

# **The Atlantic Monthly, Volume 07, No. 44, June, 1861 Creator eBook**

## **The Atlantic Monthly, Volume 07, No. 44, June, 1861 Creator**

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## THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY

*A magazine of literature, art, and politics.*

*Vol. VII.—June, 1861.—No. XLIV.*

## AGNES OF SORRENTO.

### CHAPTER V.

Il padre Francesco.

The next morning Elsie awoke, as was her custom,—when the very faintest hue of dawn streaked the horizon. A hen who has seen a hawk balancing his wings and cawing in mid-air over her downy family could not have awakened with her feathers, metaphorically speaking, in a more bristling state of caution.

“Spirits in the gorge, quotha?” said she to herself, as she vigorously adjusted her dress. “I believe so,—spirits in good sound bodies, I believe; and next we shall hear, there will be rope-ladders, and climbings, and the Lord knows what. I shall go to confession this very morning, and tell Father Francesco the danger; and instead of taking her down to sell oranges, suppose I send her to the sisters to carry the ring and a basket of oranges?”

“Ah, ah!” she said, pausing, after she was dressed, and addressing a coarse print of Saint Agnes pasted against the wall,—“you look very meek there, and it was a great thing no doubt to die as you did; but if you’d lived to be married and bring up a family of

girls, you'd have known something greater. Please, don't take offence with a poor old woman who has got into the way of speaking her mind freely! I'm foolish, and don't know much,—so, dear lady, pray for me!" And old Elsie bent her knee and crossed herself reverently, and then went out, leaving her young charge still sleeping.

It was yet dusky dawn when she might have been seen kneeling, with her sharp, clear-cut profile, at the grate of a confession-box in a church in Sorrento. Within was seated a personage who will have some influence on our story, and who must therefore be somewhat minutely introduced to the reader.

Il Padre Francesco had only within the last year arrived in the neighborhood, having been sent as superior of a brotherhood of Capuchins, whose convent was perched on a crag in the vicinity. With this situation came a pastoral care of the district; and Elsie and her grand-daughter found in him a spiritual pastor very different from the fat, jolly, easy Brother Girolamo, to whose place he had been appointed. The latter had been one of those numerous priests taken from the peasantry, who never rise above the average level of thought of the body from which they are drawn. Easy, gossipy, fond of good living and good stories, sympathetic in troubles and in joys, he had been a general favorite in the neighborhood, without exerting any particularly spiritualizing influence.

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It required but a glance at Father Francesco to see that he was in all respects the opposite of this. It was evident that he came from one of the higher classes, by that indefinable air of birth and breeding which makes itself felt under every change of costume. Who he might be, what might have been his past history, what rank he might have borne, what part played in the great warfare of life, was all of course sunk in the oblivion of his religious profession, where, as at the grave, a man laid down name and fame and past history and worldly goods, and took up a coarse garb and a name chosen from the roll of the saints, in sign that the world that had known him should know him no more.

Imagine a man between thirty and forty, with that round, full, evenly developed head, and those chiselled features, which one sees on ancient busts and coins no less than in the streets of modern Rome. The cheeks were sunken and sallow; the large, black, melancholy eyes had a wistful, anxious, penetrative expression, that spoke a stringent, earnest spirit, which, however deep might be the grave in which it lay buried, had not yet found repose. The long, thin, delicately formed hands were emaciated and bloodless; they clasped with a nervous eagerness a rosary and crucifix of ebony and silver,—the only mark of luxury that could be discerned in a costume unusually threadbare and squalid. The whole picture of the man, as he sat there, had it been painted and hung in a gallery, was such as must have stopped every person of a certain amount of sensibility before it with the conviction that behind that strong, melancholy, earnest figure and face lay one of those hidden histories of human passion in which the vivid life of medieval Italy was so fertile.

He was listening to Elsie, as she kneeled, with that easy air of superiority which marks a practised man of the world, yet with a grave attention which showed that her communication had awakened the deepest interest in his mind. Every few moments he moved slightly in his seat, and interrupted the flow of the narrative by an inquiry concisely put, in tones which, clear and low, had a solemn and severe distinctness, producing, in the still, dusky twilight of the church, an almost ghostly effect.

When the communication was over, he stepped out of the confessional and said to Elsie in parting,—“My daughter, you have done well to take this in time. The devices of Satan in our corrupt times are numerous and artful, and they who keep the Lord’s sheep must not sleep. Before many days I will call and examine the child; meanwhile I approve your course.”

It was curious to see the awe-struck, trembling manner in which old Elsie, generally so intrepid and commanding, stood before this man in his brown rough woollen gown with his corded waist; but she had an instinctive perception of the presence of the man of superior birth no less than a reverence for the man of religion.

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After she had departed from the church, the Capuchin stood lost in thought; and to explain his reverie, we must throw some further light on his history.

Il Padre Francesco, as his appearance and manner intimated, was in truth from one of the most distinguished families of Florence. He was one of those whom an ancient writer characterizes as “men of longing desire.” Born with a nature of restless stringency that seemed to doom him never to know repose, excessive in all things, he had made early trial of ambition, of war, and of what the gallants of his time called love, —plunging into all the dissipated excesses of a most dissolute age, and outdoing in luxury and extravagance the foremost of his companions.

The wave of a great religious impulse—which in our times would have been called a revival—swept over the city of Florence, and bore him, with multitudes of others, to listen to the fervid preaching of the Dominican monk, Jerome Savonarola; and amid the crowd that trembled, wept, and beat their breasts under his awful denunciations, he, too, felt within himself a heavenly call,—the death of an old life, and the uprising of a new purpose.

The colder manners and more repressed habits of modern times can give no idea of the wild fervor of a religious revival among a people so passionate and susceptible to impressions as the Italians. It swept society like a spring torrent from the sides of the Apennines, bearing all before it. Houses were sacked with religious fervor by penitent owners, and licentious pictures and statuary and books, and all the thousand temptations and appliances of a luxurious age, were burned in the great public square. Artists convicted of impure and licentious designs threw their palettes and brushes into the expiatory flames, and retired to convents, till called forth by the voice of the preacher, and bid to turn their art into higher channels. Since the days of Saint Francis no such profound religious impulse had agitated the Italian community.

In our times a conversion is signalized by few outward changes, however deep the inner life; but the life of the Middle Ages was profoundly symbolical, and always required the help of material images in its expression.

The gay and dissolute young Lorenzo Sforza took leave of the world with rites of awful solemnity. He made his will and disposed of all his worldly property, and assembling his friends, bade them the farewell of a dying man. Arrayed as for the grave, he was laid in his coffin, and thus carried from his stately dwelling by the brethren of the Misericordia, who, in their ghostly costume, with mournful chants and lighted candles, bore him to the tomb of his ancestors, where the coffin was deposited in the vault, and its occupant passed the awful hours of the night in darkness and solitude. Thence he was carried, the next day, almost in a state of insensibility, to a neighboring convent of the severest order, where, for some weeks, he observed a penitential retreat of silence and prayer, neither seeing nor hearing any living being but his spiritual director.

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The effect of all this on an ardent and sensitive temperament can scarcely be conceived; and it is not to be wondered at that the once gay and luxurious Lorenzo Sforza, when emerging from this tremendous discipline, was so wholly lost in the worn and weary Padre Francesco that it seemed as if in fact he had died and another had stepped into his place. The face was ploughed deep with haggard furrows, and the eyes were as those of a man who has seen the fearful secrets of another life. He voluntarily sought a post as far removed as possible from the scenes of his early days, so as more completely to destroy his identity with the past; and he devoted himself with enthusiasm to the task of awakening to a higher spiritual life the indolent, self-indulgent monks of his order, and the ignorant peasantry of the vicinity.

But he soon discovered, what every earnest soul learns who has been baptized into a sense of things invisible, how utterly powerless and inert any mortal man is to inspire others with his own insights and convictions. With bitter discouragement and chagrin, he saw that the spiritual man must forever lift the dead weight of all the indolence and indifference and animal sensuality that surround him,—that the curse of Cassandra is upon him, forever to burn and writhe under awful visions of truths which no one around him will regard. In early life the associate only of the cultivated and the refined, Father Francesco could not but experience at times an insupportable *ennui* in listening to the confessions of people who had never learned either to think or to feel with any degree of distinctness, and whom his most fervent exhortations could not lift above the most trivial interests of a mere animal life. He was weary of the childish quarrels and bickerings of the monks, of their puerility, of their selfishness and self-indulgence, of their hopeless vulgarity of mind, and utterly discouraged with their inextricable labyrinths of deception. A melancholy deep as the grave seized on him, and he redoubled his austerities, in the hope that by making life painful he might make it also short.

But the first time that the clear, sweet tones of Agnes rang ill his ears at the confessional, and her words, so full of unconscious poetry and repressed genius, came like a strain of sweet music through the grate, he felt at his heart a thrill to which it had long been a stranger, and which seemed to lift the weary, aching load from off his soul, as if some invisible angel had borne it up on his wings.

In his worldly days he had known women as the gallants in Boccaccio's romances knew them, and among them one enchantress whose sorceries had kindled in his heart one of those fatal passions which burn out the whole of a man's nature, and leave it, like a sacked city, only a smouldering heap of ashes. Deepest, therefore, among his vows of renunciation had been those which divided him from all womankind. The gulf that parted him and them was in his mind deep as hell, and he thought of the sex only in the light of temptation and danger. For the first time in his life, an influence serene, natural, healthy, and sweet breathed over him from the mind of a woman,—an influence so heavenly and peaceful that he did not challenge or suspect it, but rather opened his worn heart insensibly to it, as one in a fetid chamber naturally breathes freer when the fresh air is admitted.

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How charming it was to find his most spiritual exhortations seized upon with the eager comprehension of a nature innately poetic and ideal: Nay, it sometimes seemed to him as if the suggestions which he gave her dry and leafless she brought again to him in miraculous clusters of flowers, like the barren rod of Joseph, which broke into blossoms when he was betrothed to the spotless Mary; and yet, withal, she was so humbly unconscious, so absolutely ignorant of the beauty of all she said and thought, that she impressed him less as a mortal woman than as one of those divine miracles in feminine form of which he had heard in the legends of the saints.

Thenceforward his barren, discouraged life began to blossom with wayside flowers,—and he mistrusted not the miracle, because the flowers were all heavenly. The pious thought or holy admonition that he saw trodden under the swinish feet of the monks he gathered up again in hope,—she would understand it; and gradually all his thoughts became like carrier-doves, which, having once learned the way to a favorite haunt, are ever fluttering to return thither.

Such is the wonderful power of human sympathy, that the discovery even of the existence of a soul capable of understanding our inner life often operates as a perfect charm; every thought, and feeling, and aspiration carries with it a new value, from the interwoven consciousness that attends it of the worth it would bear to that other mind; so that, while that person lives, our existence is doubled in value, even though oceans divide us.

The cloud of hopeless melancholy which had brooded over the mind of Father Francesco lifted and sailed away, he knew not why, he knew not when. A secret joyfulness and alacrity possessed his spirits; his prayers became more fervent and his praises more frequent. Until now, his meditations had been most frequently those of fear and wrath,—the awful majesty of God, the terrible punishment of sinners, which he conceived with all that haggard, dreadful sincerity of vigor which characterized the modern Etruscan phase of religion of which the “Inferno” of Dante was the exponent and the out-come. His preachings and his exhortations had dwelt on that lurid world seen by the severe Florentine, at whose threshold hope forever departs, and around whose eternal circles of living torture the shivering spirit wanders dismayed and blasted by terror.

He had been, shocked and discouraged to find how utterly vain had been his most intense efforts to stem the course of sin by presenting these images of terror: how hard natures had listened to them with only a coarse and cruel appetite, which seemed to increase their hardness and brutality; and how timid ones had been withered by them, like flowers scorched by the blast of a furnace; how, in fact, as in the case of those cruel executions and bloody tortures then universal in the jurisprudence of Europe, these pictures of eternal torture seemed to exert a morbid demoralizing influence which hurried on the growth of iniquity.



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But since his acquaintance with Agnes, without his knowing exactly why, thoughts of the Divine Love had floated into his soul, filling it with a golden cloud like that which of old rested over the mercy-seat in that sacred inner temple where the priest was admitted alone. He became more affable and tender, more tolerant to the erring, more fond of little children; would stop sometimes to lay his hand on the head of a child, or to raise up one who lay overthrown in the street. The song of little birds and the voices of animal life became to him full of tenderness; and his prayers by the sick and dying seemed to have a melting power, such as he had never known before. It was spring in his soul,—soft, Italian spring,—such as brings out the musky breath of the cyclamen, and the faint, tender perfume of the primrose, in every moist dell of the Apennines.

A year passed in this way, perhaps the best and happiest of his troubled life,—a year in which, insensibly to himself, the weekly interviews with Agnes at the confessional became the rallying-points around which the whole of his life was formed, and she the unsuspected spring of his inner being.

It was his duty, he said to himself, to give more than usual time and thought to the working and polishing of this wondrous jewel which had so unexpectedly been intrusted to him for the adorning of his Master's crown; and so long as he conducted with the strictest circumspection of his office, what had he to fear in the way of so delightful a duty? He had never touched her hand; never had even the folds of her passing drapery brushed against his garments of mortification and renunciation; never, even in pastoral benediction, had he dared lay his hand on that beautiful head. It is true, he had not forbidden himself to raise his glance sometimes when he saw her coming in at the church-door and gliding up the aisle with downcast eyes, and thoughts evidently so far above earth, that she seemed, like one of Fra Angelico's angels, to be moving on a cloud, so encompassed with stillness and sanctity that he held his breath as she passed.

But in the confession of Dame Elsie that morning he had received a shock which threw his whole interior being into a passionate agitation which dismayed and astonished him.

The thought of Agnes, his spotless lamb, exposed to lawless and licentious pursuit, of whose nature and probabilities his past life gave him only too clear an idea, was of itself a very natural source of anxiety. But Elsie had unveiled to him her plans for her marriage, and consulted him on the propriety of placing Agnes immediately under the protection of the husband she had chosen for her; and it was this part of her communication which had awakened the severest internal recoil, and raised a tumult of passions which the priest vainly sought either to assuage or understand.

As soon as his morning duties were over, he repaired to his convent, sought his cell, and, prostrate on his face before the crucifix, began his internal reckoning with himself. The day passed in fasting and solitude.



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It is now golden evening, and on the square, flat roof of the convent, which, high-perched on a crag, overlooks the bay, one might observe a dark figure slowly pacing backward and forward. It is Father Francesco; and as he walks up and down, one could see by his large, bright, dilated eye, by the vivid red spot on either sunken cheek, and by the nervous energy of his movements, that he is in the very height of some mental crisis,—in that state of placid *extase* in which the subject supposes himself perfectly calm, because every nerve is screwed to the highest point of tension and can vibrate no more.

What oceans had that day rolled over him and swept him, as one may see a little boat rocked on the capricious surges of the Mediterranean! Were, then, all his strivings and agonies in vain? Did he love this woman with any earthly love? Was he jealous of the thought of a future husband? Was it a tempting demon that said to him, "Lorenzo Sforza might have shielded this treasure from the profanation of lawless violence, from the brute grasp of an inappreciative peasant, but Father Francesco cannot"? There was a moment when his whole being vibrated with a perception of what a marriage bond might have been that was indeed a sacrament, and that bound together two pure and loyal souls who gave life and courage to each other in all holy purposes and heroic deeds; and he almost feared that he had cursed his vows,—those awful vows, at whose remembrance his inmost soul shivered through every nerve.

But after hours of prayer and struggle, and wave after wave of agonizing convulsion, he gained one of those high points in human possibility where souls can stand a little while at a time, and where all things seem so transfigured and pure that they fancy themselves thenceforward forever victorious over evil.

As he walks up and down in the gold-and-purple evening twilight, his mind seems to him calm as that glowing sea that reflects the purple shores of Ischia, and the quaint, fantastic grottos and cliff's of Capri. All is golden and glowing; he sees all clear; he is delivered from his spiritual enemies; he treads them under his feet.

