminals, who now-a-days cannot be found guilty,—especially were a law passed that the jury should have the criminal. We read in the “Scottish Criminal Trials,” that a woman, clearly convicted of an atrocious murder, was, nevertheless, found not guilty. The astonished lord justiciary asked the foreman, how it was possible to find the prisoner not guilty, with such overwhelming evidence, and was answered: “Becaase, my laird, she is purty.” Would not the delicacy of the prisoner have been an additional reason for finding her guilty with Fijian jurors?



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Fourthly, there would be an obvious national advantage in some countries, in which the government is at one and the same time busily engaged in finding cheap food for the people, and in transporting annually many hundreds of political *suspects* to killing colonies. It is, indeed, surprising, that so sagacious and parental a government as that of Napoleon the Third,—may His Majesty be long preserved for the civilization of France, the peace of Europe, and the glory of mankind in general!—it is surprising, that his all-providing and all-foreseeing government has not long ago discovered how the craving of the national stomach for food, and of the popular mind for political purification, might be stilled by no longer transporting political offenders and *suspects* to French Guiana or Lambessa, where they uselessly and ignobly perish, but by sentencing them, instead, to the enviable lot of making a feast for their brethren. Would not every Socialist, receiving permission thus to help feed society, exclaim: *C'est magnifique! mais c'est sublime!*

When Robespierre was in the zenith of his guillotinacious glory, the *bonnes* would sit around the scaffold, minding children and knitting stockings, to see the head of a marquis or of a shoemaker fall. We leave it to every reader, whether there would not be more historic unity and poetic completeness in the *tableau*, were we to read that these good creatures dined upon the *ci-devant*, after the execution.

Imperial Rome is the *beau ideal* of the present government of *la belle France*; and we must own, that, when perusing the exhilarating pages of Suetonius, it has often occurred to our mind that there is something wanting in the list of high deeds related of those superb specimens of humanity exhibited in the Caligulas and Heliogabali. They did so much for cookery! Yet they seem never to have risen above an indirect consumption of their subjects, by feeding their lobsters with ignoble slaves; never did they directly bestow upon Roman freemen the honor of being served up for the imperial table. Nero murdered his mother and bade his teacher open his own veins. Would it not read much more civilized, if the annals of the empire were telling us: *Nero, jam divus, leniter dixit: O Seneca, Pundit delectabilis et philosophe laute, quis dubitet te libentissime mihi hodie proferre artocreatem stoicum?*

Strange as it may appear to some readers, that thus the polished Romans might have learned a lesson of civilization from the Fijians, they will not reject our suggestion, when they reflect, that, only a short time ago, they were, probably, as much surprised at finding the government of so great a country as France adopting imperial Rome as a model body-politic. Familiarize your mind with the idea, and all difficulties vanish. It is only the last step which costs,—not the first.



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There are many more reasons that might be urged in favor of the Fijians. We are not aware that the reverend missionaries have given any statistical tables, showing a regularity in the annual numbers of consumed persons, male and female, classed according to the reasons why consumed; but no one can doubt that such tables might be given, and if so, the whole question of anthropophagism could be very easily buckled up in a tidy little valise. The Fijians, in the plural, we take it, have little or nothing to do with it; it is the abstract, will-less, impersonal Fijian—who, according to the learned Ferrari,[A] would be called, now, Podesta Fijian, now Consul Fijian, now Papa Fijianus—that snuffs the flavor of his own dear natural *pot a feu*; and Right or Wrong, Just or Unjust, Commendable or Revolting, are schoolboy distinctions, no longer recognized by the philosophical historian, who treats all moral questions and national movements like questions of natural philosophy,—like social chemistry, in which so puerile a word as poison has no place. Arsenic is arsenic with certain effects, and nothing more; and society poisons itself annually to such an amount, arithmetically expressed.

[Footnote A: *Histoire des Revolutions d'Italie, ou Guelf's et Gibelins*. Par J. Ferrari. Paris, 1858.]

We ask leave to add two suggestions in favor of the Fijians, both, it would seem, of philosophic importance. If you do not like the Fijian national dish,—*national* in more than one sense,—have the dear sons of Nature, as Carlyle probably would call them, not the right to reply,—“We do not like your *sauerkraut*, if you are a German; your *polenta*, if you are an Italian; your *olla podrida*, if you are a Spaniard; nor your *grit*, if you are a Dane; your bacon and greasy greens, if you are a Southerner; nor your baked beans, if you are a Northerner; nor any other stuff called national dishes,—all of which are vile, except English roast beef and plum-pudding, and Neapolitan macaroni.”

The other suggestion is this: Is it likely that Nature has placed the Fijians exactly in the same meridian with Greenwich, which in some measure may be called the meridian of civilization, for nothing?—is it likely that all the solar and cosmic influences which must result from this fact have really left the Fijian in that state of hyper-brutality which you think is proved by his *menage*? Is it, we ask, fairly to be supposed? We think not.

We do not presume to know whether we have carried conviction to the minds of our readers; but even if we have not,—if we have only been sufficiently fortunate to give the first impulse to the great inquiry, we shall be satisfied. If we consider the history of some opinions now openly preached and vehemently maintained,—how timidly they were first hinted at, within our own recollection, and with what surprising rapidity they have risen to an unblushing



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amplitude, rustling and sweeping proudly and defiantly along the Broadway of human events and opinions,—how that which but a lustre ago was wicked is now virtuous,—we see no reason for despair; and our century may yet witness the time when it will be considered the highest mixture of philosophic courtesy and Christian urbanity to make the most graceful semi-lateral bow, as you pass your friend in the street, and, kissing the tip of your finger, to lisp, with bending head and smiling eye,—

“May I never disagree with you!”

THE PROFESSOR AT THE BREAKFAST-TABLE.

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

[*The Professor talks with the Reader. He tells a Young Girl's Story.*]

When the elements that went to the making of the first man, father of mankind, had been withdrawn from the world of unconscious matter, the balance of creation was disturbed. The materials that go to the making of one woman were set free by the abstraction from inanimate nature of one man's-worth of masculine constituents. These combined to make our first mother, by a logical necessity involved in the previous creation of our common father. All this, mythically, illustratively, and by no means doctrinally or polemically.

The man implies the woman, you will understand. The excellent gentleman whom I had the pleasure of setting right in a trifling matter a few weeks ago believes in the frequent occurrence of miracles at the present day. So do I. I believe, if you could find an uninhabited coral-reef island, in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, with plenty of cocoa-palms and bread-fruit on it, and put a handsome young fellow, like our Marylander, ashore upon it, if you touched there a year afterwards, you would find him walking under the palm trees arm in arm with a pretty woman.

Where would she come from?

Oh, that's the miracle!

—I was just as certain, when I saw that fine, high-colored youth at the upper right-hand corner of our table, that there would appear some fitting feminine counterpart to him, as if I had been a clairvoyant, seeing it all beforehand.

—I have a fancy that those Marylanders are just about near enough to the sun to ripen well.—How some of us fellows remember Joe and Harry, Baltimoreans, both! Joe, with his cheeks like lady-apples, and his eyes like black-heart cherries, and his teeth



like the whiteness of the flesh of cocoa-nuts, and his laugh that set the chandelier-drops rattling overhead, as we sat at our sparkling banquets in those gay times! Harry, champion, by acclamation, of the College heavyweights, broad-shouldered, bull-necked, square-jawed, six feet and trimmings, a little science, lots of pluck, good-natured as a steer in peace, formidable as a red-eyed bison in the crack of hand-to-hand battle! Who forgets the great muster-day, and the collision of the classic



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with the democratic forces? The huge butcher, fifteen stone,—two hundred and ten pounds,—good weight,—steps out like Telamonian Ajax, defiant. No words from Harry, the Baltimorean,—one of the quiet sort, who strike first, and do the talking, if there is any, afterwards. No words, but, in the place thereof, a clean, straight, hard hit, which took effect with a spank like the explosion of a percussion-cap, knocking the slayer of beeves down a sand-bank,—followed, alas! by the too impetuous youth, so that both rolled down together, and the conflict terminated in one of those inglorious and inevitable Yankee *clinches*, followed by a general *melee*, which make our native fistic encounters so different from such admirably-ordered contests as that which I once saw at an English fair, where everything was done decently and in order, and the fight began and ended with such grave propriety, that a sporting parson need hardly have hesitated to open it with a devout petition, and, after it was over, dismiss the ring with a benediction.

I can't help telling one more story about this great field-day, though it is the most wanton and irrelevant digression. But all of us have a little speck of fight underneath our peace and goodwill to men,—just a speck, for revolutions and great emergencies, you know,—so that we should not submit to be trodden quite flat by the first heavy-heeled aggressor that came along. You can tell a portrait from an ideal head, I suppose, and a true story from one spun out of the writer's invention. See whether this sounds true or not.

Admiral Sir Isaac Coffin sent out two fine blood-horses, Barefoot and Scrab by name, to Massachusetts, something before the time I am talking of. With them came a Yorkshire groom, a stocky little fellow, in velvet breeches, who made that mysterious hissing noise, traditionary in English stables, when he rubbed down the silken-skinned racers, in great perfection. After the soldiers had come from the muster-field, and some of the companies were on the village-common, there was still some skirmishing between a few individuals who had not had the fight taken out of them. The little Yorkshire groom thought he must serve out somebody. So he threw himself into an approved scientific attitude, and, in brief, emphatic language, expressed his urgent anxiety to accommodate any classical young gentleman who chose to consider himself a candidate for his attentions. I don't suppose there were many of the college boys that would have been a match for him in the art which Englishmen know so much more of than Americans, for the most part. However, one of the Sophomores, a very quiet, peaceable fellow, just stepped out of the crowd, and, running straight at the groom, as he stood there, sparring away, struck him with the sole of his foot, a straight blow, as if it had been with his fist,—and knocked him heels over head and senseless, so that he had to be carried off from the field. This ugly way of hitting is the great trick of the French *savate*, which is not commonly thought able to stand its ground against English pugilistic science.—These are old recollections, with not much to recommend them, except, perhaps, a dash of life, which may be worth a little something.



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The young Marylander brought them all up, you may remember. He recalled to my mind those two splendid pieces of vitality I told you of. Both have been long dead. How often we see these great red flaring flambeaux of life blown out, as it were, by a puff of wind,—and the little, single-wicked night-lamp of being, which some white-faced and attenuated invalid shades with trembling fingers, flickering on while they go out one after another, until its glimmer is all that is left to us of the generation it belonged to!

I told you that I was perfectly sure, beforehand, we should find some pleasing girlish or womanly shape to fill the blank at our table and match the dark-haired youth at the upper corner.

There she sits, at the very opposite corner, just as far off as accident could put her from this handsome fellow, by whose side she ought, of course, to be sitting. One of the “positive” blondes, as my friend, you may remember, used to call them. Tawny-haired, amber-eyed, full-throated, skin as white as a blanched almond. Looks dreamy to me, not self-conscious, though a black ribbon round her neck sets it off as a Marie-Antoinette’s diamond-necklace could not do. So in her dress, there is a harmony of tints that looks as if an artist had run his eye over her and given a hint or two like the finishing touch to a picture. I can’t help being struck with her, for she is at once rounded and fine in feature, looks calm, as blondes are apt to, and as if she might run wild, if she were trifled with.—It is just as I knew it would be,—and anybody can see that our young Marylander will be dead in love with her in a week.

Then if that little man would only turn out immensely rich and have the good-nature to die and leave them all his money, it would be as nice as a three-volume novel.

Little Boston is in a flurry, I suspect, with the excitement of having such a charming neighbor next him. I judge so mainly by his silence and by a certain rapt and serious look on his face, as if he were thinking of something that had happened, or that might happen, or that ought to happen,—or how beautiful her young life looked, or how hardly Nature had dealt with him, or something which struck him silent, at any rate. I made several conversational openings for him, but he did not fire up as he often does. I even went so far as to indulge in a fling at the State House, which, as we all know, is in truth a very imposing structure, covering less ground than St. Peter’s, but of similar general effect. The little man looked up, but did not reply to my taunt. He said to the young lady, however, that the State House was the Parthenon of our Acropolis, which seemed to please her, for she smiled, and he reddened a little,—so I thought. I don’t think it right to watch persons who are the subjects of special infirmity,—but we all do it.

I see that they have crowded the chairs a little at that end of the table, to make room for another new-comer of the lady sort. A well-mounted, middle-aged preparation, wearing her hair without a cap,—pretty wide in the parting, though,—contours vaguely hinted,—features very quiet,—says little as yet, but seems to keep her eye on the young lady, as if having some responsibility for her.—



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* * * * *

My record is a blank for some days after this. In the mean time I have contrived to make out the person and the story of our young lady, who, according to appearances, ought to furnish us a heroine for a boarding-house romance before a year is out. It is very curious that she should prove connected with a person many of us have heard of. Yet, curious as it is, I have been a hundred times struck with the circumstance that the most remote facts are constantly striking each other; just as vessels starting from ports thousands of miles apart pass close to each other in the naked breadth of the ocean, nay, sometimes even touch, in the dark, with a crack of timbers, a gurgling of water, a cry of startled sleepers,—a cry mysteriously echoed in warning dreams, as the wife of some Gloucester fisherman, some coasting skipper, wakes with a shriek, calls the name of her husband, and sinks back to uneasy slumbers upon her lonely pillow,—a widow.

Oh, these mysterious meetings! Leaving all the vague, waste, endless spaces of the washing desert, the ocean-steamer and the fishing-smack sail straight towards each other as if they ran in grooves ploughed for them in the waters from the beginning of creation! Not only things and events, but our own thoughts, are so full of these surprises, that, if there were a reader in my parish who did not recognize the familiar occurrence of what I am now going to mention, I should think it a case for the missionaries of the Society for the Propagation of Intelligence among the Comfortable Classes.

There are about as many twins in the births of thought as of children. For the first time in your lives you learn some fact or come across some idea. Within an hour, a day, a week, that same fact or idea strikes you from another quarter. It seems as if it had passed into space and bounded back upon you as an echo from the blank wall that shuts in the world of thought. Yet no possible connection exists between the two channels by which the thought or the fact arrived. Let me give an infinitesimal illustration.

One of the Boys mentioned, the other evening, in the course of a very pleasant poem he read us, a little trick of the Commons table-boarders, which I, nourished at the parental board, had never heard of. Young fellows being always hungry—Allow me to stop dead-short, in order to utter an aphorism which has been forming itself in one of the blank interior spaces of my intelligence, like a crystal in the cavity of a geode.

* * * * *

Aphorism by the Professor.

In order to know whether a human being is young or old, offer it food of different kinds at short intervals. If young, it will eat anything at any hour of the day or night. If old, it

observes stated periods, and you might as well attempt to regulate the time of high-water to suit a fishing-party as to change these periods.



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The crucial experiment is this. Offer a bulky and boggy bun to the suspected individual just ten minutes before dinner. If this is eagerly accepted and devoured, the fact of youth is established. If the subject of the question changes color and expresses surprise and incredulity, as if you could not possibly be in earnest, the fact of maturity is no less clear.

* * * * *

—Excuse me,—I return to my story of the Commons-table.—Young fellows being always hungry, and tea and dry toast being the meagre fare of the evening meal, it was a trick of some of the Boys to impale a slice of meat upon a fork, at dinner-time, and stick the fork holding it beneath the table, so that they could get it at tea-time. The dragons that guarded this table of the Hesperides found out the trick at last, and kept a sharp look-out for missing forks;—they knew where to find one, if it was not in its place. —Now the odd thing was, that, after waiting so many years to hear of this college trick, I should hear it mentioned *a second time* within the same twenty-four hours by a college youth of the present generation. Strange, but true. And so it has happened to me and to every person, often and often, to be hit in rapid succession by these twinned facts or thoughts, as if they were linked like chain-shot.

I was going to leave the simple reader to wonder over this, taking it as an unexplained marvel. I think, however, I will turn over a furrow of subsoil in it. The explanation is, of course, that in a great many thoughts there must be a few coincidences, and these instantly arrest our attention. Now we shall probably never have the least idea of the enormous number of impressions which pass through our consciousness, until in some future life we see the photographic record of our thoughts and the stereoscopic picture of our actions. There go more pieces to make up a conscious life or a living body than you think for. Why, some of you were surprised when a friend of mine told you there were fifty-eight separate pieces in a fiddle. How many “swimming glands”—solid, organized, regularly formed, rounded disks, taking an active part in all your vital processes, part and parcel, each one of them, of your corporeal being—do you suppose are whirled along, like pebbles in a stream, with the blood which warms your frame and colors your cheeks?—A noted German physiologist spread out a minute drop of blood, under the microscope, in narrow streaks, and counted the globules, and then made a calculation. The counting by the micrometer took him *a week*.—You have, my full-grown friend, of these little couriers in crimson or scarlet livery, running on your vital errands day and night as long as you live, sixty-five billions, five hundred and seventy thousand millions. Errors excepted.—Did I hear some gentleman say, “Doubted?”—I am the Professor. I sit in my chair with a petard under it that will blow me through the skylight of my lecture-room, if I do not know what I am talking about and whom I am quoting.