Yes, he says to himself, he loves Agnes,—loves her all-sacredly as her guardian angel does, who ever beholdeth the face of her Father in Heaven. Why, then, does he shrink from her marriage? Is it not evident? Has that tender soul, that poetic nature, that aspiring genius, anything in common with the vulgar, coarse details of a peasant's life? Will not her beauty always draw the eye of the licentious, expose her artless innocence to solicitation which will annoy her and bring upon her head the inconsiderate jealousy of her husband? Think of Agnes made subject to the rude authority, to the stripes and correction, which men of the lower class, under the promptings of jealousy, do not scruple to inflict on their wives! What career did society, as then organized, present to such a nature, so perilously gifted in body and mind? He has the answer. The Church has opened a career to woman which all the world denies her.

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He remembers the story of the dyer's daughter of Siena, the fair Saint Catharine. In his youth he had often visited the convent where one of the first artists of Italy has immortalized her conflicts and her victories, and knelt with his mother at the altar where she now communes with the faithful. He remembered how, by her sanctity, her humility, and her holy inspirations of soul, she had risen to the courts of princes, whither she had been sent as ambassadress to arrange for the interests of the Church; and then rose before his mind's eye the gorgeous picture of Pinturicchio, where, borne in celestial repose and purity amid all the powers and dignitaries of the Church, she is canonized as one of those that shall reign and intercede with Christ in heaven.

Was it wrong, therefore, in him, though severed from all womankind by a gulf of irrevocable vows, that he should feel a kind of jealous property in this gifted and beautiful creature? and though he might not, even in thought, dream of possessing her himself, was there sin in the vehement energy with which his whole nature rose up in him to say that no other man should,—that she should be the bride of Heaven alone?

Certainly, if there were, it lurked far out of sight; and the priest had a case that might have satisfied a conscience even more fastidious;—and he felt a sort of triumph in the results of his mental scrutiny.

Yes, she should ascend from glory to glory,—but *his* should be the hand that should lead her upward. *He* would lead her within the consecrated grate,—he would pronounce the awful words that should make it sacrilege for all other men to approach her; and yet through life *he* should be the guardian and director of her soul, the one being to whom she should render an obedience as unlimited as that which belongs to Christ alone.

Such were the thoughts of this victorious hour,—which, alas! were destined to fade as those purple skies and golden fires gradually went out, leaving, in place of their light and glory, only the lurid glow of Vesuvius.

## CHAPTER VI.

### *The walk to the convent.*

Elsie returned from the confessional a little after sunrise, much relieved and satisfied. Padre Francesco had shown such a deep interest in her narrative that she was highly gratified. Then he had given her advice which exactly accorded with her own views; and such advice is always regarded as an eminent proof of sagacity in the giver.

On the point of the marriage he had recommended delay,—a course quite in accordance with Elsie's desire, who, curiously enough, ever since her treaty of marriage with Antonio had been commenced, had cherished the most whimsical, jealous dislike of him, as if he were about to get away her grandchild from her; and this rose at times

so high that she could scarcely speak peaceably to him,—a course of things which caused Antonio to open wide his great soft ox-eyes, and wonder at the ways of woman-kind; but he waited the event in philosophic tranquillity.

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The morning sunbeams were shooting many a golden shaft among the orange-trees when Elsie returned and found Agnes yet kneeling at her prayers.

“Now, my little heart,” said the old woman, when their morning meal was done, “I am going to give you a holiday to-day. I will go with you to the Convent, and you shall spend the day with the sisters, and so carry Saint Agnes her ring.”

“Oh, thank you, grandmamma! how good you are! May I stop a little on the way, and pick some cyclamen and myrtles and daisies for her shrine?”

“Just as you like, child; but if you are going to do that, we must be off soon, for I must be at my stand betimes to sell oranges: I had them all picked this morning while my little darling was asleep.”

“You always do everything, grandmamma, and leave me nothing to do: it is not fair. But, grandmamma, if we are going to get flowers by the way, let us follow down the stream, through the gorge, out upon the sea-beach, and so walk along the sands, and go by the back path up the rocks to the Convent: that walk is so shady and lovely at this time in the morning, and it is so fresh along by the sea-side!”

“As you please, dearie; but first fill a little basket with our best oranges for the sisters.”

“Trust me for that!” And the girl ran eagerly to the house, and drew from her treasures a little white wicker basket, which she proceeded to line curiously with orange-leaves, sticking sprays of blossoms in a wreath round the border.

“Now for some of our best blood-oranges!” she said;—“old Jocunda says they put her in mind of pomegranates. And here are some of these little ones,—see here, grandmamma!” she exclaimed, as she turned and held up a branch just broken, where five small golden balls grew together with a pearly spray of white buds just beyond them.

The exercise of springing up for the branch had sent a vivid glow into her clear brown cheek, and her eyes were dilated with excitement and pleasure; and as she stood joyously holding the branch, while the flickering shadows fell on her beautiful face, she seemed more like a painter’s dream than a reality.

Her grandmother stood a moment admiring her.

“She’s too good and too pretty for Antonio or any other man: she ought to be kept to look at,” she said to herself. “If I could keep her always, no man should have her; but death will come, and youth and beauty go, and so somebody must care for her.”

When the basket was filled and trimmed, Agnes took it on her arm. Elsie raised and poised on her head the great square basket that contained her merchandise, and began

walking erect and straight down the narrow rocky stairs that led into the gorge, holding her distaff with its white flax in her hands, and stepping as easily as if she bore no burden.

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Agnes followed her with light, irregular movements, glancing aside from time to time, as a tuft of flowers or a feathery spray of leaves attracted her fancy. In a few moments her hands were too full, and her woollen apron of many-colored stripes was raised over one arm to hold her treasures, while a hymn to Saint Agnes, which she constantly murmured to herself, came in little ripples of sound, now from behind a rock, and now out of a tuft of bushes, to show where the wanderer was hid. The song, like many Italian ones, would be nothing in English, —only a musical repetition of sweet words to a very simple and childlike idea, the *bella, bella, bella* ringing out in every verse with a tender joyousness that seemed in harmony with the waving ferns and pendent flowers and long ivy-wreaths from among which its notes issued. “Beautiful and sweet Agnes,” it said, in a thousand tender repetitions, “make me like thy little white lamb! Beautiful Agnes, take me to the green fields where Christ’s lambs are feeding! Sweeter than the rose, fairer than the lily, take me where thou art!”

At the bottom of the ravine a little stream tinkles its way among stones so mossy in their deep, cool shadow as to appear all verdure; for seldom the light of the sun can reach the darkness where they lie. A little bridge, hewn from solid rock, throws across the shrunken stream an arch much wider than its waters seem to demand; for in spring and autumn, when the torrents wash down from the mountains, its volume is often suddenly increased.

This bridge was so entirely and evenly grown over with short thick moss that it might seem cut of some strange kind of living green velvet, and here and there it was quaintly embroidered with small blossoming tufts of white alyssum, or feathers of ferns and maiden’s-hair which shook and trembled to every breeze. Nothing could be lovelier than this mossy bridge, when some stray sunbeam, slanting up the gorge, took a fancy to light it up with golden hues, and give transparent greenness to the tremulous thin leaves that waved upon it.

On this spot Elsie paused a moment, and called back after Agnes, who had disappeared into one of those deep grottos with which the sides of the gorge are perforated, and which are almost entirely veiled by the pendent ivy-wreaths.

“Agnes! Agnes! wild girl! come quick!”

Only the sound of “*Bella, bella Agnella*” came out of the ivy-leaves to answer her; but it sounded so happy and innocent that Elsie could not forbear a smile, and in a moment Agnes came springing down with a quantity of the feathery lycopodium in her hands, which grows nowhere so well as in moist and dripping places.

Out of her apron were hanging festoons of golden broom, crimson gladiolus, and long, trailing sprays of ivy; while she held aloft in triumph a handful of the most superb cyclamen, whose rosy crowns rise so beautifully above their dark quaint leaves in moist and shady places.

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“See, see, grandmother, what an offering I have! Saint Agnes will be pleased with me to-day; for I believe in her heart she loves flowers better than gems.”

“Well, well, wild one,—time flies, we must hurry.” And crossing the bridge quickly, the grandmother struck into a mossy foot-path that led them, after some walking, under the old Roman bridge at the gateway of Sorrento. Two hundred feet above their heads rose the mighty arches, enamelled with moss and feathered with ferns all the way; and below this bridge the gorge grew somewhat wider, its sides gradually receding and leaving a beautiful flat tract of land, which was laid out as an orange-orchard. The golden fruit was shut in by rocky walls on either side which here formed a perfect hot-bed, and no oranges were earlier or finer.

Through this beautiful orchard the two at length emerged from the gorge upon the sea-sands, where lay the blue Mediterranean swathed in bands of morning mist, its many-colored waters shimmering with a thousand reflected lights, and old Capri panting through sultry blue mists, and Vesuvius with his cloud-spotted sides and smoke-wreathed top burst into view. At a little distance a boatload of bronzed fishermen had just drawn in a net, from which they were throwing out a quantity of sardines, which flapped and fluttered in the sunshine like scales of silver. The wind blowing freshly bore thousands of little purple waves to break one after another at the foamy line which lay on the sand.

Agnes ran gayly along the beach with her flowers and vines fluttering from her gay striped apron, and her cheeks flushed with exercise and pleasure,—sometimes stopping and turning with animation to her grandmother to point out the various floral treasures that enamelled every crevice and rift of the steep wall of rock which rose perpendicularly above their heads in that whole line of the shore which is crowned with the old city of Sorrento: and surely never did rocky wall show to the open sea a face more picturesque and flowery. The deep red cliff was hollowed here and there into fanciful grottos, draped with every varied hue and form of vegetable beauty. Here a crevice high in air was all abloom with purple gillyflower, and depending in festoons above it the golden blossoms of the broom; here a cleft seemed to be a nestling-place for a colony of gladiolus, with its crimson flowers and blade-like leaves; here the silver-frosted foliage of the miller-geranium, or of the wormwood, toned down the extravagant brightness of other blooms by its cooler tints. In some places it seemed as if a sort of floral cascade were tumbling confusedly over the rocks, mingling all hues and all forms in a tangled mass of beauty.

“Well, well,” said old Elsie, as Agnes pointed to some superb gillyflowers which grew nearly half-way up the precipice,—“is the child possessed? You have all the gorge in your apron already. Stop looking, and let us hurry on.”

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After a half-hour's walk, they came to a winding staircase cut in the rock, which led them a zigzag course up through galleries and grottos looking out through curious windows and loop-holes upon the sea, till finally they emerged at the old sculptured portal of a shady garden which was surrounded by the cloistered arcades of the Convent of Saint Agnes.

The Convent of Saint Agnes was one of those monuments in which the piety of the Middle Ages delighted to commemorate the triumphs of the new Christianity over the old Heathenism.

The balmy climate and paradisiacal charms of Sorrento and the adjacent shores of Naples had made them favorite resorts during the latter period of the Roman Empire,—a period when the whole civilized world seemed to human view about to be dissolved in the corruption of universal sensuality. The shores of Baiae were witnesses of the orgies and cruelties of Nero and a court made in his likeness, and the palpitating loveliness of Capri became the hot-bed of the unnatural vices of Tiberius. The whole of Southern Italy was sunk in a debasement of animalism and ferocity which seemed irrecoverable, and would have been so, had it not been for the handful of salt which a Galilean peasant had about that time east into the putrid, fermenting mass of human society.

We must not wonder at the zeal which caused the artistic Italian nature to love to celebrate the passing away of an era of unnatural vice and demoniac cruelty by visible images of the purity, the tenderness, the universal benevolence which Jesus had brought into the world.

Some time about the middle of the thirteenth century, it had been a favorite enterprise of a princess of a royal family in Naples to erect a convent to Saint Agnes, the guardian of female purity, out of the wrecks and remains of an ancient temple of Venus, whose white pillars and graceful acanthus-leaves once crowned a portion of the precipice on which the town was built, and were reflected from the glassy blue of the sea at its feet. It was said that this princess was the first lady abbess. Be that as it may, it proved to be a favorite retreat for many ladies of rank and religious aspiration, whom ill-fortune in some of its varying forms led to seek its quiet shades, and it was well and richly endowed by its royal patrons.

It was built after the manner of conventual buildings generally,—in a hollow square, with a cloistered walk around the inside looking upon a garden.

The portal at which Agnes and her grandmother knocked, after ascending the winding staircase cut in the precipice, opened through an arched passage into this garden.

As the ponderous door swung open, it was pleasant to hear the lulling sound of a fountain, which came forth with a gentle patter, like that of soft summer rain, and to see



the waving of rose-bushes and golden jessamines, and smell the perfumes of orange-blossoms mingling with those of a thousand other flowers.

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The door was opened by an odd-looking portress. She might be seventy-five or eighty; her cheeks were of the color of very yellow parchment drawn in dry wrinkles; her eyes were those large, dark, lustrous ones so common in her country, but seemed, in the general decay and shrinking of every other part of her face, to have acquired a wild, unnatural appearance; while the falling away of her teeth left nothing to impede the meeting of her hooked nose with her chin. Add to this, she was hump-backed, and twisted in her figure; and one needs all the force of her very good-natured, kindly smile to redeem the image of poor old Jocunda from association with that of some Thracian witch, and cause one to see in her the appropriate portress of a Christian institution.

Nevertheless, Agnes fell upon her neck and imprinted a very fervent kiss upon what was left of her withered cheek, and was repaid by a shower of those epithets of endearment which in the language of Italy fly thick and fast as the petals of the orange-blossom from her groves.

“Well, well,” said old Elsie,—“I’m going to leave her here to-day. You’ve no objections, I suppose?”

“Bless the sweet lamb, no! She belongs here of good right. I believe blessed Saint Agnes has adopted her; for I’ve seen her smile, plain as could be, when the little one brought her flowers.”

“Well, Agnes,” said the old woman, “I shall come for you after the Ave Maria.” Saying which, she lifted her basket and departed.

The garden where the two were left was one of the most peaceful retreats that the imagination of a poet could create.

Around it ran on all sides the Byzantine arches of a cloistered walk, which, according to the quaint, rich fashion of that style, had been painted with vermilion, blue, and gold. The vaulted roof was spangled with gold stars on a blue ground, and along the sides was a series of fresco pictures representing the various scenes in the life of Saint Agnes; and as the foundress of the Convent was royal in her means, there was no lack either of gold or gems or of gorgeous painting.

Full justice was done in the first picture to the princely wealth and estate of the fair Agnes, who was represented as a pure-looking, pensive child, standing in a thoughtful attitude, with long ripples of golden hair flowing down over a simple white tunic, and her small hands clasping a cross on her bosom, while, kneeling at her feet, obsequious slaves and tire-women were offering the richest gems and the most gorgeous robes to her serious and abstracted gaze.

In another, she was represented as walking modestly to school, and winning the admiration of the son of the Roman Praetor, who fell sick—so says the legend—for the love of her.

Then there was the demand of her hand in marriage by the princely father of the young man, and her calm rejection of the gorgeous gifts and splendid gems which he had brought to purchase her consent.

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Then followed in order her accusation before the tribunals as a Christian, her trial, and the various scenes of her martyrdom.

Although the drawing of the figures and the treatment of the subjects had the quaint stiffness of the thirteenth century, their general effect, as seen from the shady bowers of the garden, was of a solemn brightness, a strange and fanciful richness, which was poetical and impressive.

In the centre of the garden was a fountain of white marble, which evidently was the wreck of something that had belonged to the old Greek temple. The statue of a nymph sat on a green mossy pedestal in the midst of a sculptured basin, and from a partially reversed urn on which she was leaning a clear stream of water dashed down from one mossy fragment to another, till it lost itself in the placid pool.

The figure and face of this nymph, in their classic finish of outline, formed a striking contrast to the drawing of the Byzantine pairings within the cloisters, and their juxtaposition in the same inclosure seemed a presentation of the spirit of a past and present era: the past so graceful in line, so perfect and airy in conception, so utterly without spiritual aspiration or life; the present limited in artistic power, but so earnest, so intense, seeming to struggle and burn, amid its stiff and restricted boundaries, for the expression of some diviner phase of humanity.

Nevertheless, the nymph of the fountain, different in style and execution as it was, was so fair a creature, that it was thought best, after the spirit of those days, to purge her from all heathen and improper histories by baptizing her in the waters of her own fountain, and bestowing on her the name of the saint to whose convent she was devoted. The simple sisterhood, little conversant in nice points of antiquity, regarded her as Saint Agnes dispensing the waters of purity to her convent; and marvellous and sacred properties were ascribed to the water, when taken fasting with a sufficient number of prayers and other religious exercises. All around the neighborhood of this fountain the ground was one bed of blue and white violets, whose fragrance filled the air, and which were deemed by the nuns to have come up there in especial token of the favor with which Saint Agnes regarded the conversion of this heathen relic to pious and Christian uses.