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Now, my dear friends, who are putting your hands to your foreheads, and saying to yourselves that you feel a little confused, as if you had been waltzing until things began to whirl slightly round you, is it possible that you do not clearly apprehend the exact connection of all that I have been saying, and its bearing on what is now to come? Listen, then. The number of these living elements in our bodies illustrates the incalculable multitude of our thoughts; the number of our thoughts accounts for those frequent coincidences spoken of; these coincidences in the world of thought illustrate those which we constantly observe in the world of outward events, of which the presence of the young girl now at our table, and proving to be the daughter of an old acquaintance some of us may remember, is the special example which led me through this labyrinth of reflections, and finally lands me at the commencement of this young girl's story, which, as I said, I have found the time and felt the interest to learn something of, and which I think I can tell without wronging the unconscious subject of my brief delineation.

* * * * *

IRIS.

You remember, perhaps, in some papers published awhile ago, an odd poem written by an old Latin tutor? He brought up at the verb *amo*, I love, as all of us do, and by and by Nature opened her great living dictionary for him at the word *filia*, a daughter. The poor man was greatly perplexed in choosing a name for her. *Lucretia* and *Virginia* were the first that he thought of; but then came up those pictured stories of Titus Livius, which he could never read without crying, though he had read them a hundred times.

—Lucretia sending for her husband and her father, each to bring one friend with him, and awaiting them in her chamber. To them her wrongs briefly. Let them see to the wretch, she will take care of herself. Then the hidden knife flashes out and sinks into her heart. She slides from her seat, and falls dying. “Her husband and her father cry aloud.”—No,—not Lucretia.

—Virginius,—a brown old soldier, father of a nice girl. She engaged to a very promising young man. Decemvir Appius takes a violent fancy to her,—must have her at any rate. Hires a lawyer to present the arguments in favor of the view that she was another man's daughter.

There used to be lawyers in Rome that would do such things.—All right. There are two sides to everything. *Audi alteram partem*. The legal gentleman has no opinion,—he only states the evidence.—A doubtful case. Let the young lady be under the protection of the Honorable Decemvir until it can be looked up thoroughly.—Father thinks it best, on the whole, to give in. Will explain the matter, if the young lady and her maid will step

this way. *That* is the explanation,—a stab with a butcher’s knife, snatched from a stall, meant for other lambs than this poor bleeding Virginia!



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The old man thought over the story. Then he must have one look at the original. So he took down the first volume and read it over. When he came to that part where it tells how the young gentleman she was engaged to and a friend of his took up the poor girl's bloodless shape and carried it through the street, and how all the women followed, wailing, and asking if that was what their daughters were coming to,—if that was what they were to get for being good girls,—he melted down into his accustomed tears of pity and grief, and, through them all, of delight at the charming Latin of the narrative. But it was impossible to call his child Virginia. He could never look at her without thinking she had a knife sticking in her bosom.

Dido would be a good name, and a fresh one. She was a queen, and the founder of a great city. Her story had been immortalized by the greatest of poets,—for the old Latin tutor clove to “Virgilius Maro,” as he called him, as closely as ever Dante did in his memorable journey. So he took down his Virgil,—it was the smooth-leafed, open-lettered quarto of Baskerville,—and began reading the loves and mishaps of *Dido*. It wouldn't do. A lady who had not learned discretion by experience, and came to an evil end. He shook his head, as he sadly repeated,

“—misera ante diem, subitoque accensa
furore”;

but when he came to the lines,

“Ergo Iris croceis per coelum roscida pennis
Mille trahens varios adverso Sole colores,”

he jumped up with a great exclamation, which the particular recording angel who heard it pretended not to understand, or it might have gone hard with the Latin tutor some time or other.

“*Iris* shall be her name!”—he said. So her name was *Iris*.

—The natural end of a tutor is to perish by starvation. It is only a question of time, just as with the burning of college libraries. These all burn up sooner or later, provided they are not housed in brick or stone and iron. I don't mean that you will see in the registry of deaths that this or that particular tutor died of well-marked, uncomplicated starvation. They *may*, even, in extreme cases, be carried off by a thin, watery kind of apoplexy, which sounds very well in the returns, but means little to those who know that it is only debility settling on the head. Generally, however, they fade and waste away under various pretexts,—calling it dyspepsia, consumption, and so on, to put a decent appearance upon the case and keep up the credit of the family and the institution where they have passed through the successive stages of inanition.



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In some cases it takes a great many years to kill a tutor by the process in question. You see, they do get food and clothes and fuel, in appreciable quantities, such as they are. You will even notice rows of books in their rooms, and a picture or two,—things that look as if they had surplus money; but these superfluities are the *water of crystallization* to scholars, and you can never get them away till the poor fellows effloresce into dust. Do not be deceived. The tutor breakfasts on coffee made of beans, edulcerated with milk watered to the verge of transparency; his mutton is tough and elastic, up to the moment when it becomes tired out and tasteless; his coal is a sullen, sulphurous anthracite, which rusts into ashes, rather than burns, in the shallow grate; his flimsy broadcloth is too thin for winter and too thick for summer. The greedy lungs of fifty hot-blooded boys suck the oxygen from the air he breathes in his recitation-room. In short, he undergoes a process of gentle and gradual starvation.

—The mother of little Iris was not called Electra, like hers of the old story, neither was her grandfather Oceanus. Her blood-name, which she gave away with her heart to the Latin tutor, was a plain old English one, and her water-name was Hannah, beautiful as recalling the mother of Samuel, and admirable as reading equally well from the initial letter forwards and from the terminal letter backwards. The poor lady, seated with her companion at the chess-board of matrimony, had but just pushed forward her one little white pawn upon an empty square, when the Black Knight, that cares nothing for castles or kings or queens, swooped down upon her and swept her from the larger board of life.

The old Latin tutor put a modest blue stone at the head of his late companion, with her name and age and *Eheu!* upon it,—a smaller one at her feet, with initials; and left her by herself, to be rained and snowed on,—which is a hard thing to do for those whom we have cherished tenderly.

About the time that the lichens, falling on the stone, like drops of water, had spread into fair, round rosettes, the tutor had starved into a slight cough. Then he began to draw the buckle of his black pantaloons a little tighter, and took in another reef in his never-ample waistcoat. His temples got a little hollow, and the contrasts of color in his cheeks more vivid than of old. After a while his walks fatigued him, and he was tired and breathed hard after going up a flight or two of stairs. Then came on other marks of inward trouble and general waste, which he spoke of to his physician as peculiar, and doubtless owing to accidental causes; to all which the doctor listened with deference, as if it had not been the old story that one in five or six of mankind in temperate climates tells, or has told for him, as if it were something new. As the doctor went out, he said to himself,—“On the rail at last. Accommodation train. A good many stops, but will



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get to the station by and by.” So the doctor wrote a recipe with the astrological sign of Jupiter before it, (just as your own physician does, inestimable reader, as you will see, if you look at his next prescription,) and departed, saying he would look in occasionally. After this, the Latin tutor began the usual course of “getting better,” until he got so much better that his face was very sharp, and when he smiled, three crescent lines showed at each side of his lips, and when he spoke, it was in a muffled whisper, and the white of his eye glistened as pearly as the purest porcelain,—so much better, that he hoped—by spring—he—might be able—to—attend—to his class again.—But he was recommended not to expose himself, and so kept his chamber, and occasionally, not having anything to do, his bed. The unmarried sister with whom he lived took care of him; and the child, now old enough to be manageable, and even useful in trifling offices, sat in the chamber, or played about.

Things could not go on so forever, of course. One morning his face was sunken and his hands very, very cold. He was “better,” he whispered, but sadly and faintly. After a while he grew restless and seemed a little wandering. His mind ran on his classics, and fell back on the Latin grammar.

“Iris!” he said,—“*filiola mea!*”—The child knew this meant *my dear little daughter* as well as if it had been English.—“Rainbow!”—for he would translate her name at times, “come to me,—*veni!*”—and his lips went on automatically, and murmured, “*vel venito!*”—The child came and sat by his bedside and took his hand, which she could not warm, but which shot its rays of cold all through her slender frame. But there she sat, looking steadily at him. Presently he opened his lips feebly, and whispered, “*Moribundus.*” She did not know what that meant, but she saw that there was something new and sad. So she began to cry; but presently remembering an old book that seemed to comfort him at times, got up and brought a Bible in the Latin version, called the Vulgate. “Open it,” he said,—“I will read,—*segnius irritant,*—don’t put the light out,—ah! *haeret lateri,*—I am going,—*vale, vale, vale,* good-bye, good-bye,—the Lord take care of my child!—*Domine, audi—vel audito!*” His face whitened suddenly, and he lay still, with open eyes and mouth. He had taken his last degree.

—Little Miss Iris could not be said to begin life with a very brilliant rainbow over her, in a worldly point of view. A limited wardrobe of man’s attire, such as poor tutors wear,—a few good books, especially classics,—a print or two, and a plaster model of the Pantheon, with some pieces of furniture which had seen service,—these, and a child’s heart full of tearful recollections and strange doubts and questions, alternating with the cheap pleasures which are the anodynes of childish grief; such were the treasures she inherited.—No,—I



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forgot. With that kindly sentiment which all of us feel for old men's first children,—frost-flowers of the early winter season,—the old tutor's students had remembered him at a time when he was laughing and crying with his new parental emotions, and running to the side of the plain crib in which his *alter ego*, as he used to say, was swinging, to hang over the little heap of stirring clothes, from which looked the minute, red, downy, still, round face, with unfixed eyes and working lips,—in that unearthly gravity which has never yet been broken by a smile, and which gives to the earliest moon-year or two of an infant's life the character of a *first old age*, to counterpoise that *second childhood* which there is one chance in a dozen it may reach by and by. The boys had remembered the old man and young father at that tender period of his hard, dry life. There came to him a fair, silver goblet, embossed with classical figures, and bearing on a shield the graven words, *Ex dono pupillorum*. The handle on its side showed what use the boys had meant it for; and a kind letter in it, written with the best of feeling, in the worst of Latin, pointed delicately to its destination. Out of this silver vessel, after a long, desperate, strangling cry, which marked her first great lesson in the realities of life, the child took the blue milk, such as poor tutors and their children get, tempered with water, and sweetened a little, so as to bring it nearer the standard established by the touching indulgence and partiality of Nature,—who has mingled an extra allowance of sugar in the blameless food of the child at its mother's heart, as compared with that of its infant brothers and sisters of the bovine race.

But a willow will grow in baked sand wet with rain-water. An air-plant will grow by feeding on the winds. Nay, those huge forests that overspread great continents have built themselves up mainly from the air-currents with which they are always battling. The oak is but a foliated atmospheric crystal deposited from the aerial ocean that holds the future vegetable world in solution. The storm that tears its leaves has paid tribute to its strength, and it breasts the tornado clad in the spoils of a hundred hurricanes.

Poor little Iris! What had she in common with the great oak in the shadow of which we are losing sight of her?—She lived and grew like that,—this was all. The blue milk ran into her veins and filled them with thin, pure blood. Her skin was fair, with a faint tinge, such as the white rosebud shows before it opens. The doctor who had attended her father was afraid her aunt would hardly be able to “raise” her,—“delicate child,”—hoped she was not consumptive,—thought there was a fair chance she would take after her father.



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A very forlorn-looking person, dressed in black, with a white neckcloth, sent her a memoir of a child who died at the age of two years and eleven months, after having fully indorsed all the doctrines of the particular persuasion to which he not only belonged himself, but thought it very shameful that everybody else did not belong. What with foreboding looks and dreary deathbed stories, it was a wonder the child made out to live through it. It saddened her early years, of course,—it distressed her tender soul with thoughts which, as they cannot be fully taken in, should be sparingly used as instruments of torture to break down the natural cheerfulness of a healthy child, or, what is infinitely worse, to cheat a dying one out of the kind illusions with which the Father of All has strewn its downward path.

The child would have died, no doubt, and, if properly managed, might have added another to the long catalogue of wasting children who have been as cruelly played upon by spiritual physiologists, often with the best intentions, as ever the subject of a rare disease by the curious students of science.

Fortunately for her, however, a wise instinct had guided the late Latin tutor in the selection of the partner of his life, and the future mother of his child. The deceased tutoress was a tranquil, smooth woman, easily nourished, as such people are,—a quality which is inestimable in a tutor's wife,—and so it happened that the daughter inherited enough vitality from the mother to live through childhood and infancy and fight her way towards womanhood, in spite of the tendencies she derived from her other parent.

—Two and two do not always make four, in this matter of hereditary descent of qualities. Sometimes they make three, and sometimes five. It seems as if the parental traits at one time showed separate, at another blended,—that occasionally the force of two natures is represented in the derivative one by a diagonal of greater value than either original line of living movement,—that sometimes there is a loss of vitality hardly to be accounted for, and again a forward impulse of variable intensity in some new and unforeseen direction.

So it was with this child. She had glanced off from her parental probabilities at an unexpected angle. Instead of taking to classical learning like her father, or sliding quietly into household duties like her mother, she broke out early in efforts that pointed in the direction of Art. As soon as she could hold a pencil she began to sketch outlines of objects round her with a certain air and spirit. Very extraordinary horses, but their legs looked as if they could move. Birds unknown to Audubon, yet flying, as it were, with a rush. Men with impossible legs, which did yet seem to have a vital connection with their most improbable bodies. By-and-by the doctor, on his beast,—an old man with a face looking as if Time had kneaded it like dough with his knuckles, with a rhubarb tint and flavor



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pervading himself and his sorrel horse and all their appurtenances. A dreadful old man! Be sure she did not forget those saddlebags that held the detestable bottles out of which he used to shake those loathsome powders which, to virgin childish palates that find heaven in strawberries and peaches, are——Well, I suppose I had better stop. Only she wished she was dead sometimes when she heard him coming. On the next leaf would figure the gentleman with the black coat and white cravat, as he looked when he came and entertained her with stories concerning the death of various little children about her age, to encourage her, as that wicked Mr. Arouet said about shooting Admiral Byng. Then she would take her pencil and with a few scratches there would be the outline of a child, in which you might notice how one sudden sweep gave the chubby cheek, and two dots darted at the paper looked like real eyes.

By-and-by she went to school, and caricatured the schoolmaster on the leaves of her grammars and geographies, and drew the faces of her companions, and, from time to time, heads and figures from her fancy, with large eyes, far apart, like those of Raffaele's mothers and children, sometimes with wild floating hair, and then with wings and heads thrown back in ecstasy. This was about twelve, as the dates of these drawings show, and, therefore, three or four years before she came among us. Soon after this time, the ideal figures began to take the place of portraits and caricatures, and a new feature appeared in her drawing-books in the form of fragments of verse and short poems.

It was dull work, of course, for such a young girl to live with an old spinster and go to a village school. Her books bore testimony to this; for there was a look of sadness in the faces she drew, and a sense of weariness and longing for some imaginary conditions of blessedness or other, which began to be painful. She might have gone through this flowering of the soul, and, casting her petals, subsided into a sober, human berry, but for the intervention of friendly assistance and counsel.

In the town where she lived was a lady of honorable condition, somewhat past middle age, who was possessed of pretty ample means, of cultivated tastes, of excellent principles, of exemplary character, and of more than common accomplishments. The gentleman in black broadcloth and white neckerchief only echoed the common voice about her, when he called her, after enjoying, beneath her hospitable roof, an excellent cup of tea, with certain elegancies and luxuries he was unaccustomed to, "The Model of all the Virtues."

She deserved this title as well as almost any woman. She did really bristle with moral excellences. Mention any good thing she had not done; I should like to see you try! There was no handle of weakness to take hold of her by: she was as unseizable, except in her totality, as a billiard-ball; and on the broad, green, terrestrial table, where she had been knocked about, like all of us, by the cue of Fortune, she glanced from

every human contact, and “caramelized” from one relation to another, and rebounded from the stuffed cushion of temptation, with such exact and perfect angular movements, that the Enemy’s corps of Reporters had long given up taking notes of her conduct, as there was no chance for their master.



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What an admirable person for the patroness and directress of a slightly self-willed child, with the lightning zigzag line of genius running like a glittering vein through the marble whiteness of her virgin nature! One of the lady-patroness's peculiar virtues was calmness. She was resolute and strenuous, but still. You could depend on her for every duty; she was as true as steel. She was kind-hearted and serviceable in all the relations of life. She had more sense, more knowledge, more conversation, as well as more goodness, than all the partners you have waltzed with this winter put together.

Yet no man was known to have loved her, or even to have offered himself to her in marriage. It was a great wonder. I am very anxious to vindicate my character as a philosopher and an observer of Nature by accounting for this apparently extraordinary fact.

You may remember certain persons who have the misfortune of presenting to the friends whom they meet a cold, damp hand. There are states of mind in which a contact of this kind has a depressing effect on the vital powers that makes us insensible to all the virtues and graces of the proprietor of one of these life-absorbing organs. When they touch us, virtue passes out of us, and we feel as if our electricity had been drained by a powerful negative battery, carried about by an overgrown human torpedo.

"The Model of all the Virtues" had a pair of searching eyes as clear as Wenham ice; but they were slower to melt than that fickle jewelry. Her features disordered themselves slightly at times in a surface-smile, but never broke loose from their corners and indulged in the riotous tumult of a laugh—which, I take it, is the mob-law of the features,—and propriety the magistrate who reads the riot-act. She carried the brimming cup of her inestimable virtues with a cautious, steady hand, and an eye always on them, to see that they did not spill. Then she was an admirable judge of character. Her mind was a perfect laboratory of tests and reagents; every syllable you put into breath went into her intellectual eudiometer, and all your thoughts were recorded on litmus-paper. I think there has rarely been a more admirable woman. Of course, Miss Iris was immensely and passionately attached to her.—Well,—these are two highly oxygenated adverbs,—grateful,—suppose we say,—yes,—grateful, dutiful, obedient to her wishes for the most part,—perhaps not quite up to the concert pitch of such a perfect orchestra of the virtues.

We must have a weak spot or two in a character before we can love it much. People that do not laugh or cry, or take more of anything than is good for them, or use anything but dictionary-words, are admirable subjects for biographies. But we don't always care most for those flat-pattern flowers that press best in the herbarium.

This immaculate woman,—why couldn't she have a fault or two? Isn't there any old whisper which will tarnish that wearisome aureole of saintly perfection? Doesn't she carry a lump of opium in her pocket? Isn't her cologne-bottle replenished oftener than its legitimate use would require? It would be such a comfort!



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Not for the world would a young creature like Iris have let such words escape her, or such thoughts pass through her mind. Whether at the bottom of her soul lies any uneasy consciousness of an oppressive presence, it is hard to say, until we know more about her. Iris sits between the little man and the “Model of all the Virtues,” as the black-coated gentleman called her.—I will watch them all.

—Here I stop for the present. What the Professor said has had to make way this time for what he saw and heard.

* * * * *

—And now you may read these lines, which were written for gentle souls who love music, and read in even tones, and, perhaps, with something like a smile upon the reader’s lips, at a meeting where these musical friends had gathered. Whether they were written with smiles or not, you can guess better after you have read them.

THE OPENING OF THE PIANO.

In the little southern parlor of the house you
may have seen
With the gambrel-roof, and the gable looking
westward to the green,
At the side toward the sunset, with the window
on its right,
Stood the London-made piano I am dreaming
of to-night.

Ah me! how I remember the evening when it
came!
What a cry of eager voices, what a group of
cheeks in flame,
When the wondrous box was opened that had
come from over seas,
With its smell of mastic-varnish and its flash
of ivory keys!

Then the children all grew fretful in the restlessness
of joy,
For the boy would push his sister, and the
sister crowd the boy,
Till the father asked for quiet in his grave
paternal way,



But the mother hushed the tumult with the words, "Now, Mary, play."

For the dear soul knew that music was a very sovereign balm;
She had sprinkled it over Sorrow and seen its brow grow calm,
In the days of slender harpsichords with tapping tinkling quills,
Or carolling to her spinet with its thin metallic thrills.

So Mary, the household minstrel, who always loved to please,
Sat down to the new "Clementi," and struck the glittering keys.
Hushed were the children's voices, and every eye grew dim,
As, floating from lip and finger, arose the "Vesper Hymn."

—Catharine, child of a neighbor, curly and rosy-red,
(Wedded since, and a widow—something like ten years dead,)
Hearing a gush of music such as none before,
Steals from her mother's chamber and peeps at the open door.

Just as the "Jubilate" in threaded whisper dies,
—"Open it! open it, lady!" the little maiden cries
(For she thought 'twas a singing creature caged in a box she heard,)
"Open it! open it, lady! and let me see the *bird!*"



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THE UTAH EXPEDITION;

ITS CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES.

If General Henry Knox, of Revolutionary memory, the first Secretary of War of the Republic, had dreamed that the successor to his portfolio, after an interval of seventy years, would recommend to Congress the purchase of a thousand camels for military purposes, he would have attributed the fancy to excited nerves or a too hearty dinner. Had he dreamed, further, that the grotesque mounted corps was to be employed in regions two thousand miles beyond the frontier of the Anglo-Saxon pioneer of 1789, to guard travel to an actual El Dorado, the vision would have appeared still more extraordinary. And its absurdity would have seemed complete, if he had fancied the high road of this travel as leading through a community essentially Oriental in its social and political life, which was nevertheless ripening into a State of the American Union. Yet if General Knox could be roused from his grave at Thomaston, he would see the dream realized. On the Pacific lies El Dorado; among the fastnesses of the Rocky Mountains there is a community which blends the voluptuousness of Bagdad with the economy of Cape Cod; and within two years a regiment of camel-riders will be scouring the Great American Plains after Cheyennes, Navajoes, and Camanches.

The propagation of the religion of which Joseph Smith was the prophet has just begun to attract the notice its extraordinary success deserves. So long as the head of the Mormon Church was considered a kind of Mahometan Sam Slick, and his associates a crazy rabble, it was vain to expect that the whole sect could be treated with more attention than any of the curiosities in a popular museum. But a juster appreciation of the constitution of the Mormon community begins to prevail, and with it comes a conviction that questions are involved in its relations to the parent government which are not exceeded in importance by any that have ever been agitated at Washington. Brigham Young no longer seems to the American public a religious mountebank, only one grade removed from the man Orr, who claimed to be the veritable Angel Gabriel, and was killed in a popular commotion which he had himself excited in Dutch Guiana. On the contrary, he begins to appear as a man of great native strength and scope of mind, who understands the phases of human character and knows how to avail himself of the knowledge, and who has acquired spiritual dominion over one hundred and fifty thousand souls, combined with absolute temporal supremacy over fifty thousand of the number.



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The situation of the Mormon community in Utah has been peculiarly adapted, heretofore, to the eccentricities of its inhabitants. Isolated from Christendom on the east and west by plains incapable of settlement for generations to come, and encompassed by mountain-ranges, the line of whose summits runs above the boundary of eternal snow, it was independent of the influences of Christian civilization. No missionary of any Christian sect ever attempted to propagate his doctrines in Utah,—nor, perhaps, would any such propagation have been tolerated, had it been attempted. The Mormon religion was free to run its own course and develop whatever elements it possessed of good and evil. When Brigham Young and his followers from Nauvoo descended the Wahsatch range in the summer of 1847, and took up their abode around the Great Salt Lake, the avowed creed of the Church was different from that proclaimed to-day. The secret doctrines entertained by its leaders were perhaps the same as at present, but the religion of the people was a species of mysticism which it is not impossible to conceive might commend itself even to a refined mind. The existence of polygamy was officially denied by the highest ecclesiastical authority, although we know to-day that the denial was a shameless lie, and that Joseph Smith, during his lifetime, had a plurality of wives, and at his death bequeathed them to his successor, who already possessed a harem of his own. Property was almost equally distributed among the people, the leaders being as poor as their disciples. In this respect at that time they were accustomed exultantly to compare their condition with that of the early Christians.

Ten years passed, and the change was extraordinary. The doctrines of Mormonism, if plainly stated, are no longer such as can commend themselves to a mind not perverted nor naturally prurient. Polygamy is inculcated as a religious duty, without which dignity in the Celestial Kingdom is impossible, and even salvation hardly to be obtained. Property is distributed unjustly, the bulk of real and personal estate in the Territory being vested in the Church and its directors, between whom and the mass of the population there exists a difference in social welfare as wide as between the Russian nobleman and his serf. In brief, the Mormons no longer claim to be a Christian sect, but assert, and truly, that their religion is as distinct from Christianity as that is from Mahometanism. Many of the doctrines whispered in 1847 only to those who had been admitted to the penetralia of the Nauvoo Temple are proclaimed unblushingly in 1857 from the pulpit in the Tabernacle at Salt Lake City. A system of polytheism has been ingrafted on the creed, according to which there are grades among the Gods, there being no Supreme Ruler of all, but the primeval Adam of Genesis being the deity highest in spiritual rank, and Christ, Mahomet, Joseph Smith, and, finally, Brigham Young, partaking also of divinity. The



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business of these deities in the Celestial Kingdom is the propagation of souls to people bodies begotten on earth, and the sexual relation is made to permeate every portion of the creed as thoroughly as it pervaded the religions of ancient Egypt and India. In the Endowment House at Salt Lake City, secret rites are practised of a character similar to the mysteries of the Nile, and presided over by Young and Kimball, two Vermont Yankees, with all the solemnity of priests of Isis and Osiris. In these rites, which are symbolical of the mystery of procreation, both sexes participate, clad in loose flowing robes of white linen, with cleansed bodies and anointed hair. Since the revelation of the processes of the Endowment, which was first fully made by a young apostate named John Hyde, other dissenters, real and pretended, have attempted to impose on the public exaggerated accounts of these ceremonies; but in justice to the Mormon Church it ought to be said, that there is no foundation for the reports that they are such as would outrage decency. To be sure, an assemblage of members of both sexes, clad in white shifts, with oiled and dishevelled hair, in a room fitted up in resemblance of a garden, to witness a performance of the allegory of Adam and Eve in Eden, which is conducted so as to be sensually symbolic, is not suggestive of refined ideas; but it is necessary to take into consideration the character both of performers and witnesses, which is not distinguished in any way by delicacy. According to their standard of morality and taste, the rites of the Endowment are devoid of immodesty.

In their political bearing, however, they are more important, and justly liable to the severest censure. It is established beyond question, that the initiated, clad in the preposterous costume before described, take an oath, in the presence of their Spiritual Head, to cherish eternal enmity towards the government of the United States until it shall have avenged the death of their prophet, Joseph Smith. And this ceremony is not a mere empty form of words. It is an oath, the spirit of which the Endowed carry into their daily life and all their relations with the Gentile world. In it lies the root of the evasion, and finally subversion, of Federal authority which occasioned the recent military expedition to Utah.

When the Territory was organized in 1850, the government at Washington, acting on an imperfect knowledge of the nature of Mormonism, conferred the office of Governor upon Brigham Young. For this act Mr. Fillmore has been unjustly censured. It appeared to him, at the time, a proper, as well as politic, appointment. But before the succession of General Pierce to the Presidency, its evil results became apparent, in the expulsion of civil officers from the Territory and the subversion of all law. A feeble, and of course unsuccessful, attempt was then made to supplant Young with Lieutenant-Colonel Steptoe, a meritorious, but too amiable officer of the regular army,—the



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same whose defeat by the Cayuses, Spokans, and Coeur d'Alenes, last May, occasioned the Indian war in Washington Territory. During the summer of 1855, he led a battalion overland, wintering in Salt Lake City. It was at his option, at any time during his sojourn, to have claimed the supreme executive authority. He did not do so, but even headed a recommendation to President Pierce for the reappointment of Brigham Young. This was the result of his winter's residence, during which he and some of his fellow-officers were feasted to their stomachs' content, and entirely careless concerning the political condition of the Territory. Late in the spring, he marched away to California, after having expressed to the President that it was "his unqualified opinion, based on personal acquaintance, that Brigham Young is [was] the most suitable person for the office of Governor." Brigham's views of the winter's proceedings, on the other hand, were expressed in a sermon preached in the Tabernacle, the Sunday after the departure of the Lieutenant-Colonel, in which he repeated his declaration of three years previous:—

"I am, and will be, governor, and no power can hinder it, until the Lord Almighty says, 'Brigham, you need not be governor any longer.'" And he added,—“I do not know what I shall say next winter, if such men make their appearance here as some last winter. I know what I think I shall say; if they play the same game again, let the women be ever so bad, so help me God, we will slay them.”

Most of the other civil officers who were commissioned about the same time with Colonel Steptoe arrived the August after he had departed. Within eighteen months their lot was the same as that of their predecessors. In April, 1857, before the snow had begun to melt on the mountains, all of them, in a party led by Surveyor-General Burr, were on their way to the States, happy in having escaped with life. During the previous February, the United States District Court had been broken up in Salt Lake City. A mob had invaded the courtroom, armed with pistols and bludgeons, a knife was drawn on the judge in his private room, and he was ordered to adjourn his court *sine die*, and yielded. Indian-Agent Hurt was the only Gentile official who remained in the Territory.

In the mean while, however, a change of national administration had taken place, and General Pierce had been succeeded by Mr. Buchanan. For nearly three years the country had been convulsed by an agitation of the Slavery question, originating with Senator Douglas, which culminated in the Presidential election of 1856. The Utah question, grave though it was, was forgotten in the excitement concerning Kansas, or remembered only by the Republican party, as enabling them to stigmatize more pungently the political theories of the Illinois Senator, by coupling polygamy and slavery, "twin relics of barbarism," in the resolution of their Philadelphia Platform against Squatter Sovereignty.



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In the lull which succeeded the election, Mr. Buchanan had leisure, at Wheatland, to draft a programme for his incoming administration. His paramount idea was to gag the North and induce her to forget that she had been robbed of her birthright, by forcing on the attention of the country other questions of absorbing interest. One of the most obvious of these was supplied by the condition of affairs in Utah. It had been satisfactorily established, that the Mormons, acting under the influence of leaders to whom they seemed to have surrendered their judgment, refused to be controlled by any other authority; that they had been often advised to obedience, and these friendly counsels had been answered with defiance; that officers of the Federal Government had been driven from the Territory for no offence except an effort to do their sworn duty, while others had been prevented from going there by threats of assassination; that judges had been interrupted in the performance of their functions, and the records of their courts seized, and either destroyed or concealed; and, finally, that many other acts of unlawful violence had been perpetrated, and the right to repeat them openly claimed by the leading inhabitants, with at least the silent acquiescence of nearly all the rest of the population. In view of these facts, Mr. Buchanan determined to supersede Brigham Young in the office of Governor, and to send to Utah a strong military force to sustain the new appointee in the exercise of his authority.

The rumors of the impending expedition reached the Mormons at the very moment they were prepared to apply to Congress for admission as a State. A Constitution had been framed by a Convention assembled without the sanction of an enabling act, and was intrusted to George A. Smith and John Taylor, two of the Twelve Apostles of the Church, for presentation to Congress. These men, both of them of more than ordinary ability, helped to present the Mormon side of the question to the country through the newspapers, during the winter of 1856-7. The essence of their vindication was, that the character of some of the Federal officers who had been sent to Utah was objectionable in the extreme; but, granting the truth of all their statements on this subject, they supplied no excuse for the utter subversion of Federal authority in the Territory. Their narrative, however, formed a most spicy chapter in the annals of official scandal. The three United States judges, Kinney, Drummond, and Stiles, were presented to the public stripped of all judicial sanctity;—Kinney, the Chief Justice, as the keeper of a grocery-store, dance-room, and boarding-house, enforcing the bills for food and lodging against his brethren of the law by expulsion from the bar in case of non-payment, and so tenacious of life, that, before departing from the Territory, he solicited and received from Brigham Young a patriarchal blessing; Drummond, as an amorous horse-jockey, who had taken to Utah,



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as his mistress, a drab from Washington, and seated her beside him once upon the bench of the court; Stiles as himself a Mormon, so far as the possession of two wives could make him one. From the early days of Joseph Smith, his disciples have never minced their language, and they expended their whole vocabulary now on such themes as have been cited, proving, to the satisfaction of everybody, that, in respect to the judiciary, they had indeed had just cause for complaint. The mission of Smith and Taylor failed, as might have been expected,—the Chairman of the Committee on Territories, Mr. Grow, of Pennsylvania, refusing even to present their Constitution to the House,—and they prepared to return to Utah.