This nymph had been an especial favorite of the childhood of Agnes, and she had always had a pleasure which she could not exactly account for in gazing upon it. It is seldom that one sees in the antique conception of the immortals any trace of human feeling. Passionless perfection and repose seem to be their uniform character. But now and then from the ruins of Southern Italy fragments have been dug, not only pure in outline, but invested with a strange pathetic charm, as if the calm, inviolable circle of divinity had been touched by some sorrowing sense of that unexplained anguish with which the whole lower

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creation groans. One sees this mystery of expression in the face of that strange and beautiful Psyche which still enchants the Museum of Naples. Something of this charm of mournful pathos lingered on the beautiful features of this nymph,—an expression so delicate and shadowy that it seemed to address itself only to finer natures. It was as if all the silent, patient woe and discouragement of a dumb antiquity had been congealed into this memorial. Agnes was often conscious, when a child, of being saddened by it, and yet drawn towards it with a mysterious attraction.

About this fountain, under the shadow of bending rose-trees and yellow jessamines, was a circle of garden-seats, adopted also from the ruins of the past. Here a graceful Corinthian capital, with every white acanthus-leaf perfect, stood in a mat of acanthus-leaves of Nature's own making, glossy green and sharply cut; and there was a long portion of a frieze sculptured with graceful dancing figures; and in another place a fragment of a fluted column, with lycopodium and colosseum vine hanging from its fissures in graceful draping. On these seats Agnes had dreamed away many a tranquil hour, making garlands of violets, and listening to the marvellous legends of old Jocunda.

In order to understand anything of the true idea of conventual life in those days, we must consider that books were as yet unknown, except as literary rarities, and reading and writing were among the rare accomplishments of the higher classes; and that Italy, from the time that the great Roman Empire fell and broke into a thousand shivers, had been subject to a continual series of conflicts and struggles, which took from life all security. Norman, Dane, Sicilian, Spaniard, Frenchman, and German mingled and struggled, now up and now down; and every struggle was attended by the little ceremonies of sacking towns, burning villages, and routing out entire populations to utter misery and wretchedness. During these tumultuous ages, those buildings consecrated by a religion recognized alike by all parties afforded to misfortune the only inviolable asylum, and to feeble and discouraged spirits the only home safe from the prospect of reverses.

If the destiny of woman is a problem that calls for grave attention even in our enlightened times, and if she is too often a sufferer from the inevitable movements of society, what must have been her position and needs in those ruder ages, unless the genius of Christianity had opened refuges for her weakness, made inviolable by the awful sanctions of religion?

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What could they do, all these girls and women together, with the twenty-four long hours of every day, without reading or writing, and without the care of children? Enough: with their multiplied diurnal prayer periods, with each its chants and ritual of observances,—with the preparation for meals, and the clearing away thereafter,—with the care of the chapel, shrine, sacred gifts, drapery, and ornaments,—with embroidering altar-cloths and making sacred tapers,—with preparing conserves of rose-leaves and curious spiceries,—with mixing drugs for the sick,—with all those mutual offices and services to each other which their relations in one family gave rise to,—and with divers feminine gossipries and harmless chatterings and cooings, one can conceive that these dove-cots of the Church presented often some of the most tranquil scenes of those convulsive and disturbed periods.

Human nature probably had its varieties there as elsewhere. There were there the domineering and the weak, the ignorant and the vulgar and the patrician and the princess, and though professedly all brought on the footing of sisterly equality, we are not to suppose any Utopian degree of perfection among them. The way of pure spirituality was probably, in the convent as well as out, that strait and narrow one which there be few to find. There, as elsewhere, the devotee who sought to progress faster toward heaven than suited the paces of her fellow—travellers was reckoned a troublesome enthusiast, till she got far enough in advance to be worshipped as a saint.

Sister Theresa, the abbess of this convent, was the youngest daughter in a princely Neapolitan family, who from her cradle had been destined to the cloister, in order that her brother and sister might inherit more splendid fortunes and form more splendid connections. She had been sent to this place too early to have much recollection of any other mode of life; and when the time came to take the irrevocable step, she renounced with composure a world she had never known.

Her brother had endowed her with a *livre des heures*, illuminated with all the wealth of blue and gold and divers colors which the art of those times afforded,—a work executed by a pupil of the celebrated Fra Angelico; and the possession of this treasure was regarded by her as a far richer inheritance than that princely state of which she knew nothing. Her neat little cell had a window that looked down on the sea,—on Capri, with its fantastic grottos,—on Vesuvius, with its weird daily and nightly changes. The light that came in from the joint reflection of sea and sky gave a golden and picturesque coloring to the simple and bare furniture, and in sunny weather she often sat there, just as a lizard lies upon a wall, with the simple, warm, delightful sense of living and being amid, scenes of so much beauty. Of the life that people lived in the outer world, the struggle, the hope, the fear, the vivid joy, the bitter sorrow, Sister Theresa knew nothing. She could form no judgment and give no advice founded on any such experience.

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The only life she knew was a certain ideal one, drawn from, the legends of the saints; and her piety was a calm, pure enthusiasm which had never been disturbed by a temptation or a struggle. Her rule in the Convent was even and serene; but those who came to her flock from the real world, from the trials and temptations of a real experience, were always enigmas to her, and she could scarcely comprehend or aid them.

In fact, since in the cloister, as everywhere else, character will find its level, it was old Jocunda who was the real governess of the Convent. Jocunda was originally a peasant woman, whose husband had been drafted to some of the wars of his betters, and she had followed his fortunes in the camp. In the sack of a fortress, she lost her husband and four sons, all the children she had, and herself received an injury which distorted her form, and so she took refuge in the Convent. Here her energy and *savoir-faire* rendered her indispensable in every department. She made the bargains, bought the provisions, (being allowed to sally forth for these purposes,) and formed the medium by which the timid, abstract, defenceless nuns accomplished those material relations with the world with which the utmost saintliness cannot afford to dispense. Besides and above all this, Jocunda's wide experience and endless capabilities of narrative made her an invaluable resource for enlivening any dull hours that might be upon the hands of the sisterhood; and all these recommendations, together with a strong mother-wit and native sense, soon made her so much the leading spirit in the Convent that Mother Theresa herself might be said to be under her dominion.

"So, so," she said to Agnes, when she had closed the gate after Elsie,—“you never come empty-handed. What lovely oranges!—worth double any that one can buy of anybody else but your grandmother.”

“Yes, and these flowers I brought to dress the altar.”

“Ah, yes! Saint Agnes has given you a particular grace for that,” said Jocunda.

“And I have brought a ring for her treasury,” said Agnes, taking out the gift of the Cavalier.

“Holy Mother! here is something, to be sure!” said Jocunda, catching it eagerly. “Why, Agnes, this is a diamond,—and as pretty a one as ever I saw. How it shines!” she added, holding it up. “That’s a prince’s present. How did you get it?”

“I want to tell our mother about it,” said Agnes.

“You do?” said Jocunda. “You’d better tell me. I know fifty times as much about such things as she.”

“Dear Jocunda, I will tell you, too; but I love Mother Theresa, and I ought to give it to her first.”

“As you please, then,” said Jocunda. “Well, put your flowers here by the fountain, where the spray will keep them cool, and we will go to her.”

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## **GREEK LINES.**



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Blessed are the shadows of porches and cloisters! Blessed the walls that shut us out from the dusty, dazzling world, and shed upon us the repose and consolation of our own serene humanity! We, harassed among the base utilities of life, made weary and sore by the ceaseless struggles of emulation and daily warfare, turn wistfully to the Peripatetic among the shady groves of Athens,—dream of quiet Saracenic courts, echoing with plashy fountains,—of hooded monks, pacing away their cloistered lives beneath storied vaults and little patches of sky,—knowing, while we dream, that out of these came of yore the happiness of the old *eurekas* and the deep sweetness of ancient knowledge. And then, away from the city of our toil, the tumult of our ambitions, we gratefully find Vallombrosas of our own, where we walk not alone, but in the pleasant companionship of elevated thoughts, and of old sages and masters, long passed away, but still wise and gentle to those who approach them with faith and simplicity. Here, like those chimes which wander unheeded over the house-tops of the roaring town, till they drop down blessed dews of Heaven into still, grass-grown courts and deserted by-ways, the great universal human heart beats closer to our own, and our whole being palpitates with almost ethereal sympathies. Voices of old minstrels, wandering down to us on loving lips through the generations, murmur in our ears the dear burden of human, affection for men and things; and the same tale is poured abundantly into our hearts by all those great masters who, through their Art, have become to us oracles of Beauty and eloquent interpreters of the Love of God.

There are few persons so hardened in the practical life as not to have recognized that in these moments of large and spiritual stillness all the processes of the mind seem to be instinctively attuned to harmonies almost celestial. Experience and memory present their pictures softened and made gentle by some mysterious power. The imagination is swayed by the sweetest impulses of humanity; and the whole man is changed. The mere instincts of affinity are purified and deepened into tenderest affection, and all the external relations of existence

“come apparelled in more precious habit,  
More moving delicate and full of life,  
Into the eye and prospect of the soul,”

than when they offered themselves to the ordinary waking senses. This is a wonder and a mystery. I sometimes believe, thinking on these things, that we have inherited from our father Adam a habit of day-dreaming; that in this exile of coarse and work-day life our heated brows are sometimes fanned with breezes from some half-remembered Araby the Blest, and there instinctively come over us such visions of beatitude that the Paradise we have lost is recalled to us, and we live once more among the dreamy and grateful splendors of Eden. These moods come upon us so like memories! But you, graybeard travellers in the Desert of Life, you are not to be deceived by the trickery of the elements; you know the moist *mirage*; you are not to be beguiled by it from your track; let the unwary dream dreams of bubbling wellsprings and pleasant shade, of

palmy oases and tranquil repose; as for you, you must goad your camels and press onward for Jerusalem.

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But I like to chase phantoms; I hate the plodding of the caravans. I turn aside and spread my own tent apart. Will you tarry awhile under its shadow, O serious and gentle stranger, and listen to some poor words of mine?

These memories of Eden! Let us cherish them, for they are not worthless or deceitful. We, who, when we can, carry our hearts in our eyes, know very well, and have often said it before, that Eden is not so many days' journey away from our feet that we may not inhale its perfumes and press our brows against its sod whenever we wish. It is not cant, I hope, to say that Eden is not lost entirely. There stands no angel at its gates with naming sword; nor did it fade away with all its legendary beauties, drop its leaves into the melancholy streams, leaving no trace behind of its glades and winding alleys, its stretches of flowery mead, its sunny hill-sides, and valleys of happiness and peace. But Eden still blooms wherever Beauty is in Nature; and Beauty, we know, is everywhere. We cannot escape from it, if we would. It is ever knocking at the door of our hearts in sweet and unexpected missions of grace and tenderness. We are haunted by it in our loneliest walks. Almost unconsciously, out of flowers and trees, earth and sky, sunrises and sunsets,—out of mosses under the feet, mosses and pebbles and grasses,—out of the loveliness of moon and stars, their harmonies and changes,—out of sea-foam, and what sea-foam reveals to us of the rich and strange things beneath the waters far down,—out of sweet human eyes,—out of all these things creeps into our spirits the knowledge that God is Love, and His handiwork the expression of ineffable tenderness and affection. I believe, indeed, that the principle of Beauty, philosophically speaking, pervades all material objects, all motions and sounds in Nature,—that it enters intimately into the very idea of Creation. But we, poor finite beings, do not seek for it, as we do for gold and gems. We remain content with those conventional manifestations of it which are continually and instinctively touching our senses as we walk the earth. Fearfully and wonderfully as we are made, there is no quality in our being so blessed as this sensitiveness to Beauty. All the organs of our life are attuned by it to that vast universal symphony which, in spite of the warring elements of passion and prejudice, unites us in friendly sympathies with all mankind. If

“the meanest flower that blows can bring  
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears,”—

if it can so move some of us, who have cared to open the portals of our hearts to receive and cherish the little waif,—why, verily, the simple violet that blooms alike under every sky, the passing cloud that floats changing ever over every land, gathering equal glories from the sunsets of Italy and Labrador, are more potent missionaries of peace and good-will to all the earth than the most persuasive accents of human eloquence.

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These are familiar truths. Like

“The stretched metre of an antique song,”

they flow from our grateful lips in ready words. But we do not suspect how these manifestations of material Beauty are received by the mysterious alembic of the soul,—how they are worked up there by exquisite and subtle processes of moral chemistry, humanized, spiritualized, and appropriated unconsciously to sweet uses of piety and affection. We do not know how the star, the flower, the dear human face, the movement of a wave, the song of a bird,—we do not know how these things enter into the heart, become ideal, mingle with human emotions, consecrate and are consecrated, and come forth once more into light, but transfigured into tenderest sympathies and the gentle offices of charity and grace. There was Wordsworth,—he knew something of this still machinery, this “kiss of toothed wheels” within the soul of man. Listen to him,—he had been to Tintern Abbey and heard once more the “soft inland murmur” of the Wye;—

“These beauteous forms,  
Through a long absence, have not been to me  
As is a landscape to a blind man’s eye:  
But oft, in lonely rooms, and ’mid the din  
Of towns and cities, I have owed to them,  
In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,  
Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart,  
And passing even into my purer mind,  
With tranquil restoration:—*feelings, too,*  
*Of unremembered pleasure:* such, perhaps,  
As have no slight or trivial influence  
On that best portion of a good man’s life,  
His little, nameless, unremembered acts  
Of kindness and of love.”

And then who that has ever read it can forget his exquisite picture in the “Education of a little Child”?—

“And she shall lean her ear In many a secret place, Where rivulets dance their wayward round, *And beauty burn of murmuring sound Shall pass into her face!*”

The material Beauty of the world, as exhibited in the manifold objects, sounds, perfumes, motions of Nature, is created for a nobler purpose than only to delight the senses and please the aesthetic faculties. I believe it is the distant source whence flow all our dear daily affections. We know, that, according to the suggestions of our merely human passions and instincts, we ease our hearts of Love by heaping treasures and the choicest gifts of fancy in the laps of those whom we most dearly cherish. We take no credit to ourselves for such precious prodigalities; for they are the inevitable and

disinterested outpourings of affection. They are received as such. And when we cast our eyes abroad and behold the loving prodigality of a divine hand, we accept the manifestation, are made happy in the consciousness of being beloved, and, constituted as we are in the image and likeness of God, express our instinctive gratitude in those fine human sympathies which impress the seal of Truth on the primary idea of our creation.

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And so, blessed are the shadows of porches and cloisters! Blessed the hours of serene meditation, when the “tender grace of days that are dead,” of flowers that have faded, of scenes “gone glimmering through the dream of things that were,” comes back to us with a new meaning, softening and refining the heart to unexpected capacities of affection. But how they fade away, these ghostly and unsubstantial pageants, when they “scent the morning air”! How they leave in our hearts nought but the dim consciousness that we are capable of an existence ineffably deeper and vaster than that which we lead in the visible world! Nought but this? Alas, poor human nature! do we leave the casket of Pandora open in wanton carelessness, and let all escape but the mere scent of the roses? Or does there not remain, behind an indefinable presence to comfort and console us,—the precious *Ideal of Beauty*,—

“The light that never was on sea or land,  
The inspiration and the poet’s dream”?

The human heart forever yearns *to create*,—this is the pure antique word for it,—to give expression and life to an evasive loveliness that haunts the soul in those moments when the body is laid asleep and the spirit walks. There is a continual and godlike longing to embody these elusive phantoms of Beauty. But the immortal songs which remain unsung, the exquisite idyls which gasp for words, the bewildering and restless imagery which seeks in vain the eternal repose of marble or of canvas,—while these confess the affectionate and divine desires of humanity, they prove how few there are to whom it is given to learn the great lesson of Creation. When one arises among us, who, like Pygmalion, makes no useless appeal to the Goddess of Beauty for the gift of life for his Ideal, and who creates as he was created, we cherish him as a great interpreter of human love. We call him poet, composer, artist, and speak of him reverently as *Master*. We say that his lips have been wet with dew of Hybla,—that, like the sage of Crotona, he has heard the music of the spheres,—that he comes to us, another Numa, radiant and inspired from the kisses of Egeria.