A month or two later, Mr. Buchanan was inaugurated, and preparations for the Utah Expedition were immediately ordered. In the first place, an opinion was solicited from General Scott as to the feasibility of the undertaking until the next year. That distinguished soldier gave a decision adverse to the immediate dispatch of the expedition. He considered that the arrangements necessary to be made were so extensive, and the distances from which the regiments must be concentrated so great, that the wiser plan was to consume the year in getting everything in readiness for the troops to march from the frontier early in the spring of 1858. It would have been well, had his advice prevailed; but it was overruled, and the preparations for the expedition were commenced. The troops detailed for the service were the Fifth Infantry, then busy fighting Billy Bowlegs among the everglades of Florida,—the Tenth Infantry, which was stationed at the forts in Upper Minnesota,—the Second Dragoons, which was among the forces assembled at Fort Leavenworth, to be used, if necessary, in Kansas, at the requisition of Governor Walker,—and Phelps's light-artillery battery, the same which so distinguished itself at Buena Vista, under the command of Captain Washington. An ordnance-battery, also, was organized for the purposes of the expedition. Brevet Brigadier-General Harney was assigned to the command-in-chief, an officer of a rude force of character, amounting often to brutality, and careless as to those details of military duty which savor more of the accountant's inkstand than of the drum and fife, but ambitious, active, and well acquainted with the character of the service for which he was detailed. He was, at the time, in command in Kansas, subject in a measure to the will of Governor Walker.

The whole number of troops under orders for the expedition was hardly twenty-five hundred, but from this total no estimate can be predicated of the enormous quantities of commissary stores and munitions of war necessary to be dispatched to sustain it. It was thought advisable to send a supply for eighteen months, so that the trains exceeded in magnitude those which would accompany an army of twenty thousand in ordinary operations on the European continent, where *depots* could be established along the line of march. To appreciate such preparations, it is necessary to understand the character of the country to be traversed between the Missouri River and the Great Salt Lake.



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The route selected for the march was along the emigrant road across the Plains, first defined fifty years ago by trappers and *voyageurs* following the trail by which the buffalo crossed the mountains, described by Lieutenant-Colonel Fremont, in the reports of his earlier explorations, and subsequently adopted by all the overland emigration across the continent. It is, perhaps, the most remarkable natural road in the world. The hand of man could hardly add an improvement to the highway along which, from the Missouri to the Great Basin, Nature has presented not a single obstacle to the progress of the heaviest loaded teams. From the frontier, at Fort Leavenworth, it sweeps over a broad rolling prairie to the Platte, a river shallow, but of great width, whose course is as straight as an arrow. Pursuing the river-bottom more than three hundred miles, to the Black Hills, steep mounds dotted with dark pines and cedars, it enters the broad belt of mountainous country which terminates in the rim of the Basin. Following thence the North Fork of the Platte, and its tributary, the Sweetwater,—so named by an old French trapper, who had the misfortune to upset a load of sugar into the stream,—it emerges from the Black Hills into scenery of a different character. On the northern bank of the Sweetwater are the Rattlesnake Mountains, huge excrescences of rock, blistering out of an arid plain; on the southern bank, the hills which bear the name of the river, and are only exaggerations of the bluffs along the Platte. The dividing ridge between the waters of the Atlantic and Pacific is reached in the South Pass, at the foot of a spur of the Wind River range, a group of gigantic mountains, whose peaks reach three thousand feet above the line of perpetual snow. There the emigrant strikes his tent in the morning on the banks of a rivulet which finds its way, through the Platte, Missouri, and Mississippi, into the Gulf of Mexico,—and pitches it, at his next camp, upon a little creek which trickles into Green River, and at last, through the Colorado, into the Gulf of California. Not far distant spring the fountains of the Columbia. A level table-land extends to the fords of Green River, a clear and rapid stream, whose entire course has never yet been mapped by an intelligent explorer. Here the road becomes entangled again among mountains, and winds its way over steep ridges, across foaming torrents, and through canons so narrow that only noonday sunshine penetrates their depths, until it emerges, through a rocky gate in the great barrier of the Wahsatch range, upon the bench above Salt Lake City, twelve hundred miles from Fort Leavenworth. The view at this point, from the mouth of Emigration Canon, is enchanting. The sun, sinking through a cloudless western sky, silvers the long line of the lake, which is visible twenty miles away. Beyond the city the River Jordan winds quietly through the plain. Below the gazer are roofs and cupolas, shady streets, neat gardens, and fields of ripening grain. The mountains, which bound the horizon on every side, except where a wavering stream of heated air shows the beginning of the Great Desert, are tinged with a soft purple haze, in anticipation of the sunset, but every patch of green grass on their slopes glows through it like an emerald, while along the summits runs an undulating thread of snow.



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Throughout this vast line of road, the only white inhabitants are the garrisons of the military posts, the keepers of mail-stations, and *voyageurs* and mountaineers, whose cabins may be found in every locality favorable to Indian trade. These last are a singular race of men, fast disappearing, like the Indian and the buffalo, their neighbors. Most of them are of French extraction, and some have died without having learned to speak a word of English. Their wealth consists in cattle and horses, and little stocks of goods which they purchase from the sutlers at the forts or the merchants at Salt Lake City. Some of the more considerable among them have the means of sending to the States for an annual supply of blankets, beads, vermilion, and other stuff for Indian traffic; but the most are thriftless, and all are living in concubinage or marriage with squaws, and surrounded by troops of unwashed, screeching half-breeds. Once in from three to six years, they will make a journey to St. Louis, and gamble away so much of their savings since the last visit as has escaped being wasted over greasy card-tables during the long winter-evenings among the mountains. The Indian tribes along the way are numerous and formidable, the road passing through country occupied by Pawnees, Cheyennes, Sioux, Arapahoes, Crows, Snakes, and Utahs. With the Cheyennes war had been waged by the United States for more than two years, which interfered seriously with the expedition; for, during the month of June, a war-party from that tribe intercepted and dispersed the herd of beef-cattle intended for the use of the army.

The natural characteristics of the entire route are as unpromising as those of its inhabitants. At the distance of about two hundred miles from the Missouri frontier the soil becomes so pervaded by sand, that only scientific agriculture can render it available. Along the Platte there is no fuel. Not a tree is visible, except the thin fringe of cottonwoods on the margin of the river, all of which upon the south bank, where the road runs, were hewed down and burned at every convenient camp, during the great California emigration. When the Rocky Mountains are entered, the only vegetation found is bunch-grass, so called because it grows in tufts,—and the *artemisia*, or wild sage, an odorous shrub, which sometimes attains the magnitude of a tree, with a fibrous trunk as thick as a man's thigh, but is ordinarily a bush about two feet in height. The bunch-grass, grown at such an elevation, possesses extraordinary nutritive properties, even in midwinter. About the middle of January a new growth is developed underneath the snow, forcing off the old dry blade that ripened and shed its seed the previous summer. From Fort Kearney to Fort Laramie, almost the only fuel to be obtained is the dung of buffalo and oxen, called, in the vocabulary of the region, "chips,"—the *argal* of the Tartar deserts. Among the mountains the sage is the chief material of the traveller's fire. It burns with a lively, ruddy flame, and gives out an intense heat. In the settlements of Utah all the wood consumed is hauled from the canons, which are usually lined with pines, firs, and cedars, while the broadsides of the mountains are nothing but terraces of volcanic rock. The price of wood in Salt Lake City is from twelve to twenty dollars a cord.

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From this brief review of the natural features of the country, some idea may be formed of the intensity of the religious enthusiasm which has induced fifty thousand Mormon converts to traverse it, many of them on foot and trundling handcars, to seek a home among the valleys of Utah, in a region hardly more propitious; and some idea, also, of the difficulties which were to attend the march of the army.

During the spring of 1857, the preparations for the expedition were hurried forward, and in June the whole force was collected at Fort Leavenworth. All Western Missouri was in a ferment. The river foamed with steamboats freighted with military stores, and the levee at Leavenworth City was covered all summer long with the frames of wagons. Between the 18th and the 24th of July, all the detachments of the little army were on the march, except a battalion of two companies of infantry, which had been unable to join their regiment at the time it moved from Minnesota, and the Second Dragoons, which Governor Walker retained in Kansas to overawe the uneasy people of the town of Lawrence. General Harney also tarried in Kansas, intending to wait until after the October election there, at which disturbances were anticipated that it might be necessary to quell by force.

At Washington, movements of equal importance were taking place. The Postmaster-General, in June, annulled the contract held by certain Mormons for the transportation of the monthly mail to Utah, ostensibly on account of non-performance of the service within the stipulated time, but really because he was satisfied that the mails were violated, either *en route* or after arrival at Salt Lake City. The office of Governor of the Territory was offered by the President to various persons, and finally accepted, July 11th, by Alfred Cumming, a brother of the Cumming of Georgia who fought multitudinous duels with McDuffie of South Carolina, all of which both parties survived. Mr. Cumming had been a sutler during the Mexican War, and more recently a Superintendent of Indian Affairs on the Upper Missouri. He was reputed to be a gentleman of education, ambition, and executive ability. The office of Chief Justice was conferred on Judge D.R. Eckels, of Indiana, a person well fitted for the position by the circumstances of his early life, of the utmost determination, and whose judicial integrity was above suspicion.

The news of the stoppage of the mail reached Salt Lake Valley July 24th, an eventful anniversary in the history of Mormonism. It was on the 24th of July, 1847, that Brigham Young entered the Valley from the East, and the day had always afterwards been kept as a holiday of the Church. On this occasion, the celebration was held in Cottonwood Canon, one of the wildest and grandest gorges among the Wahsatch Mountains, opening at the foot of the Twin Peaks, about twenty miles southeast from Salt Lake City. Thither more than twenty-five hundred people had flocked



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from the city on the previous day, and prepared to hold their festival under bowers built of fragrant pines and cedars around a little lake far up among the mountains. During the afternoon of the 24th, while they were engaged in music, dancing, and every manner of lively sport, two dusty messengers rode up the canon, bringing from the States the news of the stoppage of the mail and of the approaching march of the troops. This mode of announcement was probably preconcerted with Brigham Young, who was undoubtedly aware of the facts on the preceding day. A scene of the maddest confusion ensued, which was heightened by the inflammatory speeches of the Mormon leaders. Young reminded the fanatical throng, that, ten years ago that very day, he had said, "Give us ten years of peace and we will ask no odds of the United States"; and he added, that the ten years had passed, and now they asked no odds,—that they constituted henceforth a free and independent state, to be known no longer as Utah, but by their own Mormon name of Deseret. Kimball, the second in authority in the Church, called on the people to adhere to Brigham, as their "prophet, seer, and revelator, priest, governor, and king." The sun set on the first overt act in the rebellion. The fanatics, wending their way back to the city, across the broad plain, in the moonlight, were ready to follow wherever Brigham Young might choose to lead.

On the succeeding Sundays the spirit of rebellion was breathed from the pulpit in language yet more intemperate, and often profane and obscene. Military preparations were made with the greatest bustle; and the Nauvoo Legion—under which name, transplanted from Illinois, the militia were organized—was drilled daily in the streets of the city. The martial fervor ran so high that even the boys paraded with wooden spears and guns, and the little ragamuffins were inspected and patted on the head by venerable and veritable Fathers of the Church.

In total ignorance that the standard of rebellion had already been raised, General Harney, in the beginning of August, detached Captain Van Vliet, the Quarter-master on his staff, to proceed rapidly to Utah to make arrangements for the reception of the army in the Valley. He passed the troops in the vicinity of Fort Laramie. About thirty miles west of Green River he was met by a party of Mormons, who escorted him, accompanied only by his servant, to the city. There he was politely treated, but informed that his mission would be fruitless, for the Mormon people were determined to resist the ingress of the troops. At a meeting in the Tabernacle, at which the Captain was present on the platform, when Brigham Young called on the audience for an expression of opinion, every hand was raised in favor of the policy of resistance, and in expression of willingness, if it should become necessary, to abandon harvest and homestead, retreat with the women to the mountains, and wage there a war of extermination.



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They took pains to conduct the Captain through the well-kept gardens and blooming fields, to show him their household comforts, the herds of cattle, the stacks of hay and grain, and all their public improvements, in order to present a contrast between such plenty and prosperity and such a scene of desolation as they depicted. Profoundly impressed by the devotion of the people to their leaders, he started on his return, accompanied by Mr. Bernhisel, the Mormon delegate to Congress. Two days after he left the city, a proclamation was issued by Young, in his capacity of Governor, in which the army was denounced as a mob and forbidden to enter the Territory, and the people of Utah were summoned to arms to repel its advance.

When this document reached the troops, they had already crossed the Territorial line, and were prepared for its reception by the report of Captain Van Vliet as he passed them on his return to the States. Their position was embarrassing. In the absence of General Harney, each separate detachment constituted an independent command. The senior officer present was Colonel Alexander, of the Tenth Infantry, a thorough soldier in the minutiae of his profession, and distinguished by gallantry during the Mexican War. He resolved, very properly, in view of his seniority, to assume the command-in-chief until General Harney should arrive from the East. On the 27th of September, before the proclamation was received, the first division of the army crossed Green River, having accomplished a march of a thousand miles in little more than two months. That same night it hastened forwards thirty miles to Ham's Fork,—a confluent of Black's Fork, which empties into Green River,—where several supply-trains were gathered, upon which there was danger that the Mormons would make an attack. The other divisions followed within the week, and the whole force was concentrated. On the night of October 5th, after the last division had crossed the river, two supply-trains, of twenty-five wagons each, were captured and burned just on the bank of the stream, by a party of mounted Mormons led by a man named Lot Smith, and the next morning another train was destroyed by the same party, twenty miles farther east, on the Big Sandy, in Oregon Territory. The teamsters were disarmed and dismissed, and the cattle stolen. No blood was shed; not a shot fired. Immediately upon the news of this attack reaching Ham's Fork, Colonel Alexander, who had then assumed the command-in-chief, dispatched Captain Marcy, of the Fifth Infantry, with four hundred men, to afford assistance to the trains, and punish the aggressors, if possible. But when the Captain reached Green River, all that was visible near the little French trading-post was two broad, black rings on the ground, bestrewn with iron chains and bolts, where the wagons had been burned in *corral*. He was able to do nothing except to send orders to the other trains on the road to halt, concentrate,



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and await the escort of Brevet Colonel Smith, of the Tenth Infantry, who had started from the frontier in August with the two companies mentioned as having been left behind in Minnesota, and by rapid marches had already reached the Sweetwater. The condition of affairs at this moment was indeed critical. By the folly of Governor Walker's movements in Kansas the expedition was deprived of its mounted force, and consisted entirely of infantry and artillery. The Mormon marauding parties, on the contrary, which it now became evident were hovering on every side, were all well mounted and tolerably well armed. The loss of three trains more would reduce the troops to the verge of starvation before spring, in case of inability to reach Salt Lake Valley. Nothing was heard from General Harney, and in his absence no one possessed instructions adequate to the emergency.

To understand the movements which followed, it is necessary to describe briefly the topography of the country between Green River and the Great Salt Lake. The entire interval, one hundred and fifty miles in breadth, is filled with groups and chains of mountains, the direct route through which to Salt Lake City lies along water-courses, following them through canons so narrow that little science is necessary to render the natural defences impregnable. In this respect, and in the general character of the scenery, it bears much resemblance to the Tyrol. In the narrowest of these gorges, Echo Canon, twenty-five miles in length, whose walls of rock often approach within a stone's throw of each other, it became known that the Mormons were erecting breastworks and digging ditches, by means of which they expected to be able to submerge the road to the depth of several feet, for miles. The only known mode of avoiding a passage through this gorge was by a circuitous route, following the eastern slope of the rim of the Great Basin northward, more than a hundred miles, to Soda Springs, at the northern bend of Bear River, the principal tributary of the Salt Lake,—then crossing the rim along the course of the river, and pursuing its valley southward, and that of the Roseaux or Malade, into Salt Lake Valley. The distance of Salt Lake City from the camp on Ham's Fork was by this route nearly three hundred miles,—while the distance by the road past Fort Bridger, through the canons, was less than one hundred and fifty miles. At that fort, about twenty miles west from the encampment of the army, the Mormon marauding parties had their head-quarters and principal *depot*. It was there that Colonel Alexander was ordered, about this time, by Brigham Young, to surrender his arms to the Mormon Quartermaster-General, on which condition and an agreement to depart eastward early the following spring, he and his troops should be fed during the winter; otherwise, Young added, they would perish from hunger and cold, and rot among the mountains. In his perplexity, Colonel Alexander called a council



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of war, and, with its approval, resolved to commence a march towards Soda Springs, leaving Fort Bridger unmolested on his left. For more than a fortnight the army toiled along Ham's Fork, cutting a road through thickets of greasewood and wild sage, incumbered by a train of such unwieldy length that often the advance-guard reached its camp at night before the rear-guard had moved from the camp of the preceding day, and harassed by Mormon marauding parties from the Fort, which hung about the flanks out of the reach of rifle-shot, awaiting opportunities to descend on unprotected wagons and cattle. The absence of dragoons prevented a dispersion of these banditti. Some companies of infantry were, indeed, mounted on mules, and sent to pursue them, but these only excited their derision. The Mormons nicknamed them "jackass cavalry." Their only exploit was the capture of a Mormon major and his adjutant, on whose person were found orders issued by D.H. Wells, the Commanding General of the Nauvoo Legion, to the various detachments of marauders, directing them to burn the whole country before the army and on its flanks, to keep it from sleep by night surprises, to stampede its animals and set fire to its trains, to blockade the road by felling trees and destroying river-fords, but to take no life. On the 13th of October, eight hundred oxen were cut off from the rear of the army and driven to Salt Lake Valley. Thus the weary column toiled along until it reached the spot where it expected to be joined by Colonel Smith's battalion, about fifty miles up Ham's Fork. The very next day snow fell to the depth of more than a foot. Disheartened, vacillating, and perplexed, Colonel Alexander called another council of war, and, acting on its judgment, resolved to retrace his steps. An express reached him that same day, from Colonel Smith, by which he was informed of the approach of Colonel Albert S. Johnston, of the Second Cavalry, who had been detailed to take command of the expedition in the place of General Harney, and now sent orders that the troops should return to Black's Fork, where he proposed to concentrate the entire army.

During the month of August, it having become evident that General Harney was reluctant to proceed to Utah, anticipating a brighter field for military distinction in Kansas, Colonel Johnston was summoned from Texas to Washington and there ordered to hasten to take command of the expedition. On the 17th of September, he left Fort Leavenworth, and by rapid travel overtook Colonel Smith while he was engaged in collecting the trains which he intended to escort to the main body. On the 27th of October, the column moved forwards. The escort had been reinforced by a squadron of dragoons from Fort Laramie, but its entire strength was less than three hundred men, a number obviously insufficient to defend a line of wagons six miles in length. An attack by the Mormons was expected every day, but none was made; and on the 3d of November, the whole



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army, with its munitions, supplies, and commander, was concentrated on Black's Fork. Colonel Alexander had arrived at the place of rendezvous some days previously, being no nearer Salt Lake City November 3d than he had been a month before. The country was covered with snow, winter having fairly set in among the mountains, the last pound of forage was exhausted, and the cattle and mules were little more than animated skeletons.

Colonel Johnston had already determined, while in the South Pass, that it would be impracticable to cross the Wahsatch range until spring, and shaped his arrangements accordingly. He resolved to establish winter-quarters in the vicinity of Fort Bridger, and on the 6th of November the advance towards that post commenced. The day was memorable in the history of the expedition. Sleet poured down upon the column from morning till night. On the previous evening, five hundred cattle had been stampeded by the Mormons, in consequence of which some trains were unable to move at all. After struggling along till nightfall, the regiments camped wherever they could find shelter under bluffs or among willows. That night more than five hundred animals perished from hunger and cold, and the next morning the camp was encircled by their carcasses, coated with a film of ice. It was a scene which could be paralleled only in the retreat of the French from Moscow. Had there been any doubt before concerning the practicability of an immediate advance beyond Fort Bridger, none existed any longer. It was the 16th of November when the vanguard reached that post, which the Mormons had abandoned the week before. Nearly a fortnight had been consumed in accomplishing less than thirty miles.

It is time to return to the States and record what had been transpiring there, in connection with the expedition, while the army was staggering towards its permanent winter-camp. The only one of the newly-appointed civil officials who was present with the troops was Judge Eckels, who had left his home in Indiana immediately after receiving his appointment, and started across the Plains with his own conveyance. Near Fort Laramie he was overtaken by Colonel Smith, whom he accompanied in his progress to the main body. Governor Cumming, in the mean while, dilly-dallied in the East, travelling from St. Louis to Washington and back again, begging for an increase of salary, for a sum of money to be placed at his disposal for secret service, and for transportation to the Territory,—all which requests, except the last, were denied. Towards the close of September, he arrived at Fort Leavenworth. Governor Walker had, by this time, released his hold on the dragoons, and, notwithstanding the advanced period of the season, they were preparing to march to Utah. The Governor and most of the other civil officers delayed until they started, and travelled in their company. The march was attended with the severest hardships. When they reached the Rocky Mountains, the snow lay from one to three



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feet deep on the loftier ridges which they were obliged to cross. The struggle with the elements, during the last two hundred miles before gaining Fort Bridger, was desperate. Nearly a third of the horses died from cold, hunger, and fatigue; everything that could be spared was thrown out to lighten the wagons, and the road was strewn with military accoutrements from the Rocky Ridge to Green River. On the 20th of November, Colonel Cooke reached the camp with a command entirely incapacitated for active service.

The place selected by Colonel Johnston for the winter-quarters of the army was on the bank of Black's Fork, about two miles above Fort Bridger, on a spot sheltered by high bluffs which rise abruptly from the bottom at a distance of five or six hundred yards from the channel of the stream. The banks of the Fork were fringed with willow brush and cottonwood trees, blasted in some places where the Mormons had attempted to deprive the troops of fuel. The trees were fortunately too green to burn, and the fire swept through acres, doing no more damage than to consume the dry leaves and char the bark. The water of the Fork, clear and pure, rippled noisily over a stony bed between two unbroken walls of ice. The civil officers of the Territory fixed their quarters in a little nook in the wood above the military camp. The Colonel, anticipating a change of encampment, determined not to construct quarters of logs or sod for the army. A new species of tent, which had just been introduced, was served out for its winter dwellings. An iron tripod supported a pole from the top of which depended a slender but strong hoop. Attached to this, the canvas sloped to the ground, forming a tent in the shape of a regular cone. The opening at the top caused a draught, by means of which a fire could be kept up beneath the tripod without choking the inmates with smoke. An Indian lodge had evidently been the model of the inventor. Most of the civil officers, however, dug square holes in the ground, over which they built log huts, plastering the cracks with mud. Their little town they named Eckelsville, after the Chief Justice. A *depot* for all the military stores was established at Fort Bridger, where a strong detachment was encamped. At the time of its occupation, the Fort consisted merely of two stone walls, one twenty, the other about ten feet in height, inclosing quadrangles fifty paces long and forty broad. These walls were built of cobble-stones cemented with mortar. Half-a-dozen cannonballs would have knocked them to pieces, although they constituted a formidable defence against infantry. When the Mormons evacuated the post, they burned all the buildings inside these quadrangles. Colonel Johnston proceeded to set up additional defences for the *depot*, and within a month two lunettes were completed with ditches and *chevaux-de-frise*, in each of which was mounted a piece of artillery.



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The work of unloading the trains commenced, and after careful computation the Chief Commissary determined, that, by an abridgment of the ration, diminishing the daily issue of flour, and issuing bacon only once a week, his supplies would last until the first of June. All the beef cattle intended for the use of the army having been intercepted by the Cheyennes, it became necessary to kill those draught oxen for beef, which had survived the march. Shambles were erected, to which the poor half-starved animals were driven by hundreds to be butchered. The flesh was jerked and stored carefully in cabins built for the purpose.

The business of loading the trains had been carelessly performed at Fort Leavenworth. In this respect the quartermaster who superintended the work might have learned a lesson from the experience of the British in the Crimea. But, unwilling to take the trouble to assign to each train a proportionate quantity of all the articles to be transported, he had packed one after another with just such things as lay most conveniently at hand. The consequence was, that in the wagons which were burned were contained all the mechanics' implements, stationery, and horse-medicines, although the loss of the latter was not to be regretted. The rest of their contents was mostly flour and bacon. Had the Mormons burned the next three trains upon the road, they would have destroyed all the clothing intended for the expedition. As it was, upon searching those trains, only one hundred and fifty pairs of boots and shoes and six hundred pairs of stockings were found provided for an army of two thousand men, and some of the soldiers already had nothing but moccasins to cover their feet, with the thermometer at 16 degrees below zero,—while there were found one thousand leather neck-stocks and three thousand bed-sacks, articles totally useless. "How not to do it" had evidently been the motto of the Quarter-master's Department. The ample supplies of some articles were rendered unavailable by deficiencies in other articles equally necessary. In some of its arrangements it seemed to have proceeded on the presumption that there would be an armed collision, while in others the probability of such an event was entirely disregarded. One wagon was loaded wholly with boiling-kettles, but there was no brine to boil, and at the close of November not a pound of salt remained in the camp.

One of the first and most important of Colonel Johnston's duties was to provide for the keeping, during the winter, of the mules and horses which survived. On Black's Fork there was no grass for their support. It had either been burned by the Mormons or consumed by their cavalry. He decided to send them all to Henry's Fork, thirty-five miles south of Fort Bridger, where he had at one time designed to encamp with the whole army. The regiment of dragoons was detailed to guard them. A supply of fresh animals for transportation in the spring was his next care. The settlements in New Mexico



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are less than seven hundred miles distant from Fort Bridger, and to them he resolved to apply. Captain Marcy was the officer selected to lead in the arduous expedition. He had been previously distinguished in the service by a thorough exploration of the Red River of Louisiana. Accompanied by only thirty-five picked men, all volunteers, and by two guides, he started for Taos, November 27th,—an undertaking from which, at that season of the year, the most experienced mountaineers would have shrunk. A party was dispatched at the same time to the Flathead country, in Oregon and Washington Territories, to procure horses to remount the dragoons, and to induce the traders in that region to drive cattle down to Fort Bridger for sale.

On the day of Captain Marcy's departure, Governor Cumming issued a proclamation, declaring the Territory to be in a state of rebellion, and commanding the traitors to lay down their arms and return to their homes. It announced, also, that proceedings would be instituted against the offenders, in a court to be organized in the county by Judge Eckels, which would supersede the necessity of appointing a military commission for that purpose. This document was sent to Salt Lake City by a Mormon prisoner who was released for the purpose. The Governor sent also, by the same messenger, a letter to Brigham Young, in which there were expressions that indicated a disposition to temporize.

The whole camp, at this time, was a scene of confusion and bustle. Some of the stragglers around the tents were Indians belonging to a band of Pah-Utahs, among whom Dr. Hurt, already mentioned as the only Federal officer who did not abandon the Territory in the spring of 1857, had established a farm upon the banks of the Spanish Fork, which rises among the snows of Mount Nebo, and flows into Lake Utah from the East. Shortly after the issue of Brigham Young's proclamation of September 15th, the Mormons resolved to take the Doctor prisoner. No official was ever more obnoxious to the Church than he; for by his authority over the tribes he had been able to counteract in great measure the influences by which Young had endeavored to alienate both Snakes and Utahs from the control of the United States. On the 27th of September, two bands of mounted men moved towards the farm from the neighboring towns of Springville and Payson. Warned by the faithful Indians of his danger, the Doctor fled to the mountains, and twenty Pah-Utahs and Uinta-Utahs escorted him to the South Pass, where he joined Colonel Johnston on the 23d of October. It was an act of devotion which has rarely been excelled in Indian history. The sufferings of his naked escort on the journey were severe. They crossed the Green River Mountains, breaking the crust of the snow and leading their animals, being reduced at the time to tallow and roots for their own sustenance. On the advance of the army towards Fort Bridger, they accompanied its march.



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Another class of stragglers, and one most dangerous to the peace of the camp, was composed of the thousand teamsters who were discharged from employment on the supply-trains. Many of these men belonged to the scum of the great Western cities,—a class more dangerous, because more intelligent and reckless, than the same class of population in New York. Others had sought to reach California, not anticipating a state of hostilities which would bar their way. Now, thrown out of employment, with slender means, a great number became desperate. Hundreds attempted to return to the States on foot, some of whom died on the way,—and nine-tenths of them would have perished, had they encountered the storms of the preceding winter among the mountains. But the majority hung around the camp. To some of these the Quartermaster was able to furnish work, but he was obviously incapable of affording this assistance to all. Thefts and assaults became frequent, and promised to multiply as the season advanced. To remedy this trouble, Colonel Johnston assumed the responsibility of organizing a volunteer battalion. The term of service for which the men enlisted was nine months. For their pay they were to depend on the action of Congress. The four companies which the battalion comprised selected for their commander an officer from the regular army, Captain Bee, of the Tenth Infantry.

The organization of a District Court, by Judge Eckels, helped quite as essentially to enforce order. Its convicts were received by Colonel Johnston and committed to imprisonment in the guard-tents of the army. The grand jury, impanelled for the purposes of the court, were obliged to take cognizance of the rebellion, and, after thoroughly investigating the facts of the case, they returned bills of indictment against Brigham Young and sixty of his principal associates.

During “the campaign of Ham’s Fork,” as Colonel Alexander’s march up and down that stream was facetiously called by the Mormons, he had been in constant receipt of communications from Young, of a character similar to the letter in which the army was commanded to surrender its arms at Fort Bridger. This correspondence was now abruptly terminated by Colonel Johnston. Two messengers came to the camp from Salt Lake City at the beginning of December, escorted by a party of Mormon militia, and bringing four pack-mules loaded with salt, which a letter from Young offered as a present, with assurances that it was not poisoned. This letter contained, besides, certain threats concerning the treatment of prisoners, and reminded Colonel Johnston that the Mormons also had prisoners in their power, on whom anything which might befall those in camp should be retaliated. The Colonel returned no other answer to this epistle than to dismiss its bearers with their salt, informing them that he could accept no favors from traitors and rebels, and that any communication which they might in future hold with the army must be under a flag of truce, although as to the manner in which they might communicate with the Governor it was not within his province to prescribe. A week or two later, a thousand pounds of salt were forced through to the camp from Fort Laramie, thirty out of the forty-six mules on which it was packed perishing on the way.



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Thus the long and dreary winter commenced in the camp of the army of Utah. It mattered not that the rations were abridged, that communication with the States was interrupted, and that every species of duty at such a season, in such a region, was uncommonly severe. Confidence and even gayety were restored to the camp, by the consciousness that it was commanded by an officer whose intelligence was adequate to the difficulties of his position. Every additional hardship was cheerfully endured. As the animals failed, all the wood used in camp was obliged to be drawn a distance of from three to six miles by hand, but there were few gayer spectacles than the long strings of soldiers hurrying the wagons over the crunching snow. They built great pavilions, decorated them with colors and stacks of arms, and danced as merrily on Christmas and New Year's Eves to the music of the regimental bands, as if they had been in cozy cantonments, instead of in a camp of fluttering canvas, more than seven thousand feet above the level of the sea. In the pavilion of the Fifth Infantry, there drooped over the company the flags which that regiment had carried, ten years before, up the sunny slopes of Chapultepec, and which were torn in a hundred places by the storm of bullets at Molinos del Rey.

Meanwhile, how hearts were beating in the States with anxious apprehension for the safety of kindred and friends, those who felt that anxiety, and not those who were the objects of it, best know.

Perhaps the disposition of the camp would have been more in harmony with the scenery and the season, if the army had dreamed that the administration, which had launched it so recklessly into circumstances of such privation and danger, was about to turn its labors and sufferings into a farce, and to claim the approval of the country for an act of mistaken clemency, which was, in reality, a grave political error.

[To be continued.]

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THE MINISTER'S WOOING.

[Continued.]

CHAPTER VIII.

WHICH TREATS OF ROMANCE.

There is no word in the English language more unceremoniously and indefinitely kicked and cuffed about, by what are called sensible people, than the word *romance*. When Mr. Smith or Mr. Stubbs has brought every wheel of life into such range and order that it is one steady, daily grind,—when they themselves have come into the habits and

attitudes of the patient donkey, who steps round and round the endlessly turning wheel of some machinery, then they fancy that they have gotten “the victory that overcometh the world.”



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All but this dead grind, and the dollars that come through the mill, is by them thrown into one waste “catch-all” and labelled *romance*. Perhaps there was a time in Mr. Smith’s youth,—he remembers it now,—when he read poetry, when his cheek was wet with strange tears, when a little song, ground out by an organ-grinder in the street, had power to set his heart beating and bring a mist before his eyes. Ah, in those days he had a vision!—a pair of soft eyes stirred him strangely; a little weak hand was laid on his manhood, and it shook and trembled; and then came all the humility, the aspiration, the fear, the hope, the high desire, the troubling of the waters by the depending angel of love,—and a little more and Mr. Smith might have become a man, instead of a banker! He thinks of it now, sometimes, as he looks across the fireplace after dinner and sees Mrs. Smith asleep, innocently shaking the bouquet of pink bows and Brussels lace that waves over her placid red countenance.