Thus, as infinite Love begets infinite Beauty, so does infinite Beauty reflect into finite perceptions that image of its divine parentage which the antique world worshipped under the personification of Astarte, Aphrodite, Venus, and recognized as the *great creative principle* lying at the root of all high Art.

There is a curious passage in Boehme, which relates how Satan, when asked the cause of the enmity of God and his own consequent downfall, replied,—“I wished to be an Artist.” So, according to antique tradition, Prometheus manufactured a man and woman of clay, animated them with fire stolen from the chariot of the Sun, and was punished for the crime of Creation; Titans chained him to the rocks of the Indian Caucasus for thirty thousand years!

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This Ideal, this Aphrodite of old mythologies, still reigns over the world of Art, and every truly noble effort of the artist is saturated with her spirit, as with a religion. It is impossible for a true work of Art to exist, unless this great creative principle of Love be present in its inception, in its execution, in its detail. It must be pervaded with the warmth of human, passionate affection. The skill which we are so apt to worship is but the instrument in the hands of Love. It is the means by which this humanity is transferred to the work, and there idealized in the forms of Nature. Thus the test of Art is in our own hearts. It is not something far away from us, throwing into our presence gleaming reflections from some supernal source of Light and Beauty; but it is very near to us,—so near, that, like the other blessings which lie at our feet, we overlook it in our far-reaching searches after the imaginary good. We, poor underlings, have been taught in the school of sad experience the mortal agony of Love without Skill,—the power of perception, without the power of utterance. We know how dumb are the sweet melodies of our souls,—how fleeting their opulent and dreamy pageantries. But we have not fully learned the utter emptiness and desolation of Skill without Love. We accept its sounding brass and tinkling cymbals for immortal harmonies. We look reverently upon its tortured marbles and its canvases stained with academic knowledge as revelations of higher intelligence; forgetting, that, if we go down to the quiet places of our own souls, we shall find there the universe reflected, like a microcosm, in the dark well-springs, and that out of these well-springs in the deep silence rises the beautiful Ideal, Anadyomene, to compensate and comfort us for the vacancy of Life. If we know ourselves, it is not to the dogmas of critics, the artificial rules of aesthetics, that we most wisely resort for judgments concerning works of Art. Though technical externals and the address of manipulation naturally take possession of our senses and warp our opinions, there are depths of immortal Truth within us, rarely sounded, indeed, but which can afford a standard and a criterion far nobler than the schools can give us.

The broken statues and columns and traditions and fragmentary classics which Greece has left us are so still and tranquil to the eye and ear, that we search in vain for the Delphic wisdom they contain, till we find it echoed in the sympathetic depths of our souls, and repeated in the half-impalpable Ideals there. It is to Greece that we must look for the external type of these Ideals, whose existence we but half suspect within us. It is not pleasant, perhaps, to think that we were nearly unconscious of the highest capacities of our humanity, till we recognized their full expression in the ashes of a distant and dead civilization,—that we did not know ourselves, till

“The airy tongues that syllable men’s names  
In pathless wildernesses”

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uttered knowledge to us among the ghastly ruins of Hellas. It is good for us to lend a spiritual ear to these ancient whisperings, and hear nymph calling to nymph and faun to faun, as they caper merrily with the god Pan through the silence. It is good for us to listen to that “inextinguishable laughter” of the happy immortals of Olympus, ever mingling with all the voices of Nature and setting them to the still sweet music of humanity,—good, because so we are reminded how close we are to the outward world, and how all its developments are figurative expressions of our near relationships with the visible Beauty of things. Thus it is that the poetic truths of old religions exquisitely vindicate themselves; thus we find, even we moderns, with our downward eyes and our wrinkled brows, that we still worship at the mythological altars of childlike divinities; and when we can get away from the distracting Bedlam of steam-shrieks and machinery, we behold the secrets of our own hearts, the Lares and Penates of our own households, reflected in the “white ideals” on antique vases and medallions.

Abstract lines are the most concentrated expressions of human ideas, and, as such, are peculiarly sensitive to the critical tests of all theories of the Beautiful. Distinguished from the more usual and direct means by which artists express their inspirations and appeal to the sympathies of men, distinct from the common language of Art, which contents itself with conveying merely local and individual ideas, abstract lines are recognized as the grand hieroglyphic symbolism of the aggregate of human thought, the artistic manifestations of the great human Cosmos. The natural world, passing through the mind of man, is immediately interpreted and humanized by his creative power, and assumes the colors, forms, and harmonies of Painting, Sculpture, and Music. But abstract lines, as we find them in Architecture and in the ceramic arts, are the independent developments of this creative power, coming directly from humanity itself, and obtaining from the outward world only the most distant motives of composition. Thus it is an inevitable deduction that Architecture is the most *human* of all arts, and its lines the most *human* of all lines.

“A thing of beauty is a joy forever”;

and the affectionate devotion with which this gift is received by finite intelligences from the hand of God is expressed in Art, when its infinite depth *can* be so expressed at all, in a twofold language,— the one objective, the other subjective; the one recalling the immediate source of the emotion, and presenting it palpably to the senses, arrayed in all the ineffable tenderness of Art, which is Love,—the other, portraying rather the emotion than the cause of it, and by an instinctive and universal symbolism expressing the deep and serious joy with which the “thing of beauty” is welcomed to the heart. Hence come those lines which aesthetic writers term “Lines



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of Beauty,” so eloquent to us with an uncomprehended meaning,—so near, and yet so far,—so simple, and yet so mysterious,—so animated with life and thought and musical motion, and yet so still and serene and spiritual. Links which bind us fraternally to old intelligences, tendrils by which the soul climbs up to a wider view of the glimmering landscape, they are grateful and consoling to us. We look with cognizant eyes at their subtle affinities with some unexpressed part of human life, and, turning one to another, are apt to murmur,

“We cannot understand: we love.”

The mysteries of orb and cycle, with which old astrologers girded human life, and sought to define from celestial phenomena the horoscope of man, have been brought down to modern applications by learned philosophers and mathematicians. These have labored with a godlike energy and skill to trace the interior relationships existing between the recondite revelations of their Geometry, their wonderful laws of mathematical harmonies and unities, and those lines which by common consent are understood to be exponential of certain phases of our own existence. No well-organized intellect can fail to perceive that a sublime and immortal Truth underlies these speculations. Undoubtedly, in the straight line, in the conic sections, in the innumerable composite curves of the mathematician, lie the germs of all these symbolic expressions. But the artist, whose lines of Beauty vary continually with the emotions which produce them, who feels in his own human heart the irresistible impulse which gives an exquisite balance and poise to those lines, cannot allow that the *spirit* of his compositions is governed by the exact and rigid formula; of the philosopher to any greater extent or in any other manner than as the numbers of the poet are ruled by the grammar of his language. These formulae may be applied as a curious test to ascertain what strange sympathies there may be between such lines and the vast organic harmonies of Nature and the Universe; but they do not enter into the soul of their creation any more than the limitations of counterpoint and rhythm laid their incubus on the lyre of Apollo. The porches where Callicrates, Hermogenes, and Callimachus walked were guarded by no such Cerberus as the disciples of Plato encountered at the entrance of the groves of the Academy,—

“[Greek: Oudeis ageometraetos eisito],”

“Let no one ignorant of Geometry enter here”;

but the divine Aphrodite welcomed all mankind to the tender teachings of the Wild Acanthus, the Honeysuckle, and the Sea-Shell, and all the deep utterances of boundless Beauty.

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Truly, it is sad and dispiriting to the artist to find that all modern aesthetical writings limit and straiten the free walks of highest Art with strict laws deduced from rigid science, with mathematical proportions and the formal restrictions of fixed lines and curves, nicely adapted from the frigidities of Euclid. The line A B must equal the line C D; somewhere in space must be found the centre or the focus of every curve; and every angle must subtend a certain arc, to be easily found on reference to the tables of the text-books. "The melancholy days have come" for Art, when the meditative student finds his early footsteps loud among these dry, withered, and sapless leaves, instead of brushing away the dews by the fountains of perpetual youth. I am aware of no extant English work on Greek Lines which does not aim to reduce that magnificent old Hellenic poetry to the cold, hard limitations of Geometry. Modern Pharisees nail that antique Ideal of loveliness and purity to a mathematical cross.

Now it is capable of distinct proof, that abstract Lines of Beauty, even in a greater degree than any other expressions of Art, are born and baptized in Love. Because parabolic curves frequently *coincide* with these lines, it is no proof that they *created* them.

The Water-Lily, or Lotus, perpetually occurs in Oriental mythology as the sublime and hallowed symbol of the productive power in Nature,—the emblem of that great life-giving principle which the Hindu and the Egyptian and all early nations instinctively elevated to the highest and most cherished place in their Pantheons. Payne Knight, quoted in Mr. Squier's work on the "Antiquities of America," ingeniously attributes the adoption of this symbol to the fact, that the Lotus, instead of rejecting its seeds from the vessels where they are germinated, nourishes them in its bosom till they have become perfect plants, when, arrayed in all the irresistible panoply of grace and beauty, they spring forth, Minerva-like, float down the current, and take root wherever deposited. And so it was used by nearly all the early peoples to express the creative spirit which gives life and vegetation to matter. Lacshmi, the beautiful Hindu goddess of abundance, corresponding to the Venus Aphrodite of the Greeks, was called "the Lotus-born," as having ascended from the ocean in this flower. Here, again, is the inevitable intermingling of the eternal principles of Beauty, Love, and the Creative Power in that pure triune medallion image which the ancients so tenderly cherished and so exquisitely worshipped with vestal fires and continual sacrifices of Art. Old Father Nile, reflecting in his deep, mysterious breast the monstrous temples of Nubia and Pylae, bears eloquent witness to the earnestness and sincerity of the old votive homage to Isis, "the Lotus-crowned" Venus of Egypt. For the symbolic Water-Lily, *recreated* by human Art, blooms forever in the capitals of Karnac and Thebes, and wherever

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columns were reared and lintels laid throughout the length and breadth of the "Land of Bondage." It is the key-note of all that architecture; and a brief examination into the principles of this, new birth of the Lotus, of the monumental straightening and stiffening of its graceful and easy lines, will afford some insight into the strange processes of the human mind, when it follows the grandest impulse of Love, and out of the material beauties of Nature creates a work of Art.

It is well known that the religion of the old Egyptians led them to regard this life as a mere temporary incident, an unimportant phase of their progress toward that larger and grander state imaged to them with mysterious sublimity in the idea of Death or Eternity. In accordance with this belief, they expressed in their dwellings the sentiment of transitoriness and vicissitude, and in their tombs the immortality of calm repose. And so their houses have crumbled into dust ages ago, but their tombs are eternal. In all the relations of Life the sentiment of Death was present in some form or other. The hallowed mummies of their ancestors were the most sacred mortgages of their debts, and to redeem them speedily was a point of the highest honor. They had corpses at their feasts to remind them how transitory were the glory and happiness of the world, how eternal the tranquillity of Death.

Now, how was this prevailing idea expressed in their Art? They looked around them and saw that all Organic Life was full of movement and wavy lines; their much-loved Lotus undulated and bent playfully to the solemn flow of the great Nile; the Ibis fluttered with continual motion; their own bodies were full of ever-changing curves; and their whole visible existence was unsteady, like the waves of the sea. But when the temporary Life was changed, and "this mortal put on immortality," their eyes and souls were filled with the utter stillness and repose of its external aspects; its features became rigid and fixed, and were settled to an everlasting and immutable calm; the vibrating grace of its lines departed, and their ever-varying complexity became simplified, and assumed the straightness and stiffness of Death. So the straight line, the natural expression of eternal repose, in contradistinction to the wavy line, which represents the animal movements of Life, became the motive and spirit of their Art. The anomaly of Death in Life was present in every development of the creative faculty, and no architectural feature could be so slight and unimportant as not to be thoroughly permeated with this sentiment. The tender and graceful lines of the Lotus became sublime and monumental under the religious loyalty of Egyptian chisels; and these lines, whether grouped or single, in the severity of their fateful repose, in their stateliness and immobility, wherever found, are awful with the presence of a grand serious humanity long passed away from any other contact with living creatures. The rendering of the human form, under this impulse of Art, produced results in which the idea of mutability was so overwhelmed in this grandeur of immortality, that we cry

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“O melancholy eyes!  
O vacant eyes! from which the soul has gone  
To gaze in other lands,”

bend not upon us, living and loving mortals, that stony stare of death,—lest we too, as smit with the basilisk, be turned into monumental stone, and all the dear grace and movement of life be lost forever!

“Solid-set,  
And moulded in colossal calm,”

all the lines of this lost Art thus recall the sentiment of endless repose, and even the necessary curves of its mouldings are dead with straightness. The Love which produced these lines was not the passionate Love which we understand and feel; they were not the result of a sensuous impulse; but the Egyptian artist seemed ever to be standing alone in the midst of a trackless and limitless desert,—around him earth and sky meeting with no kiss of affection, no palpitating embrace of mutual sympathy; he felt himself encircled by a calm and pitiless Destiny, the cold expression of a Fate from which he could not flee, and in himself the centre and soul of it all. Oppressed thus with a vast sense of spiritual loneliness, when he uttered the inspirations of Art, the memories of playful palms and floating lilies and fluttering wings, though they came warm to the Love of his heart, were attuned in the outward expression to the deep, solemn, prevailing monotone of his humanity. His Love for the Lotus and the Ibis, more profound than the passion of the senses, dwelt serene in the bottom of his soul, and thence came forth transfigured and dedicated to the very noblest uses of Life. And this is the Art of Egypt.

But among all the old nations which have perished with their gods, Greece appeals to our closest sympathies. She looks upon us with the smile of childhood, free, contented, and happy, with no ascetic self-denials to check her wild-flower growth, no stern religion to bind the liberty of her actions. All her external aspects are in harmony with the weakness and the strength of human nature. We recognize ourselves in her, and find all the characteristics of our own humanity there developed into a theism so divine, clothed with a personification so exquisite and poetical, that the Hellenic mythology seems still to live in our hearts, a silent and shadowy religion without ceremonies or altars or sacrifices. The festive gods of the “Iliad” made man a deity to himself, and his soul the dwelling-place of Ideal Beauty. In this Ideal they lived, and moved and had their being, and came forth thence, bronze, marble, chryselephantine, a statuesque and naked humanity, chaste in uncomprehended sin and glorified in antique virtue. The Beauty of this natural Life and the Love of it was the soul of the Greek Ideal; and the nation continually cherished and cultivated and refined this Ideal with impulses from groves of Arcadia, vales of Tempe, and flowery slopes of Attica, from the manliness of Olympic Games and the loveliness of Spartan Helens. They cherished and cultivated and refined it, because here they set up their altars to known gods and worshipped

attributes which they could understand. The Ideal was their religion, and the Art which came from it the expression of their highest aspiration.

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Lines of Beauty, produced in such a soil, were not, as might at first be supposed, tropic growths of wanton and luxurious curves, wild, spontaneous utterances of superabundant Life. The finely-studied perception of the Greek artist admitted no merely animal, vegetable, instinctive, licentious renderings of what Nature was ever giving him with a liberal hand in the whorls of shells, the veins of leaves, the life of flames, the convolutions of serpents, the curly tresses of woman, the lazy grace of clouds, the easy sway of tendrils, flowers, and human motion. He was no literal interpreter of her whispered secrets. But the Grace of his Art was a *deliberate grace*,—a grace of thought and study. His lines were *creations*, and not *instincts* or *imitations*. They came from the depth of his Love, and it was his religion so to nurture and educate his sensitiveness to Beauty and his power to love and create it, that his works of Art should be deeds of passionate worship and expressions of a godlike humanity. Unlike the Egyptian's, there was nothing in *his* creed to check the sweet excess of Life, and no grim shadow, "feared of man," scared him in his walks, or preached to him sermons of mortality in the stones and violets of the wayside. Life was hallowed and dear to him for its own sake. He saw it was lovable, and he made it the theme of his noblest poems, his subtlest philosophies, and his highest Art. Hence the infinite joy and endless laughter on Olympus, the day-long feasting, *the silver stir of strings* in the hollow shell of the exquisite Phoebus, "the soft song of the Muse with voices sweetly replying."