Mrs. Smith wasn’t his first love, nor, indeed, any love at all; but they agree reasonably well. And as for poor Nellie,—well, she is dead and buried,—all that was stuff and romance. Mrs. Smith’s money set him up in business, and Mrs. Smith is a capital manager, and he thanks God that he isn’t romantic, and tells Smith Junior not to read poetry or novels, and to stick to realities.

“This is the victory that overcometh the world,”—to learn to be fat and tranquil, to have warm fires and good dinners, to hang your hat on the same peg at the same hour every day, to sleep soundly all night, and never to trouble your head with a thought or imagining beyond.

But there are many people besides Mr. Smith who have gained this victory,—who have strangled their higher nature and buried it, and built over its grave the structure of their life, the better to keep it down.

The fascinating Mrs. T., whose life is a whirl between ball and opera, point lace, diamonds, and schemings of admiration for herself, and of establishments for her daughters,—there was a time, if you will believe me, when that proud, worldly woman was so humbled, under the touch of some mighty power, that she actually thought herself capable of being a poor man’s wife. She thought she could live in a little, mean house on no-matter-what-street, with one servant, and make her own bonnets and mend her own clothes, and sweep the house Mondays, while Betty washed,—all for what? All because she thought that there was a man so noble, so true, so good, so high-minded, that to live with him in poverty, to be guided by him in adversity, to lean on him in every rough place of life, was a something nobler, better, purer, more satisfying, than French laces, opera-boxes, and even Madame Roget’s best gowns.



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Unfortunately, this was all romance,—there was no such man. There was, indeed, a person of very common, self-interested aims and worldly nature, whom she had credited at sight with an unlimited draft on all her better nature; and when the hour of discovery came, she awoke from her dream with a start and a laugh, and ever since has despised aspiration, and been busy with the *realities* of life, and feeds poor little Mary Jane, who sits by her in the opera-box there, with all the fruit which she has picked from the bitter tree of knowledge. There is no end of the epigrams and witticisms which she can throw out, this elegant Mrs. T., on people who marry for love, lead prosy, worky lives, and put on their best cap with pink ribbons for Sunday. “Mary Jane shall never make a fool of herself”; but, even as she speaks, poor Mary Jane’s heart is dying within her at the vanishing of a pair of whiskers from an opposite box,—which whiskers the poor little fool has credited with a *resume* drawn from her own imaginings of all that is grandest and most heroic, most worshipful in man. By-and-by, when Mrs. T. finds the glamour has fallen on her daughter, she wonders; she has “tried to keep novels out of the girl’s way,—where did she get these notions?”

All prosaic, and all bitter, disenchanted people talk as if poets and novelists *made* romance. They do,—just as much as craters make volcanoes,—no more. What is romance? whence comes it? Plato spoke to the subject wisely, in his quaint way, some two thousand years ago, when he said, “Man’s soul, in a former state, was winged and soared among the gods; and so it comes to pass, that, in this life, when the soul, by the power of music or poetry, or the sight of beauty, hath her remembrance quickened, forthwith there is a straggling and a pricking pain as of wings trying to come forth,—even as children in teething.” And if an old heathen, two thousand years ago, discoursed thus gravely of the romantic part of our nature, whence comes it that in Christian lands we think in so pagan a way of it, and turn the whole care of it to ballad-makers, romancers, and opera-singers?

Let us look up in fear and reverence and say, “GOD is the great maker of romance. HE, from whose hand came man and woman,—HE, who strung the great harp of Existence with all its wild and wonderful and manifold chords, and attuned them to one another,—HE is the great Poet of life.” Every impulse of beauty, of heroism, and every craving for purer love, fairer perfection, nobler type and style of being than that which closes like a prison-house around us, in the dim, daily walk of life, is God’s breath, God’s impulse, God’s reminder to the soul that there is something higher, sweeter, purer, yet to be attained.

Therefore, man or woman, when thy ideal is shattered,—as shattered a thousand times it must be,—when the vision fades, the rapture burns out, turn not away in skepticism and bitterness, saying, “There is nothing better for a man than that he should eat and drink,” but rather cherish the revelations of those hours as prophecies and foreshadowings of something real and possible, yet to be attained in the manhood, of immortality. The scoffing spirit that laughs at romance is an apple of the Devil’s own

hanging from the bitter tree of knowledge;—it opens the eyes only to see eternal nakedness.



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If ever you have had a romantic, uncalculating friendship,—a boundless worship and belief in some hero of your soul,—if ever you have so loved, that all cold prudence, all selfish worldly considerations have gone down like drift-wood before a river flooded with new rain from heaven, so that you even forgot yourself, and were ready to cast your whole being into the chasm of existence, as an offering before the feet of another, and all for nothing,—if you awoke bitterly betrayed and deceived, still give thanks to God that you have had one glimpse of heaven. The door now shut will open again. Rejoice that the noblest capability of your eternal inheritance has been made known to you; treasure it, as the highest honor of your being, that ever you could so feel,—that so divine a guest ever possessed your soul.

By such experiences are we taught the pathos, the sacredness of life; and if we use them wisely, our eyes will ever after be anointed to see what poems, what romances, what sublime tragedies lie around us in the daily walk of life, “written not with ink, but in fleshly tables of the heart.” The dullest street of the most prosaic town has matter in it for more smiles, more tears, more intense excitement, than ever were written in story or sung in poem; the reality is there, of which the romancer is the second-hand recorder.

So much of a plea we put in boldly, because we foresee grave heads beginning to shake over our history, and doubts rising in reverend and discreet minds whether this history is going to prove anything but a love-story, after all.

We do assure you, right reverend Sir, and you, most discreet Madam, that it is not going to prove anything else; and you will find, if you will follow us, that there is as much romance burning under the snow-banks of cold Puritan preciseness as if Dr. H. had been brought up to attend operas instead of metaphysical preaching, and Mary had been nourished on Byron’s poetry instead of “Edwards on the Affections.”

The innocent credulities, the subtle deceptions, that were quietly at work under the grave, white curls of the Doctor’s wig, were exactly of the kind which have beguiled man in all ages, when near the sovereign presence of her who is born for his destiny;—and as for Mary, what did it avail her that she could say the Assembly’s Catechism from end to end without tripping, and that every habit of her life beat time to practical realities, steadily as the parlor clock? The wildest Italian singer or dancer, nursed on nothing but excitement from her cradle, never was more thoroughly possessed by the awful and solemn mystery of woman’s life than this Puritan girl.



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It is quite true, that, the next morning after James's departure, she rose as usual in the dim gray, and was to be seen opening the kitchen-door just at the moment when the birds were giving the first little drowsy stir and chirp,—and that she went on setting the breakfast-table for the two hired men, who were bound to the fields with the oxen,—and that then she went on skimming cream for the butter, and getting ready to churn, and making up biscuit for the Doctor's breakfast, when he and they should sit down together at a somewhat later hour; and as she moved about, doing all these things, she sung various scraps of old psalm-tunes; and the good Doctor, who was then busy with his early exercises of devotion, listened, as he heard the voice, now here, now there, and thought about angels and the Millennium. Solemnly and tenderly there floated in at his open study-window, through the breezy lilacs, mixed with low of kine and bleat of sheep and hum of early wakening life, the little silvery ripples of that singing, somewhat mournful in its cadence, as if a gentle soul were striving to hush itself to rest. The words were those of the rough old version of the Psalms then in use:—

“Truly my waiting soul relies
In silence God upon;
Because from him there doth arise
All my salvation.”

And then came the busy patter of the little footsteps without, the moving of chairs, the clink of plates, as busy hands were arranging the table; and then again there was a pause, and he thought she seemed to come near to the open window of the adjoining room, for the voice floated in clearer and sadder:—

“O God, to me be merciful,
Be merciful to me!
Because my soul for shelter safe
Betakes itself to thee.

“Yea, in the shadow of thy wings
My refuge have I placed,
Until these sore calamities
Shall quite be overpast.”

The tone of life in New England, so habitually earnest and solemn, breathed itself in the grave and plaintive melodies of the tunes then sung in the churches; and so these words, though in the saddest minor key, did not suggest to the listening ear of the auditor anything more than that pensive religious calm in which he delighted to repose. A contrast indeed they were, in their melancholy earnestness, to the exuberant carollings of a robin, who, apparently attracted by them, perched himself hard by in the lilacs, and struck up such a merry *roulade* as quite diverted the attention of the fair singer;—in fact, the intoxication breathed in the strain of this little messenger, whom God had feathered and winged and filled to the throat with ignorant joy, came in singular



contrast with the sadder notes breathed by that creature of so much higher mould and fairer clay,—that creature born for an immortal life.

But the good Doctor was inly pleased when she sung,—and when she stopped, looked up from his Bible wistfully, as missing something, he knew not what; for he scarce thought how pleasant the little voice was, or knew he had been listening to it,—and yet he was in a manner enchanted by it, so thankful and happy that he exclaimed with fervor, “The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage.”



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So went the world with him, full of joy and praise, because the voice and the presence wherein lay his unsuspected life were securely near, so certainly and constantly a part of his daily walk that he had not even the trouble to wish for them. But in that other heart how was it?—how with the sweet saint that was talking to herself in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs?

The good child had remembered her mother's parting words the night before,—“Put your mind upon your duties,”—and had begun her first conscious exercise of thought with a prayer that grace might be given her to do it. But even as she spoke, mingling and interweaving with that golden thread of prayer was another consciousness, a life in another soul, as she prayed that the grace of God might overshadow him, shield him from temptation, and lead him up to heaven; and this prayer so got the start of the other, that, ere she was aware, she had quite forgotten self, and was feeling, living, thinking in that other life.

The first discovery she made, when she looked out into the fragrant orchard, whose perfumes steamed in at her window, and listened to the first chirping of birds among the old apple-trees, was one that has astonished many a person before her; it was this: she found that all that had made life interesting to her was suddenly gone. She herself had not known, that, for the month past, since James came from sea, she had been living in an enchanted land,—that Newport harbor, and every rock and stone, and every mat of yellow seaweed on the shore, that the two-mile road between the cottage and the white house of Zebedee Marvyn, every mullein-stalk, every juniper-tree, had all had a light and a charm which were suddenly gone. There had not been an hour in the day for the last four weeks that had not had its unsuspected interest,—because he was at the white house, because, possibly, he might be going by, or coming in; nay, even in church, when she stood up to sing, and thought she was thinking only of God, had she not been conscious of that tenor voice that poured itself out by her side? and though afraid to turn her head that way, had she not felt that he was there every moment,—heard every word of the sermon and prayer for him? The very vigilant care which her mother had taken to prevent private interviews had only served to increase the interest by throwing over it the veil of constraint and mystery. Silent looks, involuntary starts, things indicated, not expressed, these are the most dangerous, the most seductive aliment of thought to a delicate and sensitive nature. If things were said out, they might not be said wisely,—they might repel by their freedom, or disturb by their unfitness; but what is only looked is sent into the soul through the imagination, which makes of it all that the ideal faculties desire.



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In a refined and exalted nature, it is very seldom that the feeling of love, when once thoroughly aroused, bears any sort of relation to the reality of the object. It is commonly an enkindling of the whole power of the soul's love for whatever she considers highest and fairest; it is, in fact, the love of something divine and unearthly, which, by a sort of illusion, connects itself with a personality. Properly speaking, there is but One true, eternal Object of all that the mind conceives, in this trance of its exaltation.

Disenchantment must come, of course; and in a love which terminates in happy marriage, there is a tender and gracious process, by which, without shock or violence, the ideal is gradually sunk in the real, which, though found faulty and earthly, is still ever tenderly remembered as it seemed under the morning light of that enchantment.

What Mary loved so passionately, that which came between her and God in every prayer, was not the gay, young, dashing sailor,—sudden in anger, imprudent of speech, and, though generous in heart, yet worldly in plans and schemings,—but her own ideal of a grand and noble man,—such a man as she thought he might become. He stood glorified before her, an image of the strength that overcomes things physical, of the power of command which controls men and circumstances, of the courage which disdains fear, of the honor which cannot lie, of constancy which knows no shadow of turning, of tenderness which protects the weak, and, lastly, of religious loyalty which should lay the golden crown of its perfected manhood at the feet of a Sovereign Lord and Redeemer. This was the man she loved, and with this regal mantle of glories she invested the person called James Marvyn; and all that she saw and felt to be wanting she prayed for with the faith of a believing woman.

Nor was she wrong;—for, as to every leaf and every flower there is an ideal to which the growth of the plant is constantly urging, so is there an ideal to every human being,—a perfect form in which it might appear, were every defect removed and every characteristic excellence stimulated to the highest point. Once in an age, God sends to some of us a friend who loves in us, *not* a false imagining, an unreal character, but, looking through all the rubbish of our imperfections, loves in us the divine ideal of our nature,—loves, not the man that we are, but the angel that we may be. Such friends seem inspired by a divine gift of prophecy,—like the mother of St. Augustine, who, in the midst of the wayward, reckless youth of her son, beheld him in a vision, standing, clothed in white, a ministering priest at the right hand of God,—as he has stood for long ages since. Could a mysterious foresight unveil to us this resurrection form of the friends with whom we daily walk, compassed about with mortal infirmity, we should follow them with faith and reverence through all the disguises of human faults and weaknesses, “waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God.”



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But these wonderful soul-friends, to whom God grants such perception, are the exceptions in life; yet sometimes are we blessed with one who sees through us, as Michel Angelo saw through a block of marble, when he attacked it in a divine fervor, declaring that an angel was imprisoned within it;—and it is often the resolute and delicate hand of such a friend that sets the angel free.

There be soul-artists, who go through this world, looking among their fellows with reverence, as one looks amid the dust and rubbish of old shops for hidden works of Titian and Leonardo, and, finding them, however cracked or torn or painted over with tawdry daubs of pretenders, immediately recognize the divine original, and set themselves to cleanse and restore. Such be God's real priests, whose ordination and anointing are from the Holy Spirit; and he who hath not this enthusiasm is not ordained of God, though whole synods of bishops laid hands on him.

Many such priests there be among women;—for to this silent ministry their nature calls them, endowed, as it is, with fineness of fibre, and a subtile keenness of perception outrunning slow-footed reason;—and she of whom we write was one of these.

At this very moment, while the crimson wings of morning were casting delicate reflections on tree, and bush, and rock, they were also reddening innumerable waves round a ship that sailed alone, with a wide horizon stretching like an eternity around it; and in the advancing morning stood a young man thoughtfully looking off into the ocean, with a book in his hand,—James Marvyn,—as truly and heartily a creature of this material world as Mary was of the invisible and heavenly.

There are some who seem made to *live*;—life is such a joy to them, their senses are so fully *en rapport* with all outward things, the world is so keenly appreciable, so much a part of themselves, they are so conscious of power and victory in the government and control of material things, that the moral and invisible life often seems to hang tremulous and unreal in their minds, like the pale, faded moon in the light of a gorgeous sunrise. When brought face to face with the great truths of the invisible world, they stand related to the higher wisdom much like the gorgeous, gay Alcibiades to the divine Socrates, or like the young man in Holy Writ to Him for whose appearing Socrates longed;— they gaze, imperfectly comprehending, and at the call of ambition or riches turn away sorrowing.

So it was with James;—in full tide of worldly energy and ambition, there had been forming over his mind that hard crust, that skepticism of the spiritual and exalted, which men of the world delight to call practical sense; he had been suddenly arrested and humbled by the revelation of a nature so much nobler than his own that he seemed worthless in his own eyes. He had asked for love; but when *such* love unveiled itself, he felt like the disciple of old in the view of a diviner tenderness,—“Depart from me, for I am a sinful man.”



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But it is not often that all the current of a life is reversed in one hour; and now, as James stood on the ship's deck, with life passing around him, and everything drawing upon the strings of old habits, Mary and her religion recurred to his mind as some fair, sweet, inexplicable vision. Where she stood he saw; but how *he* was ever to get there seemed as incomprehensible as how a mortal man should pillow his form on sunset clouds.

He held the little Bible in his hand as if it were some amulet charmed by the touch of a superior being; but when he strove to read it, his thoughts wandered, and he shut it, troubled and unsatisfied. Yet there were within him yearnings and cravings, wants never felt before, the beginning of that trouble which must ever precede the soul's rise to a higher plane of being.

There we leave him. We have shown you now our three different characters, each one in its separate sphere, feeling the force of that strongest and holiest power with which it has pleased our great Author to glorify this mortal life.

CHAPTER IX.

WHICH TREATS OF THINGS SEEN.