I believe that all true Lines of Grace and Beauty, in their highest, *intellectual, human* significance, may be concentrated and expressed in one; not a *precise* and *exact* line, like a formula of mathematics, to which the neophyte can refer for deductions of Grace to suit any premises or conditions. This, of course, is contrary to the spirit of beautiful design; and the ingenious Hay,—who maintains that his "composite ellipse" is capable of universal application in the arts of ornamental composition, and that by its use any desirable lines in mouldings or vases can be mechanically produced, especially Greek lines, falls into the grave error of endeavoring to materialize and fix that *animula vagula, blandula*, that coy and evasive spirit of Art, which is its peculiar characteristic, and gives to its works inspiration, harmony, and poetic sentiment. Ideal Beauty can be hatched from no geometrical eggs. But the line which I refer to, as the expression of most subtle Grace, pretends to be merely a type of that large language of forms with which the most refined intellects of antiquity uttered their Love, and their joyful worship of Aphrodite. This line, of course, is Greek.

[Illustration]

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The three great distinctive eras of Art, in a purely psychological sense, have been the Egyptian, the Grecian, and the Romanesque,—including in the latter term both Roman Art itself and all subsequent Art, whether derived directly or indirectly from Rome, as the Byzantine, the Moresque, the Mediaeval, and the Renaissance. Selecting the most characteristic works to which these great eras respectively gave birth, it is not difficult, by comparison, to ascertain the master-spirit, or type, to which each of these three families may be reduced. If we place these types side by side, the result will be as in the diagram, presenting to the eye, at one view, the concentration of three civilizations, DESTINY, LOVE, and LIFE;—Destiny, finding utterance in the stern and inflexible simplicity of the tombs and obelisks of Egypt; Love, expressing itself in the statuesque and thoughtful grace of Grecian temples, statues, and urns; Life, in the sensuous and impulsive change, evident in all the developments of Art, since Greece became Achaia, a province of the Roman Empire. Here we behold the perpetual youth, the immortal genius of Hellas, tempering the solid repose of Egypt with the passion of Life. This intermediate Beauty is the essence of the age of Pericles; and in it “the capable eye” may discover the pose of the Cnidian Venus of Praxiteles, of the Jupiter Olympius of Phidias, and the other lost wonders of ancient chisels, and, more directly, the tender severity of Doric capitals, and the secret grace of the shafts of the Parthenon.

You remember Pliny's account of the visit of Apelles to the great painter Protogenes, at Rhodes;—how, not finding him at home, Apelles inscribed a line upon a board, assuring the slave that this line would signify to the master who had been to see him. Whatever the line was, Protogenes, we hear, recognized in it the hand of the greatest limner of Greece. It was the signature of that Ideal, known to the antique world by its wider developments in the famous pictures of the Venus Anadyomene, and Alexander with the Thunderbolt, hung in the temple of Diana at Ephesus.

The gravity with which this apparently trifling anecdote is given us from antiquity evidently proves that it was one of the household tales of old Greece. It did not seem absurd in those times, when Art was recognized as a great Unity, an elaborate system of infinite language founded on the simplest elements of Life, and in its grandest and widest flowings bearing ever in its bosom, like a great river, the memory of the little weeping Naiad far up among the mountains with her “impoverished urn.” And so every great national Art, growing up naturally out of the necessities of an earnest people, expressing the grand motives of their Life, as that of the Greeks and the Egyptians and the mediaeval nations of Europe, is founded on the simplest laws. So long as these laws are obeyed in simplicity and Love, Art is good and true; so long as it remembers the purity and earnestness of its childhood, the strength that is ordained out of the mouth of babes is present in all its expressions; but when it spreads itself abroad in the fens and marshes of humanity, it has lost the purity of its aim, the singleness and unity of its action,—it becomes stagnant, and sleeps in the Death of Idleness.



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Therefore I believe in the expressiveness of single lines as symbols of the grandest phases of human Life. And when one studies Greek Art, the whole motive of it seems so childlike and so simple that the impulse to seek for that little Naiad which is the fountain and source of it all is irresistible. Look at the line I have traced, and see if there is not a curious humanity about it. It is impossible to produce it with a wanton flourish of the pencil, as I have done in that wavy, licentious curve, which Hogarth, in his quaint "Analysis of Beauty," assumes as the line of true Grace; nor yet are its infinite motions governed by any cold mathematical laws. In it is the earnest and deliberate labor of Love. There are thought and tenderness in every instant of it; but this thought is grave and almost solemn, and this tenderness is chastened and purified by wise reserve. Measure it by time, and you will find it no momentary delight, no voluptuous excess which comes and goes in a breath; but there is a whole cycle of deep human feeling in it. It is the serene joy of a nation, and not the passionate impulse of a man. Observe, from beginning to end, its intention is to give expression by the serpentine line to that sentiment of beautiful Life which was the worship of the Greeks; but they did not toss it off, like a wine-cup at a feast. They prolonged it through all the varied emotions of a lifetime with exquisite art, making it the path of their education in childhood and of their wider experience as men. All the impulses of humanity they bent to a kindly parallelism with it. This is that famous principle of Variety in Unity which St. Augustine and hosts of other philosophers considered the true Ideal of Beauty. Start with this line from the top upon its journeying: look at the hesitation of it, ere it launches into action; how it cherishes its resources, and gathers up its strength!— with a confidence in its beautiful Destiny, and yet a chaste shrinking from the full enjoyment of it, how inevitably, but how purely, it yields itself up to the sudden curve! It does not embrace this curve with a sensuous sweep, nor does it, like Sappho, throw itself with quick passion into the tide. It enters with maidenly and dignified reserve into its new Life; and then how is this new Life spent? As you glance at it, it seems almost ascetic, and reminds you of the rigid fatalism of Egypt. Its grace is almost strangled, as those other serpents were in the grasp of the child Hercules. But if you watch it attentively, you will find it ever changing, though with subtlest refinement, ever human, and true to the great laws of emotion. There is no straight line here,—no Death in Life,—but the severity and composure of intellectual meditation,—meditation, moving with serious pleasure along the grooves of happy change,—

"As all the motions of its  
Were governed by a strain  
Of music, audible to it alone!"



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As the eye is cheated out of its rectitude, following this grave delight, and seems to dilate and grow dreamy in the cool shade of imaginative cloisters and groves, the wanton joyousness of Life, with its long waving lily-stems and the luscious pending of vines, comes with dim recollections into the mind, but modified by a certain habitual chastity of thought. Follow the line still farther, and you will find it grateful to the sight, neither fatiguing with excess of monotony nor cloying the appetite with change. And when the round hour is full and the end comes, this end is met by a Fate, which does not clip with the shears of Atropos and leave an aching void, but fulfils itself in gentleness and peace. The line bends quietly and unconsciously towards the beautiful consummation, and then dies, because its work is done.

This is the way the Greeks made that Line which represents to “the capable eye” the true Attic civilization. And when we examine the innumerable lines of Grecian architecture, we find that they never for an instant lost sight of this Ideal. The fine humanity of it was everywhere present, and mingled not only with such grand and heroic lines as those of the sloping pediments and long-drawn entablatures of the Parthenon and Theseion, bending them into curves so subtilely modulated that our coarse perceptions did not perceive the variations from the dead straight lines till the careful admeasurements of Penrose and Cockerel and their *confreres* of France assured us of the fact,—not only did it make these enormous harp-strings vibrate with deep human soul-music, but there is not an abstract line in moulding, column, or vase, belonging to old Greece or the islands of the Aegean or Ionia or the colonies of Italy, which does not have the same intensity of meaning, the same statuesque Life of thought. Besides, I very much doubt if the same line, in all its parts and proportions, is ever repeated twice,—certainly not with any emphasis; and this is following out the great law of our existence, which varies the emotion infinitely with the occasion which produced it. Let us suppose, for example, that a moulding was needed to crown a column with fitting glory and grace. Now the capital of a column may fairly be called the throne of Ideal expression; it is the *cour d'honneur* of Art. The architect in this emergency did not set himself at “the antique,” and seek for authorities, and reproduce and copy; for he desired not only an abstract line of Beauty there, but a line which in every respect should answer all the requirements of its peculiar position, a line which should have its individual and essential relationships with the other lines around it, those of shaft, architrave, frieze, and cornice, should swell its fitting melody into the great *fugue*. And so, between the summit of the long shaft and that square block, the abacus, on which reposes the dead weight of the lintel of Greece, the Doric *echinus* was fashioned,

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crowning the serene Atlas-labor of the column with exquisite glory, and uniting the upright and horizontal masses of the order with a marriage ring, whose beauty is its perfect fitness. The profile of this moulding may be rudely likened to the upper and middle parts of the line assumed as the representative of the Greek Ideal. But it varied ever with the exigency of circumstances. Over the short and solid shafts of Paestum, it became flat and almost horizontal; they needed there an expression of emphatic and sudden grace; they meet the *abacus* with a moulding of passionate energy, in which the soft undulations of Beauty are nearly lost in a masculine earnestness of purpose. On the other hand, the more slender and feminine columns of the Parthenon glide into the *echinus* with gentleness and sweetness, crown themselves with a diadem of chastity, as if it grew there by Fate, preordained from the base of the shaft, like a flower from the root. It was created as with "the Dorian mood of soft recorders." Between these two extremes there is an infinity of change, everywhere modified and governed by "the study of imagination."

The same characteristics of nervous grace and severe intellectual restraint are found wherever the true Greek artist put his hand and his heart to work. Every moulding bears the impress of utter refinement, and modulates the light which falls upon it with exquisite and harmonious gradations of shade. The sun, as it touches it, makes visible music there, as if it were the harp of Memnon,—now giving us a shadow-line sharp, strict, and defined, now drawing along a beam of quick and dazzling light, and now dying away softly and insensibly into cool shade again. All the phenomena of reflected lights, half lights, and broken lights are brought in and attuned to the great daedal melody of the edifice. The antiquities of Attica afford nothing frivolous or capricious or merely fanciful, no playful extravagances or wanton meanderings of line; but ever loyal to the purity of a high Ideal, they present to us, even from their ruins, a wonderful and very evident Unity of expression, pervading and governing every possible mood and manner of thought. No phase of Art that ever existed gives us a line so very human and simple in itself as this Greek type, and so pliable to all the uses of monumental language. If this type were a mere mathematical type, its applicability to the expression of human emotions would be limited to a formalism absolutely fatal to the freedom of thought in Art. But because it has its birth in intense Love, in refined appreciation of all the movements of Life and all the utterances of Creation, because it is the humanized essence of these motions and developments, it becomes thus an inestimable Unity, containing within itself the germs of a new world of ever new delight.

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When this type in Greek Art was brought to bear on the interpretation of natural forms into architectural language, we shall curiously discover that the creative pride of the artist and his reverence for the integrity of his Ideal were so great, that he not only subjected these forms to a rigid subservience to the abstract line till Nature was nearly lost in Art, but the immediate adoption of these forms under any circumstances was limited to some three or four of the most ordinary vegetable productions of Greece and to one sea-shell. This wise reserve and self-restraint, among the boundless riches of a delicious climate and a soil teeming with fertility, present to us the best proof of the fastidious purity of artistic intentions. Nature poured out at the feet of the Greek artist a most plenteous offering, and the lap of Flora overflowed for him with tempting garlands of Beauty; but he did not gather these up with any greedy and indiscriminate hand, he did not intoxicate himself at the harvest of the vineyard. Full of the divinity of high purpose, and intent upon the nobler aim of creating a pure work of Art, he considered serenely what were his needs for decoration, took lovingly a few of the most ordinary forms, and, studying the creative sentiment of them, breathed a new and immortal life into them, and tenderly and hesitatingly applied them to the work of illustrating his grand Ideal. These leaves and flowers were selected not for their own sake, though he felt them to be beautiful, but for the decorative motive they suggested, the humanity there was in them, and the harmony they had with the emergencies of his design. The design was not bent to accommodate them, but they were translated and lifted up into the sphere of Art.

A drawing of the Ionic capitals of the temple of Minerva Polias in the Erechtheum is accessible to nearly everybody. It is well to turn to it and see what use the Greeks, under such impulses, made of the Wild Honeysuckle and of Sea-Shells. Perhaps this capital affords one of the most instructive epitomes of Greek Art, inasmuch as in its composition use is made of so much that Nature gave, and those gifts are so tenderly modelled and wrought into such exquisite harmony and eloquent repose. Examine the volute: this is the nearest approach to a mathematical result that can be found in Grecian architecture; yet this very approximation is one of the greatest triumphs of Art. No geometrical rule has been discovered which can exactly produce the spirals of the Erechtheum, nor can they be found in shells. In avoiding the exuberance of the latter and the rigid formalism of the former, a work of human thought and Love has been evolved. Follow one of these volutes with your eye from its centre outwards, taking all its congeries of lines into companionship; you find your sympathies at once strangely engaged. There is an intoxication in the gradual and melodious expansion of these curves. They seem to be full of destiny, bearing you along,

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as upon an inevitable tide, towards some larger sphere of action. Ere you have grown weary with the monotony of the spiral, you find that the system of lines which compose it gradually leave their obedience to the centrifugal forces of the volute, and, assuming new relationships of parts, sweep gracefully across the summit of the shaft, and become presently entangled in the reversed motion of the other volute, at whose centre Ariadne seems to stand, gathering together all the clues of this labyrinth of Beauty. This may seem fanciful to one who regards these things as matters of formalism. But inasmuch as, to the studious eye of affection, they suggest human action and human sympathies, this is a proof that they had their birth in some corresponding affection. It is the inanimate body of Geometry made spiritual and living by the Love of the human heart. And when a later generation reduced the Ionic volutes to rule, and endeavored to inscribe them with the gyrations of the compass, they have no further interest for us, save as a mathematical problem with an unknown value equal to a mysterious symbol  $x$ , in which the soul takes no comfort. But true Art, using the volute, inevitably makes it eloquent with an intensity of meaning, a delicacy of expression, which awaken certain very inward and very poetic sentiments, akin to those from which it was evolved in the process of creation. When we reasonably regard the printed words of an author, we not only behold an ingenious collection of alphabetical symbols, but are placed by them in direct contact with the mind which brought them together, and, for the moment, our train of thought so entirely coincides with that of the writer, that, though perhaps he died centuries ago, he may be said to live again in us. This great work of architectural Art has the same immortal life; and though it may not so often find a heart capable of discerning the sentiment and intention of it under the outward lines, yet that heart, when found, is touched very deeply and very tenderly. We imbibe the creative impulse of the artist, and the beautiful thing has a new life in our affections. Studying it, we become artists and poets ere we are aware. The alphabet becomes a living soul.

Under the volutes of this capital, and belting the top of the shaft, is a broad band of ornamentation, so happy and effectual in its uses, and so pure and perfect in its details, that a careful examination of it will, perhaps, afford us some knowledge of that spiritual essence in the antique Ideal out of which arose the silent and motionless Beauty of Greek marbles.

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Here are brought together the *sentiments* of certain vegetable productions of Greece, but sentiments so entirely subordinated to the flexure of the abstract line, that their natural significance is almost lost in a new and more human meaning. Here is the Honeysuckle, the wildest, the most elastic and undulating of plants, under the severe discipline of order and artistic symmetry, assuming a strict and chaste propriety, a formal elegance, which render it at once monumental and dignified. The harmonious succession and repetition of parts, the graceful contrasts of curves and the strict poise and balance of them, their unity in variety, their entire subjection to aesthetic laws, their serious and emphatic earnestness of purpose,—these qualities combine in the creation of one of the purest works of Art ever conceived by the human mind. It is called the Ionic *Anthemion*, and suggests in its composition all the creative powers of Greece. Its value is not alone in the sensuous gratification of the eye, as with the Arabesque tangles of the Alhambra, but it is more especially in its complete intellectual expression, the evidence there is in it of thoughtfulness and judgment and deliberate care. The inventor studied not alone the plant, but his own spiritual relationships with it; and ere he made his interpretation, he considered how, in mythological traditions, each flower once bore a human shape, and how Daphne and Syrinx, Narcissus and Philemon, and those other idyllic beings, were eased of the stress of human emotions by becoming Laurels and Reeds and Daffodils and sturdy Oaks, and how human nature was thus diffused through all created things and was epigrammatically expressed in them.

“And he, with many feelings, many thoughts,  
Made up a meditative joy, and found  
Religious meanings in the forms of Nature.”

Like Faustus, he was permitted to look into her deep bosom, as into the bosom of a friend,—to find his brothers in the still wood, in the air, and in the water,—to see himself and the mysterious wonders of his own breast in the movements of the elements. And so he took Nature as a figurative exponent of humanity, and extracted the symbolic truths from her productions, and used them nobly in his Art.

Garbett, an English aesthetical writer, assures us that the *Anthemion* bears not the slightest resemblance to the Honeysuckle or any other plant, “being no representation of anything in Nature, but simply the necessary result of the complete and systematic attempt to combine unity and variety by the principle of *gradation*.” But here he speaks like a geometer, and not like an artist. He seeks rather for the resemblance of form than the resemblance of spirit, and, failing to realize the object of his search, he endeavors to find a cause for this exquisite effect in pure reason. With equal perversity, Poe endeavored to persuade the public that his “Raven” was the result of mere aesthetical deductions!



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And here the old burden of our song must once again be heard: If we would know the golden secret of the Greek Ideal, we must ourselves first learn how to *love* with the wisdom and chastity of old Hellenic passion. We must sacrifice Taste and Fancy and Prejudice, whose specious superficialities are embodied in the errors of modern Art,—we must sacrifice these at the shrine of the true Aphrodite; else the modern Procrustes will continue to stretch and torture Greek Lines on geometrical beds, and the aesthetic Pharisees around us will still crucify the Greek Ideal.

[To be continued.]

### THE ROSE ENTHRONED.

It melts and seethes, the chaos that shall grow  
To adamant beneath the house of life:  
In hissing hatred atoms clash, and go  
To meet intenser strife.

And ere that fever leaves the granite veins,  
Down thunders o'er the waste a torrid sea:  
Now Flood, now Fire, alternate despot reigns,—  
Immortal foes to be.

Built by the warring elements, they rise,  
The massive earth-foundations, tier on tier,  
Where slimy monsters with unhuman eyes  
Their hideous heads uprear.

The building of the world is not for you  
That glare upon each other, and devour:  
Race floating after race fades out of view,  
Till beauty springs from power

Meanwhile from crumbling rocks and shoals of death  
Shoots up rank verdure to the hidden sun;  
The gulfs are eddying to the vague, sweet breath  
Of richer life begun,—

Richer and sweeter far than aught before,  
Though rooted in the grave of what has been.  
Unnumbered burials yet must heap Earth's floor,  
Ere she her heir shall win;

And ever nobler lives and deaths more grand  
For nourishment of that which is to come:



While 'mid the ruins of the work she planned  
Sits Nature, blind and dumb.

For whom or what she plans, she knows no more  
Than any mother of her unborn child;  
Yet beautiful forewarnings murmur o'er  
Her desolations wild.

Slowly the clamor and the clash subside:  
Earth's restlessness her patient hopes subdue:  
Mild oceans shoreward heave a pulse-like tide:  
The skies are veined with blue.

And life works through the growing quietness  
To bring some darling mystery into form:  
Beauty her fairest Possible would dress  
In colors pure and warm.

Within the depths of palpitating seas  
A tender tint;—anon a line of grace  
Some lovely thought from its dull atom frees,  
The coming joy to trace;—

A pencilled moss on tablets of the sand,  
Such as shall veil the unbudded maiden-blush  
Of beauty yet to gladden the green land;—  
A breathing, through the hush,

Of some sealed perfume longing to burst out  
And give its prisoned rapture to the air;—  
A brooding hope, a promise through a doubt  
Is whispered everywhere.



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And, every dawn a shade more clear, the skies  
A flush as from the heart of heaven disclose:  
Through earth and sea and air a message flies,  
Prophetic of the Rose.

At last a morning comes of sunshine still,  
When not a dew-drop trembles on the grass;  
When all winds sleep, and every pool and rill  
Is like a burnished glass

Where a long-looked-for guest may lean to gaze;  
When day on earth rests royally,—a crown  
Of molten glory, flashing diamond rays,  
From heaven let lightly down.

In golden silence, breathless, all things stand.  
What answer meets this questioning repose?  
A sudden gush of light and odors bland,  
And, lo! the Rose! the Rose!

The birds break into canticles around;  
The winds lift Jubilate to the skies:  
For, twin-born with the rose on Eden-ground,  
Love blooms in human eyes.

Life's marvellous queen-flower blossoms only so,  
In dust of low ideals rooted fast.  
Ever the Beautiful is moulded slow  
From truth in errors past.

What fiery fields of Chaos must be won,  
What battling Titans rear themselves a tomb,  
What births and resurrections greet the sun,  
Before the rose can bloom!

And of some wonder-blossom yet we dream,  
Whereof the time that is infolds the seed,—  
Some flower of light, to which the rose shall seem  
A fair and fragile weed.

**A BAG OF MEAL.**





I often wonder what was the appearance of Saul's mother, when she walked up the narrow aisle of the meeting-house and presented her boy's brow for the mystic drops that sealed him with the name of Saul.

Saul isn't a common name. It is well,—for Saul is not an ordinary man,—and—Saul is my husband.

We came in the cool of an evening upon the brink of the swift river that flows past the village of Skylight.

The silence of a nearing experience brooded over my spirit; for Saul's home was a vast unknown to me, and I fain would have delayed awhile its coming.

I wonder if the primal motion of unknown powers, like electricity, for instance, is spiral. Have you ever seen it winding out of a pair of human eyes, knowing that every fresh coil was a spring of the soul, and felt it fixing itself deeper and deeper in your own, until you knew that you were held by it?

Perhaps not. I have: as when Saul turned to me in the cool of that evening, and drew my eyes away, by the power I have spoken of, from the West, where the orange of sunset was fading into twilight.

I have felt it otherwise. A horse was standing, surrounded by snow; the biting winds were cutting across the common, and the blanket with which he had been covered had fallen from him, and lay on the snow. He had turned his head toward the place where it lay, and his eyes were fixed upon it with such power, that, if that blanket had been endowed with one particle of sensation, it would have got up, and folded itself, without a murmur, around the shivering animal. Such a picture as it was! Just then, I would have been Rosa Bonheur; but being as I was, I couldn't be expected to blanket a horse in a crowded street, could I?

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We were on the brink of the river. Saul drew my eyes away, and said,—

“You are unhappy, Lucy.”

“No,” I answered,—“not that.”

“That does not content me. May I ask what troubles you?”

I aroused myself to reason. Saul is never satisfied, unless I assign a reason for any mood I am in.

“Saul!” I questioned, “why do the mortals that we call Poets write, and why do non-Poets, like ourselves, sigh over the melancholy days of autumn, and why are we silent and thoughtful every time we think enough of the setting sun to watch its going down?”

“Simply because the winter coming is cold and dreary, in the one case,—and in the other, there are several reasons. Some natures dread the darkness; others have not accomplished the wishes or the work of the day.”

“I don’t think you go below the surface,” I ventured. “It seems to me that the entire reason is simple want of faith, a vague uncertainty as to the coming back of the dried-up leaf and flower, when they perish, and a fear, though unexpressed, that the sun is going down out of your sight for the last time, and you would hold it a little longer.”

“Would you now to-night, Lucy?”

“If I could.”

My husband did not speak again for a long time, and gradually I went back into my individuality.

We came upon an eminence outside the river-valley, and within sight of the village.

“Is it well? do you like it?” asked Saul.

The village was nested in among the elms to such a degree that I could only reply,—

“I am certain that I shall, when I find out what it is.”

Saul stayed the impatient horse at the point where we then were, and, indicating a height above and a depth below, told me the legend of the naming of his village.

It was given thus:—

“A long time ago, when the soundless tread of the moccason walked fearlessly over the bed of echoes in this valley, two warriors, Wabausee and Waubeeneemah, came one

day upon the river, at its opposite sides. Both were, weary with the march; both wore the glory of many scalps. Their belts were heavy with wampum, their hearts were heavy with hate. Wabausee was down amid the dark pines that grew beside the river's brink. Waubeeneemah was upon the high land above the river. With folded arms and unmoved faces they stood, whilst in successive flashes across the stream their eyes met, until Wabausee slowly opened out his arms, and, clasping a towering tree, cried out, 'I see sky!' and he steadfastly fixed his gaze upon the crevices of brightness that urged their way down amid the pines over his head.

"Waubeeneemah turned his eyes over the broad valley, and answered the cry with, 'I see light!'

"Thus they stood, one with his eyes downward, the other with his intent on the sky, and fast and furious ran the river, swollen with the meltings of many snows, and fierce and quick rang the battle-cries of 'I see sky!' 'I see light!'

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"A white man was near; his cabin lay just below; he had climbed a tree above Waubeeneemah and remained a silent witness of this wordy war, until, looking up the river, he saw a canoe that had broken from its fastenings and was rushing down to the rapids below. It contained the families of the two warriors, who were helplessly striving against the swift flow of waters.

"The white man spoke, and the warriors listened. He cried, 'Look to your canoe! and see Skylight!'

"Through the pines rushed Wabausee, and down the river-bank Waubeeneemah, and into the tide, until they met the coming canoe, across whose birchen bow they gave the grasp of peace, and ever since that time Indian and white man have called this place Skylight."

"Where are the Indians now?" I could not help asking,—and yet with no purpose, beyond expression of the thought question.

The shadows were gathering, the eyelids of the day were closing. Saul caught me up again through the shadows into those eyes of his, and answered,—

"Here, Lucy! I am a pale form of Waubeeneemah! I know it! I feel it now! I sometimes ache for foemen and the wilds."

Why do I think of that time to-night on the Big Blue, far away from Skylight, and imagine that the prairie airs are ringing with the echoes of the great cries that are heard in my native land, "I see North!" and "I see South!" and there is no white man of them all high enough to see the United States?

I've wandered! Let me think,—yes, I have it! My thought began with trying to fancy Saul's mother taking him to baptism.

She was dead, when I went to Skylight, her son's wife.

She went into the higher life at thirty-three of the threescore-and-ten cycle of the human period. How young to die!

The longer we live, the stronger grows the wish to live. And why not? When the circle is almost ended, and all the momentum of threescore-and-ten is gained, why not pass the line and enter into second childhood? What more beautiful truth in Nature's I Am, than obedience to this law?

I've another fancy on the Big Blue to-night. It is a place for fancies. I remember—a long time ago it seems, and yet I am not so old as Saul's mother—the first knowledge that I had of life. I saw the sun come up one morning out of the sea, and with it there came out of the night of my past a consciousness. I was a soul, and held relations

separate from other souls to that risen sun and that sea. From that hour I grew into life. A growth from the Unseen came to me with every day, born I knew not how into my soul. I sent out nothing to people the future. All came to me.

Is this true, this faith or fancy that God sends a tidal wave through man, bringing with it from Heaven's ocean fragments set afloat from its shore to lodge in our lives, until there comes an ebb, and then begin our hopes and desires all to tend heavenward, or *elsewhere*? Have you never felt, do you not now feel, that there is more of yourself *somewhere else* than there is upon the Earth?

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I like to think thus, when I see a person ill, or in sorrow, or weighed down with weary griefs. I like to think that that which is ebbing here is flowing and ripening into fitness for the freed soul in that land where there shall be “no more sea.”

In insanity, does the kind Lord remove *all* from this world in order to fit up the new life more gloriously? and are those whom most we pity clasped the closest in the Living Arms?

It may be,—there is such comfort in possibilities.

Will Saul come to-night? I am all alone on the Big Blue. There’s not another settled claim for miles away.

The August sun drank up the moisture from our corn-fields, took out the blood of our prairie-grasses, and God sent no cooling rains. Why?

Skylight was charming for a while. I had forgotten Saul’s assertion that he was a pale shadow of Waubeeneemah, as we forget a dream of our latest sleep.

At my home Aunt Carter appeared one day, and said she had “come to spend the afternoon and stay to tea”; and she seated her amplitude of being in Saul’s favorite chair, and began to count the stitches in the heel of the twenty-fourth stocking that she assured me “she had knit every stitch of since the night she saw my husband lift me down at the gate just outside the window.” Her blue eyes went down deeper and deeper into the bluer yarn her fingers were threading; and after a long pause, during which I had forgotten her presence, and was counting out the hours on the face of the clock which the slow hands must travel over before Saul would be at home, suddenly she looked up and began with,—

“Mrs. Monten!”

There was something startling in her voice. I knew it was the first drop of a coming flood, and I fortified myself. She went on repeating,—

“Mrs. Monten! I’ve been thinking, for a great long while, that it isn’t right for you to go on living with that man, without knowing what he is. And I for one have got up to the point of coming right over here and telling you of it to once.”

I could not help the involuntary question of—

“Is my husband an evil man?”

“Evil! I should think he might be, when he has got”——

“Stay, Mrs. Carter!” I interrupted. “I will hear no news of my husband that he does not choose to give me. Only one question,—Do you know of any action that my husband has done that is wrong or wicked?”

Aunt Carter forgot her blue eyes and her bluer yarn, for she stopped her knitting, and her eyes changed to gray in my sight, as she ejaculated,—

“He’s got Indian blood in him! I should think you’d be afraid he’d scalp you, if you didn’t do just as he told you to. Everybody in Skylight is just as sorry for you as ever they can be.”

Aunt Carter paused. An open door announced my husband’s unexpected presence.

Aunt Carter rolled up her twenty-fourth twin of a stocking, and, hastily declaring that “she’d always noticed that ’t was better to visit people when they was alone,” she made all possible effort to escape before Saul came in.

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My husband an Indian! I looked at him anew. He wore the same presence that he did when first I saw him, a twelve-month before. There was no outward trace of the savage, as he came to welcome me; and I forgot my thought presently, as I listened to his words.

"I am tired of this life," he said; "let us go."

"Where, Saul?"

"Anywhere, where we can breathe. I feel pent up here. I long to hunt something wild and free as I would be. Shall it be to the prairies, Lucy?"

"Will you live on the hunt?" I asked.

"I had not thought of that. No; I'll build you a"—And he paused.

I laughed, and added,—

"Let us have it, Saul. A wigwam?"

"Why not?"

"Why not, indeed, Saul? I am content,—let us go."

On the morrow I began the work of preparation. I was sitting upon the carpet, where I had cast all our treasures of knowledge, in the various guises of the printer's and binder's art, and was selecting the books that I fondly thought would be essential to my existence, when Saul came in.

He looked down upon me with that look that always drinks up my sight into his, and said,—

"You are sorry to go, Lucy. I will stay."

"No, Saul, I wish to go. You shall teach me the pleasures of wild life; and who knows but I shall like it so well that we will give up civilization for it? Where shall I pack all these books?"

"Leave them all," he said. "We will close the house as it is, until we come back." And I left them all at home.

In the heart of these preparations an insane desire came into my mind to know something of Saul's ancestors, and there was but one way to know, namely, by asking, which I would not do of human soul. Thus it came to pass that I was driven out, between this would of my mind and wouldn't of my soul, to search for some knowledge



from inanimate things. The last night before our departure I became particularly restless and unsatisfied. I went to the place of burial of the villagers, where I found duly recorded on two stones the names of Saul's parents, Richard Monten and Agnes Monten, his wife.

There was nothing Indian there, and I went home once more to the place that had been so happy until the spirit of inquiry grew stronger than I. That night I watched Saul, until he grew restless, and asked me why I did so.

I evaded direct reply, and on the morrow we were wheeling westward.

From the instant we left the line of man's art, Saul became another person. All the romance and the glory in his nature blossomed out gorgeously, and I grew glad and gay with him. We crossed the Missouri. We traversed the river-land to Fort Leavenworth, amid cottonwoods, oaks, and elms which it would have done Dr. Holmes's heart and arms good to see and measure.

"Will you ride, Lucy? will you try the prairie?" asked Saul, the morning following our arrival in Fort Leavenworth.

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I signified my pleasure, and mounted a brave black mustang, written all over with liberty. We had ridden out the dew of the morning, and for miles not one word had been spoken, the only sound in the stillness having been the hoofs' echo on the prairie-grass, when Saul rode close to me, and, laying his hand on my pony's head, spoke in a deep, strange voice that put my soul into expectancy, for I had heard the same once before in my life.