As, for example, the breakfast. It is six o'clock,—the hired men and oxen are gone,—the breakfast-table stands before the open kitchen-door, snowy with its fresh cloth, the old silver coffee-pot steaming up a refreshing perfume,—and the Doctor sits on one side, sipping his coffee and looking across the table at Mary, who is innocently pleased at the kindly beaming in his placid blue eyes,—and Aunt Katy Scudder discourses of housekeeping, and fancies something must have disturbed the rising of the cream, as it is not so thick and yellow as wont.

Now the Doctor, it is to be confessed, was apt to fall into a way of looking at people such as pertains to philosophers and scholars generally, that is, as if he were looking through them into the infinite,—in which case, his gaze became so earnest and intent that it would quite embarrass an uninitiated person; but Mary, being used to this style of contemplation, was only quietly amused, and waited till some great thought should loom up before his mental vision,—in which case, she hoped to hear from him.

The good man swallowed his first cup of coffee and spoke:—

“In the Millennium, I suppose, there will be such a fulness and plenty of all the necessaries and conveniences of life, that it will not be necessary for men and women to spend the greater part of their lives in labor in order to procure a living. It will not be necessary for each one to labor more than two or three hours a day,—not more than will conduce to health of body and vigor of mind; and the rest of their time they will spend in

reading and conversation, and such exercises as are necessary and proper to improve their minds and make progress in knowledge.”



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New England presents probably the only example of a successful commonwealth founded on a theory, as a distinct experiment in the problem of society. It was for this reason that the minds of its great thinkers dwelt so much on the final solution of that problem in this world. The fact of a future Millennium was a favorite doctrine of the great leading theologians of New England, and Dr. H. dwelt upon it with a peculiar partiality. Indeed, it was the solace and refuge of his soul, when oppressed with the discouragements which always attend things actual, to dwell upon and draw out in detail the splendors of this perfect future which was destined to glorify the world.

Nobody, therefore, at the cottage was in the least surprised when there dropped into the flow of their daily life these sparkling bits of ore, which their friend had dug in his explorations of a future Canaan,—in fact, they served to raise the hackneyed present out of the level of mere commonplace.

“But how will it be possible,” inquired Mrs. Scudder, “that so much less work will suffice in those days to do all that is to be done?”

“Because of the great advance of arts and sciences which will take place before those days,” said the Doctor, “whereby everything shall be performed with so much greater ease,—also the great increase of disinterested love, whereby the skill and talents of those who have much shall make up for the weakness of those who have less.

“Yes,” he continued, after a pause,—“all the careful Marthas in those days will have no excuse for not sitting at the feet of Jesus; there will be no cumbering with much serving; the Church will have only Maries in those days.”

This remark, made without the slightest personal intention, called a curious smile into Mrs. Scudder’s face, which was reflected in a slight blush from Mary’s, when the crack of a whip and the rattling of wagon-wheels disturbed the conversation and drew all eyes to the door.

There appeared the vision of Mr. Zebedee Marvyn’s farm-wagon, stored with barrels, boxes, and baskets, over which Candace sat throned triumphant, her black face and yellow-striped turban glowing in the fresh morning with a hearty, joyous light, as she pulled up the reins, and shouted to the horse to stop with a voice that might have done credit to any man living.

“Dear me, if there isn’t Candace!” said Mary.

“Queen of Ethiopia,” said the Doctor, who sometimes adventured a very placid joke.

The Doctor was universally known in all the neighborhood as a sort of friend and patron-saint of the negro race; he had devoted himself to their interests with a zeal unusual in those days. His church numbered more of them than any in Newport; and his hours of



leisure from study were often spent in lowliest visitations among them, hearing their stories, consoling their sorrows, advising, and directing their plans, teaching them reading and writing, and he often drew hard on his slender salary to assist them in their emergencies and distresses.



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This unusual condescension on his part was repaid on theirs with all the warmth of their race; and Candace, in particular, devoted herself to the Doctor with all the force of her being.

There was a legend current in the neighborhood, that the first efforts to catechize Candace were not eminently successful, her modes of contemplating theological tenets being so peculiarly from her own individual point of view that it was hard to get her subscription to a received opinion. On the venerable clause in the Catechism, in particular, which declares that all men sinned in Adam and fell with him, Candace made a dead halt:—

“I didn’t do dat ar’, for one, I knows. I’s got good mem’ry,—allers knows what I does,—nebber did eat dat ar’ apple,—nebber eat a bit ob him. Don’t tell me!”

It was of no use, of course, to tell Candace of all the explanations of this redoubtable passage,—of potential presence, and representative presence, and representative identity, and federal headship. She met all with the dogged,—

“Nebber did it, I knows; should ’ave ’membered, if I had. Don’t tell me!”

And even in the catechizing class of the Doctor himself, if this answer came to her, she sat black and frowning in stony silence even in his reverend presence.

Candace was often reminded that the Doctor believed the Catechism, and that she was differing from a great and good man; but the argument made no manner of impression on her, till, one day, a far-off cousin of hers, whose condition under a hard master had often moved her compassion, came in overjoyed to recount to her how, owing to Dr. H.’s exertions, he had gained his freedom. The Doctor himself had in person gone from house to house, raising the sum for his redemption; and when more yet was wanting, supplied it by paying half his last quarter’s limited salary.

“He do dat ar’?” said Candace, dropping the fork wherewith she was spearing doughnuts. “Den I’m gwine to b’liebe ebery word *he* does!”

And accordingly, at the next catechizing, the Doctor’s astonishment was great when Candace pressed up to him, exclaiming—

“De Lord bress you, Doctor, for opening de prison for dem dat is bound! I b’liebes in you now, Doctor. I’s gwine to b’liebe ebery word you say. I’ll say de Catechize now,—fix it any way you like. I did eat dat ar’ apple,—I eat de whole tree, an’ swallowed ebery bit ob it, if you say so.”

And this very thorough profession of faith was followed, on the part of Candace, by years of the most strenuous orthodoxy. Her general mode of expressing her mind on the subject was short and definitive.



“Law me! what’s de use? I’s set out to b’liebe de Catechize, an’ I’m gwine to bliebe it, —so!”

While we have been telling you all this about her, she has fastened her horse, and is swinging leisurely up to the house with a basket on either arm.

“Good morning, Candace,” said Mrs. Scudder. “What brings you so early?”



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“Come down ‘fore light to sell my chickens an’ eggs,—got a lot o’ money for ‘em, too. Missy Marvyn she sent Miss Scudder some turkey-eggs, an’ I brought down some o’ my doughnuts for de Doctor. Good folks must lib, you know, as well as wicked ones,”—and Candace gave a hearty, unctuous laugh. “No reason why Doctors shouldn’t hab good tings as well as sinners, is dere?”—and she shook in great billows, and showed her white teeth in the *abandon* of her laugh. “Lor bress ye, honey, chile!” she said, turning to Mary, “why, ye looks like a new rose, ebery bit! Don’t wonder *somebody* was allers pryin’ an’ spyin’ about here!”

“How is your Mistress, Candace?” said Mrs. Scudder, by way of changing the subject.

“Well, porly,—rader porly. When Massa Jim goes, ‘pears like takin’ de light right out her eyes. Dat ar’ boy trains roun’ arter his mudder like a cosset, he does. Lor’, de house seems so still widout him!—can’t a fly scratch his ear but it starts a body. Missy Marvyn she sent down, an’ says, would you an’ de Doctor an’ Miss Mary please come to tea dis arternoon.”

“Thank your mistress, Candace,” said Mrs. Scudder; “Mary and I will come,—and the Doctor, perhaps,” looking at the good man, who had relapsed into meditation, and was eating his breakfast without taking note of anything going on. “It will be time enough to tell him of it,” she said to Mary, “when we have to wake him up to dress; so we won’t disturb him now.”

To Mary the prospect of the visit was a pleasant one, for reasons which she scarce gave a definite form to. Of course, like a good girl, she had come to a fixed and settled resolution to think of James as little as possible; but when the path of duty lay directly along scenes and among people fitted to recall him, it was more agreeable than if it had lain in another direction. Added to this, a very tender and silent friendship subsisted between Mrs. Marvyn and Mary; in which, besides similarity of mind and intellectual pursuits, there was a deep, unspoken element of sympathy.

Candace watched the light in Mary’s eyes with the instinctive shrewdness by which her race seem to divine the thoughts and feelings of their superiors, and chuckled to herself internally. Without ever having been made a *confidante* by any party, or having a word said to or before her, still the whole position of affairs was as clear to her as if she had seen it on a map. She had appreciated at once Mrs. Scudder’s coolness, James’s devotion, and Mary’s perplexity,—and inly resolved, that, if the little maiden did not think of James in his absence, it should not be her fault.



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"Laws, Miss Scudder," she said, "I's right glad you's comin'; 'cause you hasn't seen how we's kind o' splendified since Massa Jim come home. You wouldn't know it. Why, he's got mats from Mogadore on all de entries, and a great big 'un on de parlor; and ye ought to see de shawl he brought Missus, an' all de cur'us kind o' tings to de Squire. 'Tell ye, dat ar' boy honors his fader and mudder, ef he don't do nuffin else,—an' dat's de fus' commandment wid promise, Ma'am; an' to see him a-settin' up ebery day in prayer-time, so handsome, holdin' Missus's han', an' lookin' right into her eyes all de time! Why, dat ar' boy is one o' de 'lect,—it's jest as clare to me; and de 'lect has got to come in,—dat's what I say. My faith's strong,—real clare, 'tell ye," she added, with the triumphant laugh which usually chorused her conversation, and turning to the Doctor, who, aroused by her loud and vigorous strain, was attending with interest to her.

"Well, Candace," he said, "we all hope you are right."

"*Hope*, Doctor!—I don't hope,—I *knows*. 'Tell ye, when I pray for him, don't I feel enlarged? 'Tell ye, it goes wid a rush. I can feel it gwine up like a rushin', mighty wind. I feels strong, I do."

"That's right, Candace," said the Doctor, "keep on; your prayers stand as much chance with God as if you were a crowned queen. The Lord is no respecter of persons."

"Dat's what he a'n't, Doctor,—an' dere's where I 'gree wid him," said Candace, as she gathered her baskets vigorously together, and, after a sweeping curtsy, went sailing down to her wagon, full laden with content, shouting a hearty "Good mornin', Missus," with the full power of her cheerful lungs, as she rode off.

As the Doctor looked after her, the simple, pleased expression with which he had watched her gradually faded, and there passed over his broad, good face a shadow, as of a cloud on a mountain-side.

"What a shame it is," he said, "what a scandal and disgrace to the Protestant religion, that Christians of America should openly practise and countenance this enslaving of the Africans! I have for a long time holden my peace,—may the Lord forgive me!—but I believe the time is coming when I must utter my voice. I cannot go down to the wharves or among the shipping, without these poor dumb creatures look at me so that I am ashamed,—as if they asked me what I, a Christian minister, was doing, that I did not come to their help. I must testify."

Mrs. Scudder looked grave at this earnest announcement; she had heard many like it before, and they always filled her with alarm, because—Shall we tell you why?



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Well, then, it was not because she was not a thoroughly indoctrinated anti-slavery woman. Her husband, who did all her thinking for her, had been a man of ideas beyond his day, and never for a moment countenanced the right of slavery so far as to buy or own a servant or attendant of any kind; and Mrs. Scudder had always followed decidedly along the path of his opinions and practice, and never hesitated to declare the reasons for the faith that was in her. But if any of us could imagine an angel dropped down out of heaven, with wings, ideas, notions, manners, and customs all fresh from that very different country, we might easily suppose that the most pious and orthodox family might find the task of presenting him in general society and piloting him along the courses of this world a very delicate and embarrassing one. However much they might reverence him on their own private account, their hearts would probably sink within them at the idea of allowing him to expand himself according to his previous nature and habits in the great world without. In like manner, men of high, unworldly natures are often revered by those who are somewhat puzzled what to do with them practically.

Mrs. Scudder considered the Doctor as a superior being, possessed by a holy helplessness in all things material and temporal, which imposed on her the necessity of thinking and caring for him, and prevising the earthly and material aspects of his affairs.

There was not in Newport a more thriving and reputable business at that time than the slave-trade. Large fortunes were constantly being turned out in it, and what better Providential witness of its justice could most people require?

Beside this, in their own little church, she reflected with alarm, that Simeon Brown, the richest and most liberal supporter of the society, had been, and was then, drawing all his wealth from this source; and rapidly there flashed before her mind a picture of one and another, influential persons, who were holders of slaves. Therefore, when the Doctor announced, "I must testify," she rattled her tea-spoon uneasily, and answered,—

"In what way, Doctor, do you think of bearing testimony? The subject, I think, is a very difficult one."

"Difficult? I think no subject can be clearer. If we were right in our war for liberty, we are wrong in making slaves or keeping them."

"Oh, I did not mean," said Mrs. Scudder, "that it was difficult to understand the subject; the *right* of the matter is clear, but what to *do* is the thing."

"I shall preach about it," said the Doctor; "my mind has run upon it some time. I shall show to the house of Judah their sin in this matter."

"I fear there will be great offence given," said Mrs. Scudder. "There's Simeon Brown, one of our largest supporters,—he is in the trade."



“Ah, yes,—but he will come out of it,—of course he will,—he is all right, all clear. I was delighted with the clearness of his views the other night, and thought then of bringing them to bear on this point,—only, as others were present, I deferred it. But I can show him that it follows logically from his principles; I am confident of that.”



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"I think you'll be disappointed in him, Doctor;—I think he'll be angry, and get up a commotion, and leave the church."

"Madam," said the Doctor, "do you suppose that a man who would be willing even to give up his eternal salvation for the greatest good of the universe could hesitate about a few paltry thousands that perish in the using?"

"He may feel willing to give up his soul," said Mrs. Scudder, naively, "but I don't think he'll give up his ships,—that's quite another matter,—he won't see it to be his duty."

"Then, Ma'am, he'll be a hypocrite, a gross hypocrite, if he won't," said the Doctor. "It is not Christian charity to think it of him. I shall call upon him this morning and tell him my intentions."

"But, Doctor," exclaimed Mrs. Scudder, with a start, "pray, think a little more of it. You know a great many things depend on him. Why! he has subscribed for twenty copies of your 'System of Theology.' I hope you'll remember that."

"And why should I remember that?" said the Doctor,—hastily turning round, suddenly enkindled, his blue eyes flashing out of their usual misty calm,—"what has my 'System of Theology' to do with the matter?"

"Why," said Mrs. Scudder, "it's of more importance to get right views of the gospel before the world than anything else, is it not?—and if, by any imprudence in treating influential people, this should be prevented, more harm than good would be done."

"Madam," said the Doctor, "I'd sooner my system should be sunk in the sea than it should be a millstone round my neck to keep me from my duty. Let God take care of my theology; I must do my duty."

And as the Doctor spoke, he straightened himself to the full dignity of his height, his face kindling with an unconscious majesty, and, as he turned, his eye fell on Mary, who was standing with her slender figure dilated, her large blue eye wide and bright, in a sort of trance of solemn feeling, half smiles, half tears,—and the strong, heroic man started, to see this answer to his higher soul in the sweet, tremulous mirror of womanhood. One of those lightning glances passed between his eyes and hers which are the freemasonry of noble spirits,—and, by a sudden impulse, they approached each other. He took both her outstretched hands, looked down into her face with a look full of admiration, and a sort of naive wonder,—then, as if her inspired silence had been a voice to him, he laid his hand on her head, and said,—

"God bless you, child! 'Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger!'"

In a moment he was gone.



“Mary,” said Mrs. Scudder, laying her hand on her daughter’s arm, “the Doctor loves you!”

“I know he does, mother,” said Mary, innocently; “and I love him,—dearly!—he is a noble, grand man!”

Mrs. Scudder looked keenly at her daughter. Mary’s eye was as calm as a June sky, and she began, composedly, gathering up the teacups.



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“She did not understand me,” thought the mother.

[To be continued.]

* * * * *

REVIEW.

The New Testament. Translated from the Original Greek, etc. By LEICESTER AMBROSE SAWYER. Boston: John P. Jewett & Co. 1858.

Few books merit the criticism which they receive; fewer receive all they merit. Here is a work, a translation, which is more likely than most to get its deserts, because its circle of critics will be unusually large. It purports to be a new and improved version of “the Book of Books,” and puts forth claims which will be conceded only after it shall have sustained the most extensive, minute, and even prejudiced scrutiny. The Bible has more readers than any other book; and that which claims to be an improved Bible must, if it secure anything like a general attention, meet with criticisms from all quarters. Mr. Sawyer is fortunate in one respect: his work will be examined and judged by multitudes who never undertook to criticize any other book; he will have, therefore, ultimately, a popular judgment of his task and its performance. But he is unfortunate in another point: for he must meet that popular sentiment which at the outset looks with disfavor upon anything that has even the appearance of meddling with the commonly received and almost universally approved version of the Holy Scriptures. Let us, in a brief space and with as little of formal and scholastic criticism as possible, examine Mr. Sawyer’s translation.