"Lucy," he said, "I sometimes think that I have done a great wrong in taking you into my keeping; for I *must* accept these calls to wildness that come over me at intervals."

"Have you ever been here before?" I asked.

"Twice, Lucy, I have crossed the American Desert, and lain down to sleep at the foot of the Rocky Mountains."

"You are not going there now?" I almost gasped.

"Why not? Can't you go with me?"

Oh, how my spirit recoiled at the thought of the Desert! Wild animals processioned through my brain in endless circles. All the stories of Indian ferocity that ever I had heard came into my consciousness, as it is said all the past events of life do in the drowning, and I had no time to hesitate. The decision of my lifetime gathered into that instant. Saul or nothing; and bravely I answered,—did I not?—when, with brightening eyes, I said, "Let us on!"—and shaking the hand from my saddle-bow, I gave my prairie friend leave to fly.

"Lucy! Lucy!" cried Saul, and he soon overtook me,—*"Lucy, I sought you as the thirsting man seeks water on the desert; and I have sought to bless you, almost as Hagar blessed the Angel,—almost as the devout soul blesses God, when it finds a spring that He has made to rise out of the sands. Having found you, I was content. I thought that I could live always, as other men do, in the tameness of Town and Law; but I could not, unless you refused to go with me into the Nature that my spirit demands as a part of its own life."*

"Saul, you know that you *can* go without me,—else I should not wish to go. I go, not because I am a necessity to you, but a free-born soul, that wills to go where you go."

The grave Professor (for I whisper it here to-night, with only the wind to hear, that Saul *is* a Professor in a famed seat of learning not many leagues away from the Atlantic coast) looked down at me with a vague, puzzled air, for an instant, then said,—

"I see! It is so, Lucy. You have divined the secret. I am not to let you know that I cannot live without you,—and, if you can, you are to make me think that you only tolerate me."

“What of it? Isn’t it almost true? I sometimes think, that, if ever we are in heaven, effort to remain there will be necessary to its full joy. We are always crying for rest, when effort is the only pleasure worth possessing.”

“You are right, and you are wrong. Let us leave mental philosophy with mankind, who have to do with it. Just now, I am willing to confess that I need you, and you are to do as you will. Come! let us look into this thicket.”

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And leading the way, Saul rode presently under a tall cotton wood-tree, and, lifting for me the low-hanging branches of a black-jack, I entered an amphitheatre whose walls were leaves of living green domed in blue, with a river-aisle winding through.

I had not time to take in all the joy of the circle, before it was evidenced that Saul had premeditated the scene. A fire of twigs sent up a spicy perfume. A camp-kettle stood beside the fire, and a creature stood beside it. A yellow savage I should have said, but for my husband's welcome. Never in our home library did brother-professor ever receive warmer grasp of hand than I knew this Indian met. They used words, in speaking, that were unknown to me. Presently I perceived that an introduction was pending. That being over, the Indian, Meotona, pointed to a swinging-chair, built for me out of the wealth of grapevine. It was cushioned with the velvet of the buffalo-grass.

"Tell me how to thank him," I said to Saul.

Meotona immediately replied,—“Me no thank,—him,” pointing to Saul.

I laid my sun-wearied head against the vine, and through half-closed eyes watched in delicious rest the preparations for dinner. My prairie-horse mistook my comfort for his own. I found his length of liberty included my chair-cushion, and I gave him tuft after tuft, until something like justice seemed to penetrate into his soul,—for he heroically refused the last morsel, and wandered away into the next arc of his liberty.

“If all the days are to be like this, how delicious it will be!” I said, as Saul came to me with choice bits of prairie fare.

“Not this,” he said. “Wait until we hunt the buffalo!—that wakes up the spirit of man!”

“But I am not a man, and you must excuse me from hunting buffalo,” I could not help saying, as I slid out of the grapevine chair to the grass, beside Saul; for verily, I believed that he had forgotten that I was a woman, and a child of the Puritans.

No more words were spoken until our repast was over. Meotona gathered up the furniture of our dining-room, and with us returned toward Fort Leavenworth. The summer sun was setting when we drew near the Missouri. I thought I had disappointed Saul. At the last moment I ventured to ask,—

“Why did you return? I would have gone on. I wished it.”

My husband's face lit into a quick smile, then gloomed as quickly, and he said,—

“I smile at your simplicity in imagining that I ventured out, without consulting you, for the Rocky Mountains. I frown to think that my wife believes that I could go into danger with her, and only one right arm to defend her. No! I went to-day to try you. I couldn't ask you within any four-walled shelter. I wanted the wide expanse to be your only shield

before I could trust you. I wanted you to face the foe. Again I ask, Shall we go?  
Answer from your own individuality, not mine.”

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"I will go."

It was the spirit that spoke; for neither heart nor flesh could have braved the fancied dangers.

A week went by, and every moment of the time Saul was elate and busy, providing for me in every possible way, devising comforts that exceeded my imagination, remembering every idiosyncrasy that I had given expression to in his hearing. Under the guard of the United States mail, we left Fort Leavenworth. Meotona, the yellow savage, went with us. Oh, the delight of those days! it comes to me now, and I almost forget that I am alone on the Big Blue, and that those hours have gone down among "the froth and rainbows" of the past, bearing with them a part of my life. There were nights when I was afloat in the bark of my spirit, and wandering up and on, until I met Half-Way Angels that bade me back to Earth; and then I would wander away into dreams, watched by the stars and Saul,—for in those first days he never wearied in his care. By day I wandered through a garden of flowers untended by man, whose only keepers were butterflies and birds. Indian faces and forms no longer made me tremble. I grew to see beauty in them, as they dashed by the train, intent on the hunt.

We encamped beside Stranger Creek, on the banks of the Wakarusa, and on the Great Divide separating the Osage from the Wakarusa Valley.

After we left Council Grove, Meotona, I noticed, was on the watch, constantly peering off into the illimitable distance. One day I learned the cause. An exclamation from the Indian led me to look at him. For once, fire flashed out of his eyes,—he had forgotten himself. He was in ecstasy as he saw a party advancing over the prairie.

"Here they come! Now for the heart of the wilderness!" exclaimed my husband, as they rode up.

"We are not going away from the guard?" I ventured to suggest, as chief after chief came up. I knew them in their wild orders, having by this time learned something of Indian customs. They were equipped for the Plains, and among their number I distinguished two white men.

"I know them,—they are safe and true, Lucy,—fear nothing!" whispered Saul close to my whitening cheek; and afterwards we turned aside from the Santa Fe trail to the north of the American Desert.

My husband did not leave me for an instant that afternoon; and I, simple-minded woman, tried to look as happy—well, as a woman and a professor's wife could look under the circumstances. The wings of my tent that night were spread to the breeze that swept low and cool across the Divide.

The next day we came to the lodges of the Indians. Swarthy-faced girls and women came to greet us. It was evident that many of them had never before seen a white woman. As evening came on, I noticed in one group outside the principal lodge an unusual amount of grimace that was incomprehensible, until, very timidly, a little girl left the crowd. Half-way toward me she stopped and turned back, but again the

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violent gesticulations were enacted, when the child made a sudden evolution in my direction, and with one hard finger rubbed the back of my hand, until I thought myself quite a Spartan; then looking at her own finger, doubtfully at first, she ran back, and went from one to another, showing her finger. The design was evident. Indians (the women, at least) have some curiosity;—they thought *me painted white*. I forgave them.

We went five hundred miles from this lodge into the wilderness,—two of the squaws accompanying us, for my comfort.

At last came the sight of buffaloes, feeding on the short tufts of grass on the Grand Prairie. My heart grew sick with the shout that rang from a hundred Indian throats, and—must I write it?—from Saul's.

“Stay!” said Saul, and he left me a guard, and was away without one word of farewell.

Night came down, and he was not returned. The stars shone out of the vault like “red-hot diamonds,” and on the sight no vision, to the ear no sound.

The women pitched my tent. The guard lit the fire. They brought me savory bits of food, and coffee. My throat was tightened, I could not eat, and I arose and went out into the night alone. I lost all sense of fear, as I wandered away. The prairie had just been burned, and I knew must be free from serpents and other reptiles: beyond these I had no thought. I turned once to see the little dot of fire-light, to see the one point of canvas, my shelter and my home. At last I grew very weary, and remember having lain down, and having thought that the stars were raining down upon me, so near did they seem, —and one after one, constellation mingled with constellation, until I fancied a storm of stars was circling over my head.

I started with a sudden spasm, as a sound burst upon me, wild, ringing, dreadful. A hundred Indians were uttering a war-cry, and, as I lay there, with my head pressed to the burnt sod, I felt the shudder of earth from many hoofs. I turned in the direction whence they were coming;—raise my head from the ground I dared not. All was darkness. Could I possibly escape? Not if I moved. Where I was, there might be a chance that they would pass to the right or the left. On, on they came, and I knew the cry,—it was for vengeance. Feebly, like a setting star, gleamed the watch-fire of my guard in the distance. Suddenly it went down. They had heard the alarm. How awfully my heart kept time to the nearing echo of the many footfalls! My eyes must have been fastened on the West. I saw dark heads rise first above the earth-line, then the moving arms of the horsemen. I heard the ring of weapons, and saw them coming directly over the place where I lay; but I did not stir,—it was as if I had been bound with an equator to the ground. Something struck my arm and was gone. The troop passed by.



It was morning. A low, deep breathing betokened something near me. I opened my eyes, and saw the face of my husband,—but, oh, how changed! I heard him say, “The Lord hear my vow, and record my prayer!”

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All that day I lay there, on the prairie, Saul sitting beside me, shielding me from, the sun, and giving me drops of coolness, which the Indians pressed from herbs and shrubs that grew not far away. I was in a dream, and when the stars arose they lifted me up and bore me away. I knew it was to the eastward. I felt no resistance in my nature, as I always do when going to the west, either voluntarily or otherwise. We came, after many days, to the Indian lodge. I never saw the guard again, that I left in peace, when I was *driven* out to wander, because I felt wretched and lonely to be deserted for the chase by my husband. They were carried into captivity by the hostile Sioux. There was mourning in the lodge. An Indian mother, whose daughter had gone with me, sat down in the ashes of sorrow, and moved not for two days; then she arose, and, scattering dust from the earth toward the setting sun, she went into her wigwam and they gave her food.

It was September before I was able to leave the place whither they carried me. My arm was cut with the hoof of the flying horse, and when Saul found me, I had fainted; I was dying from loss of blood, which his coming only had stayed. After I grew stronger, I closely observed my husband.

I never saw such an ache, such a strife, as week after week hunting-parties went out in the morning and returned at evening with their game. Saul grew reserved and silent when I begged him to go, to leave me for a day.

“It is of no use, Lucy; I made a vow, and I must keep it. This Indian blood within me must be subdued; it has met a stronger current on the way, and *must* mingle with it.”

He said no more on the subject, and I would not question him. We took our last walk on the prairie. Everything was in readiness for our departure to meet the expected United States mail-train. We returned to the lodge, and Saul left me for a few minutes to make some last arrangements with Meotona. An old Indian woman, whose eyes I had often noticed on me, crept stealthily in at my tent-door, and said to me in English,—

“Let me be welcome; I come to teach you.”

I knew that among her tribe she had the reputation of a prophetess, but I had never heard her speak English.

“I am waiting to hear,” I said; and this woman fixed her sad, solemn eyes on me and said,—

“Child of the pale man, a great many moons ago, when my eyes were bright like the little quiver-flower, and the young warriors sought me in my father’s wigwam, I had a sister. Her name *he* called Luella. The chiefs of the tribe were going for a grand hunt on the Huron. Some pale men from across the lake came to join them. One of them looked on Luella, and her eyes grew soft and sad. She wrapped her blanket about her, and walked often under the stars at night. Through the winter, she would not talk with

the young chiefs; and when the leaves grew again, the pale men came back, and Luella walked again under the stars. She learned English, and no one knew who taught her.

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"The hunt went on again until the snow came; and when the pale men left the lodge, Luella was lost from the wigwam. The warriors went in pursuit, but they came back without Luella. She was not with the pale-faces. Many moons came and went, and one night I heard a voice singing in the distance. I knew it was Luella, and she led a child by her side, and he said soft English words. She would not come into the lodge. She only came to tell me that she was with the white man who loved her, that she was content, and to show me her boy; and Luella walked away into the night again, and I told no one.

"I made many moccasins, and wove baskets of twigs; and when Uncas, the chief of the tribe, my father, went to the great hunting-ground beyond the Sun, then I gathered up my moccasins, and went out before the gate opened to let the light through. I left the wigwam for Luella. I hated white people; I hated the white man who stole Luella from me; but the pale-faces took my moccasins, and gave me white wampum, and with that I crossed the lake, and went from town to town, and everywhere I showed the people this,"—and the wrinkled woman extended her hand to me; but, at the instant, Saul lifted the tent-curtain and came in. She hid her hand under her blanket, and, wrapping it closely about her, walked out without a glance to testify that ever she had spoken.

Saul asked me the cause of this visit, and I was about to tell him, when there arose in the lodges without such screams and cries as brought all the population into the air. The Indian woman who so lately had left my tent lay on the ground, in the apparent extreme of agony.

"Let the pale-face come," said the knot of savages around her; "it is for her she calls."

My husband interpreted the words for me, and in doubt and fear I went to her. Her screams had ceased; she held her hands tightly over her heart, as if there had been the spasms of pain. She rolled her eyes around to see if any one was within hearing, and then said,—

"I had fear that you would tell him; stay a little, and let me tell you now. I went on after Luella until I found her. I had the name of the white man to guide me. She was living as the pale-faces live, in a great town of many lodges.

"I saw with my eyes that she was happy, and then I walked many moons back to the Huron, and rowed across the lake in a canoe that I found in the woods.

"Luella came back again. I don't know how she found the way alone, but she came into the wigwam when the leaves were falling, and before the buds grew again she went to Uncas in the West. I asked her about the white man, and she shook her head and hid her eyes. I asked her for the boy, and she threw open her arms wide, to show me he was not there. Look!" said the woman, "I am dying; I'm very old; I ought to have walked with Luella this long time. Listen,—let me teach you. The pale face that you look into has eyes like my Luella. Take care! When he would walk under the stars alone, go not

with him. When he would hunt bison, give him all the prairie; don't stand at the wigwam-door to keep him in. And when you are far away beyond my people, you may see this,"—and she handed to me the small parcel from close to her wild heart. I took it.

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"You'll keep it for Luella's sake. She held it close when she went away; now I'm going, there's no one else to care. Bring it with you, when the Great Spirit calls."

I could win no more words from the woman. She spoke to those who came to her, and Saul said she told them that I had "taken away the torment."

"I shall think my Lucy witches somebody beside poor Saul," said my husband; and he gave a sigh as he stood in the tent-door, and watched the westering moon for the last time.

In the morning they told us that the Prophetess had gone into the light beyond the Sun.

Saul went in to see her, and as he came back to me I saw that he was not in a mood for words. Our farewell was very silent. Meotona went with us. Once again, bounding over the prairie, my heart grew lighter than it had been for many days; but I had no opportunity to examine Luella's treasure.

We met the long caravan of wagons on the summit of the Great Divide, and it was joy to unite my fate once more with that of my countrymen. Saul saw this, and said,—

"Know now, Lucy, that you have the portion meted out to me, when I saw the freemen of the wild coming. Your pleasure is that of civilization; mine was that of barbaric life. I bid adieu to it henceforth,"—and my brave husband, at this instant, looked out upon the head-waters of the Neosho, where Nature, when she built up the world, must have made a storehouse of material, and never came back for her treasures, they lie so magnificently rolled over the land.

Saul's eyes gathered up the view, as if they were, what they are, memory's absorbents, and said, sadly,—

"It is for the last time, Lucy!"

We went into corral the next evening by the side of a grassy mound covered with low-growing shrubs.

Afterwards Saul wandered out alone. I would have gone with him; but at the instant I put my face outside the tent-door, the memory of the Indian woman's caution came to me, and with it the opportunity to examine Luella's secret.

I entered my tent, lighted the little lamp that had travelled a thousand miles and never done service till now, and opened Luella's treasure. It was wrapped in soft white fur, bound about with the long, dried grass that grows beside the Huron. A scroll of parchment was rolled within it, faded, yellow, and old. I opened it, with a smile at my strange inheritance.