A work of such a character as this should be judged not more by its absolute or intrinsic merits than by a comparison of them with the design avowed and the claims advanced by the author. In a task of such magnitude we ought not to expect to find everything perfect. If the completed structure have a symmetry of proportions and excellence of finish approaching reasonably near to the plan proposed, we should not too severely censure minor defects. Critics rarely accord all that authors claim; the former measure the actual achievement,—the latter look to the ideal conception; if the one be in a reasonable degree commensurate with the other, we should be lenient toward the faults of the performance.

With this charitable substratum for our critical structure, let us test Mr. Sawyer’s new version by contrasting it with his own avowed design and the claims with which he introduces his completed task. In the Preface he says,—

“This is not a work of compromises, or of conjectural interpretations of the Sacred Scriptures, neither is it a paraphrase, but a strict [strictly] literal rendering. It neither

adds nor takes away; but aims to express the original with the utmost clearness and force, and with the utmost precision.”



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This is a somewhat pretentious claim. A strictly literal rendering of any language into another is by no means always an easy task; and it is especially difficult to couple, as the translator in this case asserts he has done, the utmost clearness, force, and precision in the expression of the thought, with minute exactness of version. We are surprised that Mr. Sawyer should have rested his claim for the excellence and superiority of his translation mainly upon this quality of literalism, for it is often the case that the closest literalist is the worst translator. It is often impossible to render the thoughts expressed in the peculiar idioms of one tongue into exactly corresponding idioms of another. There are idiomatic forms, especially in the Greek, which have no precisely correspondent forms in the English, and yet these are not unfrequently the most forcible expressions of any to be found in the original; any attempt to render these literally must be abortive; and a literal rendering, or as nearly literal as possible, is the worst translation, because it sacrifices the clearness, force, and precision, to say nothing of the grace and delicacy, of the original. The French language abounds in words and phrases the literal translation of which into English perverts the meaning and destroys the force of the original. Still more is a strictly literal rendering incompatible with the preservation and transference of the beauties of style and the strength of diction. The widest range of the thought, its more delicate shades and subtler connections, often depend in great part upon the peculiar forms of the language in which they are first clothed; and by a strictly literal translation the scope of the thought is narrowed, its finer lines obscured, and that which is of more importance than all else, the fitness of the expression, is altogether lost. The utmost strictness of literal translation is a poor compensation for the resultant poverty of language and dilution of thought; and by as much as the original is more impressive in its rich and fitting garb, by so much the more is it made to appear mean and unlike itself when forced to clothe itself in scanty second-hand habiliments.

We have said thus much on this point for two reasons: first, because it is on this chiefly that Mr. Sawyer appeals to the public for a verdict in favor of his translation; and secondly, because it is a common and popular notion, that, the more literal a translation can be made, especially in the case of the Bible, the better and more trustworthy it will be. And we are willing to admit, that, in translating the Holy Scriptures, the greatest degree of strictness in literal rendering, compatible with the full and correct expression of the thought, is and should be a first consideration; the translator should take no liberties with the text, by way either of omission, alteration, or compromise; he must in no way vitiate the thought; and if he keep within this rule, he will have escaped just criticism, and may claim the merit of faithfulness to his task. Has Mr. Sawyer, then, in his New Testament, given a strictly literal rendering? and is it an improvement on the common version? We have space for only a few specimens of his translation, and we have taken some of the first that attracted our notice; it will be observed that they are none of them abstruse or disputed passages.



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COMMON VERSION.

Matt. ii. 16.

“Then Herod, when he saw that he was *mocked* of the *wise men*, was exceeding wrath, and sent forth and *slew* all the children that were in Bethlehem and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he *had diligently inquired* of the *wise men*.”

SAWYER’S VERSION.

Chap. ii. verse 4.

“Then Herod seeing that he was *despised* by the *Magi*, was exceedingly angry, and sent and *destroyed* all the children, in Bethlehem, and in all its borders, from two years old and under, according to the precise time which he *had learned* of the *Magi*.”

Here is a comparison of the two translations of a simple narrative text taken at random. The essential changes (improvements?) made by Mr. Sawyer are in the words which we have italicized. Two of these changes, the substitution of “Magi” for “wise men,” and of “destroyed” for “slew,” we shall pass with the single observation, that the rendering of the common version is in both instances the more accurate and better expressed. Mr. Sawyer substitutes “despised” for “mocked,” as the translation of [Greek: *henepaichthae*]. Is this literal? or is it an improvement? The Greek verb [Greek: *hemaiso*] has the signification primarily *to deride, to mock, to scoff at*, and secondarily *to delude, to deceive, to disappoint*, but it has not the meaning *to despise*. The word *mock* is used in our language in both these significations,—in the secondary sense when it refers to men’s hopes or expectations,—as, *to mock one’s hopes*, that is, to delude or disappoint one’s expectations. In this sense, and in this alone, it is obviously used in this passage. The wise men did not scoff at King Herod, but they did delude him; they mocked his expectation of their return, and went back to their own country without returning to report to him, because they had been “warned of God in a dream,” not because they despised the king. To say, as Mr. Sawyer does, that they “despised” him, is neither warranted by the meaning of [Greek: *enepaichthae*], nor is such a rendering accordant with the facts of the story or the connections of the thought. It is a forced and far-fetched translation, and a change from the common version much for the worse. The same word is of frequent occurrence in the Scriptures. In the Septuagint, Jer. x. 14, it is used in the same sense as in Matt. ii. 16. It is worthy of note that in no other instance does Mr. Sawyer render it by “despised.” In Luke xviii. 32 and xxii. 63, and Matt. xx. 19, he translates it “mocked,” like the common version. Mr. Sawyer should be more consistent, if he would have us put faith in his scholarly pretensions and literal accuracy. The passage in which he indulges in this variation from his own rule is

the one of all the list where such a translation is particularly fitting, and where neither force, clearness, nor precision is gained by the substitution.



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Mr. Sawyer renders [Greek: *katha thov chrinon du haekribose*] thus: “according to the precise time which he had learned.”—Is this literal or correct? [Greek: *'Akriboo*] signifies *to inquire diligently, assiduously, or accurately*, and has no such signification primarily as *to learn*. If the reader will now turn to Mr. Sawyer’s translation of the 7th verse of the same chapter of Matthew, he will there find that he translates [Greek: *haekribose*] “asked”! And yet it stands in that passage in precisely the same connection of thought as in the 16th verse; so that we have our translator, who gives us only strictly literal renderings, translating the same word, occurring in the same relative connection, in the one instance by “asked,” and in the other by “had learned,”—neither of them legitimate translations, and neither precisely expressing the thought. The rendering “asked” falls as far short of the full and forcible meaning of [Greek: *haekribose*], in the one case, as “had learned” varies from its strictly literal signification in the other.

We will now examine another passage illustrating Mr. Sawyer’s consistent fidelity to literal renderings. He translates the word [Greek: *phuchae*], Luke xii. 19, 20, and 23, “soul”; thus, “I will say to my *soul*,” find “Is not the *soul* more than the food?”—agreeing with the common version in the first instance, and differing from it in the second. But he renders [Greek: *phuchae*] in Mark viii. 36, 37, Luke xvii. 33, and Matt. xvi. 26, “life”; thus, “For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his *life*?” “For whoever wishes to save his *life* shall lose it.” In these cases he seems to have made his choice between the renderings “soul” and “life” according to no rule of translation or of criticism in philology, but as his fancy dictated. How shall we explain these inconsistencies, and, at the same time, grant Mr. Sawyer his claim to literalness of rendering?

Luke ix. 24, 25, Mr. Sawyer translates [Greek: *phuchae*] “life,” and then renders [Greek: *eauthon de apolesas ae zaemiotheis*] “and destroys himself or loses his life.” The common version is “and lose himself or be cast away,” which is not only more strictly literal, but far more forcible. [Greek: *'Apollumi*] conveys the strongest idea of *total, irremediable ruin*; and [Greek: *zaemioo*], when used, as in this passage, in the aorist tense, has the signification of *bringing loss or ruin upon one’s self*. Both these thoughts are lost in Mr. Sawyer’s translation; and a more tame, insufficient, and tautological rendering than his could scarcely be imagined.

Another instance of Mr. Sawyer’s singular choice of renderings, in his zeal for improvement, is found in Luke viii. 46, which he translates, “Some one touched me; for I perceived a *power* going from me.” The common version, “Somebody touched me; for I perceive that *virtue* is gone out of me,” is clear and precise; Mr. Sawyer’s version, “a power,” is more indefinite and less forcible. Any intelligent reader will at once perceive that the common version is the better, and that Mr. Sawyer’s improved rendering is almost meaningless.



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One more example of these strictly literal renderings must suffice, John iii. 4. common version,—“Nicodemus saith unto him, 'How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born?'" Sawyer's version,—“Nicodemus said to him, 'How can a man be born when he is old? can he become an unborn infant of his mother a second time, and be born?'" The absurdity of the form of language put into the mouth of Nicodemus by Mr. Sawyer is obvious at a glance; no such thought was ever so expressed by any speaker in any language; it is wholly forced and unnatural; and upon comparing Mr. Sawyer's translation with the original, we find that he has paraphrased the passage with a vengeance, altogether omitting to translate the clause [Greek: *eis thaen koilian ... eiselthein kai gennaethaenai*], and interpolating an expression, instead, which is neither in the original text nor in the thought. Probably Mr. Sawyer's motive for taking this extraordinary liberty was a false delicacy, amounting to prudery; but it ill assorts with his assertion, that his work is not a paraphrase, nor one of compromises, or of conjectural interpretations.

We might proceed with numerous illustrations' exhibiting the weakness of Mr. Sawyer's claim of an improved and strictly literal rendering, but these are enough. Before he claims much on the score of scholarly accuracy or critical rendering, he must explain these inconsistencies and remove these blemishes. But if such faults are patent in the simplest narrative passages, what confidence can we place in Mr. Sawyer as a translator of difficult, abstruse, doctrinal, and disputed texts? In every instance in which we have tested his translation of the original, the changes which he has made from the common version not only, in our judgment, are no improvements, but positively render the expression less clear, less forcible, and less precise; of course, as the language is made worse, the thought is, in the same proportion, obscured.

Another peculiarity of Mr. Sawyer's translation, which we suppose he claims as an improvement, does not meet our approval. In all cases where there is no word in our language which expresses the signification of the Greek, as in the names of weights and measures, Mr. Sawyer substitutes for the language of the common version the foreign word of the original,—sometimes merely giving the orthography of the Greek in English letters, sometimes affixing a termination,—and frequently he adds, in brackets, an explanation of his rendering. As examples of this, we quote the following:—

“Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a *modius* [1.916 gallon measure].”

“I tell you that you shall not go out thence till you have paid even the last *lepton* [2 mills].”

“It is like leaven which a woman took and hid in three *sata* [33 quarts] of flour.”

“And there were six stone water-jars there, placed for the purification of the Jews, containing two or three *metretes* [16.75 or 25.125 gallons] each.”



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“And he desired to fill his stomach with the *carob pods* which the swine eat.”

“And one poor widow came and cast in two *lepta*, which is a *quadrans* [4 mills].”

It requires no knowledge of the original to pass judgment on such changes as are here made from the common version. The practice which Mr. Sawyer here introduces and sanctions is a vicious one in any translation, and is especially so in the case of the Holy Scriptures, which are to be read by the unlearned and ignorant as well as by the scholar and the critic. Mr. Sawyer's translation of such words as we have noted above conveys no idea to the mind of the common reader, and requires a glossary to make it intelligible. There is in his choice of words a pedantry and affectation of learning that are in bad taste. But in this, as in his other strictly literal renderings, he is inconsistent, and does not adhere to his own rule. He translates Matt. vi. 30,—“And if God so clothes the grass of the field, which to-day is, and tomorrow is cast into the *oven*,” etc. If he were consistent in his practice, he would have rendered the word “oven” *klibanon*, and then, in parenthesis, explained that it signifies “a large round pot, of earthen or other material, two or three feet high, narrowing towards the top, on the sides of which the dough was spread to be baked in thin cakes.” Probably Mr. Sawyer was deterred from following his rule in this case by the formidableness of the necessary parenthesis; but there is as much reason why he should have written *klibanon* instead of “oven,” as there is for substituting *lepton* for “farthing,” or *modius* for “bushel,” or *carob pods* for “husks,”—and in fact more reason, because the word “oven,” which he indorses and uses, conveys a far more imperfect idea of the original, [Greek: *klibanon*], than those words of the common version which he has rejected do of their originals. All such changes as those instanced above, in our judgment, mar the simplicity and obscure the meaning of the passages where they occur.

But we will now notice what appears to us a more serious defect than any of those already mentioned. Mr. Sawyer throughout his translation substitutes vulgar Latinisms and circumlocutions for the vigorous phrases of the received version. Sometimes this is done at the expense of homely Saxon words which are the very sinews of our language; and wherever such words are sacrificed for Latinisms, the beauty and force of the whole are impaired or destroyed. Again, the translator seems to have a peculiar antipathy to everything like poetical expressions or the euphonious arrangement of sentences. He has evidently fallen into the error of supposing that the most prosaic rendering is necessarily the most exact; whereas the fact is, that the most poetical form of expression of which a passage is susceptible is often the most clear, forcible, and precise. The best method of giving the reader an idea of the justice of this portion of our criticism of Mr. Sawyer's version is to quote some passages in contrast with the common version.



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COMMON VERSION.

"*If thou wilt*, let us make here three tabernacles."

"So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord: thou knowest that *I love thee*."

"God be *merciful* to me a sinner."

"Give us this day our *daily* bread."

"*And therefore* I cannot come."

"And to whom men have *committed* much, of him they will ask the more."

"I *give tithes* of all that I possess."

"For which of you intending to build a tower sitteth not down first and *counteth the cost*?"

"And upon this rock I will build my *church*."

"If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if *he repent*, forgive him."

"And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbors, saying unto them, *Rejoice with me*, for I have found my sheep which was lost."

"And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, *Peace*, be still."

"As we were driven up and down in Adria, about midnight the shipmen *deemed that they drew near to some country*."

"Enter ye in at the strait gate; for wide is the gate and *broad* is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat; because strait is the gate and *narrow* is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

"Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they *toil not*, neither do they spin."

SAWYER'S VERSION.

"*If you please*, we will make here three tabernacles."

"When therefore they had breakfasted, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these? He said to him, Yes, Lord, you know that *I am a friend to you*."

"God, be *propitious* to me a sinner."



“Give us to-day our *essential* bread.”

“*On this account* I cannot come.”

“And of him with whom men have *deposited* much, they will ask more.”

“I *tithe* all I *acquire*.”

“For what man of you wishing to build a tower, does not first sit down and *estimate the expense*?”

“And upon this rock will I build my *assembly*.”

“If your brother sins, reprove him; and if *he changes his mind*, forgive him.”

“And coming to the house, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying, *Congratulate me*; for I have found my sheep that was lost.”

“And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said to the lake, *Hush!* Be still!”

“When we were borne along in the Adriatic, at about midnight the sailors *suspected that some land was approaching them*.”

“Enter in through the narrow gate, for wide is the gate, and *spacious* the way which leads to destruction, and many are they that enter in by it; for narrow is the gate, and *compressed* the way which leads to life, and few are those who find it.”



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“Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they *perform no hard labor*, neither do they spin.”

These must suffice. We cannot extend our quotations, nor is there occasion to do so. We think we have seen enough of Mr. Sawyer's use of words and phrases, enough of his improvements on the common version of the Bible, to convince any candid mind that his is neither a literal nor a correct translation; that so far from having improved the version, by adding clearness, force, or precision, he has injured it in each of these respects; and that the world would be immensely the loser by accepting him as a substitute for the forty-seven translators who composed the famous Council of King James in 1611. We are informed that Mr. Sawyer has completed his improved version of the Old Testament, and will soon publish it. We almost shudder in anticipation of the sounds which he has probably evoked from the harp of Judah's minstrel king, of the colors which he has put on the canvas where are painted the glowing visions of Isaiah, and of the rude matter-of-fact method in which he has doubtless used the modern telescope to penetrate and scatter the glorious and solemn mysteries of the cloud-land of prophecy out of which spake the God of Daniel. But we forbear, and must wait till we have the remainder of this *magnum opus* before we venture to hazard an opinion of its merits.

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