At the first glance, I thought I had before me some Indian hieroglyphics; but bringing back from the place of its long obscurity the little knowledge of the French language that I held in possession, I deciphered, that, “fourscore years before, beside the froth of the Huron Water, Father Kino had performed the marriage-rite upon Luella, daughter of Uncas, of the Dacotahs, and Richard Monten, of Montreal.” Below the certificate of the priest of the Church were strange characters beyond my power to decipher.

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With trembling I looked out for Saul's return. Here, upon the banks of the Neosho, I had learned the secret which my life in the East had hidden so long.

A certain kind, of guiltiness came over me, as Saul drew near, breaking down with every tread the sun-cured grass,—a sense of unworthiness, to hold in my hand a possession which essentially was his, and which he had not freely given me.

"I will not look into his eyes with a veil lying in the air," I said, very quietly to myself; and so, when my husband saw the burning of the little lamp and asked the cause, I told him all the story of the Indian woman, and put into his hand her gift to me. Saul's mind was preoccupied; he paid very little attention to the story; but when I gave him the white-furred scroll, and he opened it, then the grave professor—Well, it is better that I do not put into words what followed, even here, on the Big Blue.

An hour afterwards Saul spoke. He said,—

"Lucy, you have given me the key of my life, I knew my Indian blood, but I knew not whence it came; therefore I said nothing to you. I remember being tormented by it, when a boy, but never knew by what right. Let me translate for you this Indian register of—let me see—my grandmother's marriage. 'Ten moons from the lost moon, and many sleeps from the life of the big Huron Water, the Great Spirit called Luella to walk with a son of the Pale-Faces. The mystery [the priest] met them, and told them to go on to the Sun. They are gone in the path of the lost moons.'"

"Let us go to Skylight by the way of Montreal," I suggested.

Saul said, "It is well."

At the Missouri I laid aside my prairie costume, and assumed the raiment of fashion.

We found in Canada pleasant people bearing our name, and they welcomed us as relatives.

Richard Monten lay beside a fixed cloud of marble; and although Luella's sister had said she died far away, yet her name was beneath her husband's.

Tradition told us of the beautiful Indian wife with eyes like light,—and how her husband took her, every year, alone with him into the wilds,—and how, when they came back, and the winter snows fell, she would sit all day beside him, with her eyes on figures and letters, whilst her impatient fingers were threading her long hair, and memory shook her head at the attempted education, perhaps wisely and well.

When Mr. Monten died, and left her houses and lands, she turned away from them all, and, leading her boy by the hand, went out of her home and was seen no more until long after, when Father Kino, a kind old priest, going home late one night from a dying





soul, in passing the cloud of marble, heard faint moans coming out of it, and, going near, found an Indian woman, in festive dress, like a chief's daughter, kneeling there. A few minutes afterwards, when Father Kino came back with an assistant, there were no more moans, for Luella had "gone on to the Sun."

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The fate of the little boy was never known until then, and then it was only known that he had lived and died and was buried in Skylight.

We found houses and lands, but no record that they were ours. So we left them under British rule, and returned to Skylight, to our cottage and duty.

Aunt Carter came in before we had been an hour at home. I think she watched the opportunity of Saul's absence to find me alone.

"See!" she exclaimed, holding up to my view a small eminence of stockings, "see what I have done, while you've just been going about the world doing nothing at all!" And with a really warm shake of my hand, Aunt Carter seated herself, for the second time, in Saul's chair.

"Why, I've been knitting too!" I said, in extenuation.

"What?" asked Aunt Carter. "Some new-fashioned thing or other, I'll warrant."

"No,—something that is as old as Eve."

"Who ever beard of Eve's knitting? The Bible doesn't say one word about it, Mrs. Monten. Besides, I don't think little Cain and Abel wore stockings at all."

"I did not say that Eve knit in Paradise. I only said I'd been knitting at something as old as Eve. I meant the thread of life. Here comes my husband to tell you how industrious I have been."

Saul led Aunt Carter on to talk of her youth, and gradually of his father, until he had learned all that she knew of his history. It was very little: only that a fur-trader and a party of Dacotahs came to the village, she had heard her father say, to sell their skins, bringing a brown little boy with them; that the child fell sick with scarlet fever, and they left him to the mercy of the village people, and never came back for him, although they had said they would.

Did Luella give her boy away?—Never, I was convinced, and Saul likewise.

Saul went back into his round of professional duties, and with much heart for a while.

Delighted with civilization, and peopled with memories, and joyous with the divine plumage ever hovering around me, my life ran on. I watched Saul narrowly. He would often take up his hat, after hours of application to science, and rush out of the house, as if a mission lay before him. He would come back, and devote himself to me, as if he were conscious of some neglect in his absence. I planned short excursions all over the adjacent country. I became addicted to angling, because I saw Saul liked it. There were many righteous eyeballs that reproved me for wandering in places not fit for a

woman, and Aunt Carter became exceedingly disturbed, even to the point of remonstrance.

“You’re spoiling your husband,” she would say,—“he’ll not know but what you are a squaw,” she said to me one day, in true distress.

However, I endured it delightfully for three years. Saul received in one week four letters, each containing the offer of a professor’s chair in a desirable institution.

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For many months I had seen the spell weaving around my good husband; I had seen it flash out of his eyes; I had heard its undertone in his voice; I had felt it in his whole manner, and I knew the hour of battle was near.

I was strong, and I came to the rescue. It was on this wise. Hearken! is he coming? No, it is only the wind coming up the Big Blue.

We sat in our Skylight door in an April evening,—unwise, perhaps,—but we were there. Saul had taken down that wild warble of Longfellow's, "Hiawatha." He read to me until the moon came up; then he threw down the book, and said, "Pshaw!"

"What is that for, Saul?" I asked, in some surprise.

"It is not for the book,—for myself, Lucy. I had better not have opened it. Let us go and talk with the Doctor." And we went.

Saul had not answered his letters on the chair question, and I put up a petition.

"I think I never felt so well as when I was in Kansas," I said. "Really, Saul, I've felt a strong inclination to cough for some time, every morning. The climate of Kansas is wonderfully curative for pulmonary difficulties. I wish you would go out there now, and build a log cabin, plant a few miles of maize, gather it in, and then, when the season is over, come back and go to ——. You know they value you too highly not to wait your time."

I saw a slow kindling up in Saul's eyes, but an instant later it had gone down, and he said, looking into mine,—

"Do you really and truly wish this, Lucy?"

And Lucy answered,—

"I really and truly wish it, Saul."

We came hither with the violets and bluebirds. My wigwam points to the sky. We have roamed on the prairies, and wandered in the timber-lands. Under the heavens of the Big Blue we have drunk "the wine of life all day," and "been lighted off" to hemlock-boughs "by the jewels in the cup."

Oh, this life that is passing, passing in unseen marches on to the Great Plains where we shall corral forever! I've just opened my cabin-door to look for Saul; he's been gone ten days. The drought came; our maize withered and died. Ten miles away, there is a town; two houses are there. We left our vast-wilderness lodge to Nature in October, and turned our faces eastward. Reaching the town, we found Azrael hovering there. It was impossible to go on and leave such suffering, and we stayed. While we waited,



winter came along, tossing her white mail over the prairie, and we were prisoned. Azrael folded his pinions, and carried in them two souls out of the town of two houses. Afterward, Saul and I came back to our home. I kindled the fire, and Saul went forth to earn our daily food. Life began to grow painfully earnest. The supply of wheaten flour waxed less and less, and I sometimes wished—no, I *did not wish* that I was a widow, I only wished for flour.

I began to look for manna, and it came,—not “small and white, about the size of coriander-seed,” but in the form of the flying life of yesterday.

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I have cried many tears over eyes that were shut for me, but I've never been sorry that I came hither.

At last, no more wings came flying over the prairie. Saul came home without food. That was ten days ago. He carried me the next morning to the village, to leave me there, till he should return,—then retraced the ten miles through the snow, and went for food.

I stayed until there was no more for the children to eat. I could not abide that, and this morning I stole away. I've come the ten miles through the snow to light the fire, that Saul may not pass by, and go on to the town this cold night. Where is he now? Not perishing, dying on the prairie, as I was once, when he found me? I'll walk and see. It is so lone outside, there is such an *awful sound* in the *voice of stillness*, and Saul is not in sight!

Where is my life now? Since Saul went away, so much of it has gone, I feel as if more of myself were there than here. Why couldn't I go on thinking? It was such relief! The moon is up at last. A low rumble over the dried grass, like a great wave treading on sand. I am faint. I have tightened my dress, to keep out hunger, every hour of this day. Those starving children! God pity them! A higher wave of sound,—surely 'tis not fancy. I will look out. The moon shines on a prairie sail, a gleam of canvas. Another roll of the broad wheel, and Saul is here.

"Send the man on quickly," I cried; "the children are starving in the town."

"And you?" said Saul.

The power of his eyes is almost gone. I scarcely heed them. I see—a bag of meal.

## NAPOLEON THE THIRD

On the 6th of October, 1840, a young man was brought up for sentence in one of the highest courts of Europe, before which he had been tried, and by which he had been found guilty of one of the greatest crimes that can be charged upon any human being, though the world seldom visits it with moral condemnation. The young man was Prince Louis Napoleon Bonaparte, the court was the French Chamber of Peers, and the sentence was imprisonment for life. Had the French government of that day felt strong enough to act strongly, the condemned would have been treated as the Neapolitans treated Murat, and as the Mexicans treated Yturbe. He would have been perpetually imprisoned, but his prison would have been "that which the sexton makes." But the Orleans dynasty was never strong, and its head was seldom able to act boldly. To execute a Bonaparte, the undoubted heir of the Emperor, required nerve such as no French government had exhibited since that day on which Marechal Ney had been shot; and there were seven hundred thousand foreign soldiers in France when that piece of

judicial butchery was resolved upon. The army might not be ready to join a Bonaparte, but it could not be relied upon to guard the scaffold on which he should be sent

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to die. The people might not be ready to overthrow Louis Philippe, to give his place to Louis Napoleon, but it did not follow that they would have seen the latter's execution with satisfaction, because they desired peace, and he had fallen into the habit of breaking it. The enthusiasm that was created in France by the arrival in that country of the remains of Napoleon I., not three months after the coming Napoleon III. had been sent to the fortress of Ham, showed how difficult a matter it would have been to proceed capitally against the Prince. Louis Philippe has been praised for sparing him; but the praise is undeserved. Certainly, the King of the French was not a cruel man, and it was with sincere regret that he signed the death-warrants of men who had sought his own life, and who had murdered his friends; but it would have been no act of cruelty, had he sent his rival to the guillotine. When a man makes a throw for a crown, he accepts what is staked, against it,—a coffin. Nothing is better established than this, that, when a sovereign is assailed, the intention of the assailant being his overthrow, that sovereign has a perfect right to put his rival to death, if he succeed in obtaining possession of his person. The most confirmed believer in Richard III.'s demoniac character would not think of adding the execution of Richmond to his crimes, had Plantagenet, and not Tudor, triumphed on Bosworth Field. James II. has never been blamed for causing Monmouth to be put to death, but for having complied with his nephew's request for a personal interview, at which he refused to grant his further request for a mitigation of punishment. Murat's death was an unnecessary act, but Ferdinand of Naples has never been censured for it. Had Louis Philippe followed these examples, and those of a hundred similar cases, he could not have been charged with undue severity in the exercise of his power for the conservation of his own rights, and the maintenance of the tranquillity, not of France alone, but of Europe, and of the world, which the triumph of a Bonaparte might have perilled. He spared the future Emperor's life, not from any considerations of a chivalric character, but because he durst not take it. He feared that the blood of the offender would more than atone for his offence, and he would not throw into the political caldron so rich a material, dreading the effects of its presence there. Then the Orleans party and the Imperial party not only marched with each other, but often crossed and ran into each other; and it was not safe to run the risk of offending the first by an attempt to punish its occasional ally. There was, too, something of the ludicrous in the Boulogne affair, which enabled government to regard the chief offender with cheap compassion. Louis Philippe is entitled to no credit, on the score of mercy, for his conduct in 1840,—for the decision of the Court of Peers was his inspiration; but he acted wisely,—so wisely, that, if he had done as well in 1848, his grandson would at this moment have been King of the French, and the Emperor that is a wanderer, with nothing but a character for flightiness and a capacity for failure to distinguish him from the herd, while many would have regarded him as a madman. But the end was not then, and the hand of Fate was not even near that curtain which was to be raised for the disclosure of events destined to shake and to change the world.



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The defence of Louis Napoleon was conducted by M. Berryer, the great leader of the Legitimists, who, twenty-five years before, had aided in the defence of Ney, and who, nearly twenty years later, defended Montalembert, his client of 1840 being in this last case the prosecutor. In his speech in defence of the Prince, this first of French orators and advocates made use of language, the recollection of which in after-days must have been attended with very conflicting emotions. Addressing himself to the judges, he said,—“Standing where I do, I do not think that the claims of the name in which this project was attempted can possibly fall humiliated by the disdainful expressions of the *Procureur General*. You make remarks upon the weakness of the means employed, of the poverty of the whole enterprise, which made all hope of success ridiculous. Well, if success is anything, I will say to you who are men,—you, who are the first men in the state,—you, who are members of a great political body,—there is an inevitable and eternal Arbitrator between every judge and every accused who stands before him;—before giving your judgment, now, being in presence of this Arbitrator, and in face of the country, which will hear your decrees, tell me this, without regard now to weakness of means, but with the rights of the case, the laws, and the institution before your eyes, and with your hands upon your hearts, as standing before your God, and in presence of us, who know you, will you say this:—‘If he had succeeded, if his pretended right had triumphed, I would have denied him and it,—I would have refused all share in his power, —I would have denied and rejected him’? For my part, I accept the supreme arbitration I have mentioned; and whoever there may be amongst you, who, before their God, and before their country, will say to me,—‘If he had succeeded, I would have denied him,’—such a one will I accept for judge in this case.” In making this sweeping challenge, M. Berryer knew that he was hitting the Court of Peers hard, for it contained men who had been leading Napoleonists in the days of the Empire, and others who were ready to join any government which should be powerful enough to establish itself; while it left the Legitimists, the orator’s own party, unharmed. They were the only men, according to M. Berryer’s theory of defence, who would have furnished an impartial tribunal for the trial of his client; for they alone, with strict truth, could have said that they would deny his right, and refuse to share in his power, no matter at what time he should succeed in accomplishing his designs.

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Had the French Peers been gifted with that power of mental vision which enables men to see into the future, they would not have been disposed to condemn the man who stood before them in 1840. Could it have been made known to them that in eight years he would be elected President of the French Republic by nearly five and a half millions of votes,—that in twelve years he would become Emperor of the French,—that in fifteen years he would, as the ally of England, have struck down the Russian hegemony,—and that in twenty years he would be the conqueror of Austria, and have called the Kingdom of Italy into existence, while his enmity was dreaded and his friendship desired by all the nations of the earth, and the fate of the Papedom was in his hands,—had these things been so much as dreamed of by his judges, they would have formed the most lenient of tribunals, and have suffered him to depart in peace. They are not to be charged with a lack of wisdom in not foreseeing what must have appeared to be the ravings of lunacy, had it been deliberately set down by some inspired prophet. Neither the man nor his cause commanded much respect. We, who know that the French Emperor is the first man of the age, as well in intellect as in position, have no right to sneer at the men of 1840 because they looked upon him as a feeble pretender. He had made two attempts to place himself at the head of the French nation, and in each instance his failure had been so signal, and in some respects so ridiculous, that it was impossible to regard him as the representative of a living principle. Even those who thought him a man of talent could account for his want of success only by supposing that Imperialism was no longer powerful in France, and that his appeals were made to an extinct party. The soldiery, amongst whom the traditions of the Empire were supposed to be strong, had evinced no desire to substitute a Bonaparte for a Bourbon of the younger branch; and as to the peasantry, who showed themselves so fanatically Bonapartean in 1848, and in 1851-2, they were never thought of at all. France consisted of the government, the army, the *bourgeoisie*, and the skeleton colleges of electors; and so long as they were agreed, nothing was to be feared either from Prince Louis Napoleon or from the Comte de Chambord. We think this was a sound view of affairs, and that the French government of 1841 might have been the French government of 1861, had not the parties to the combination that ruled France in 1841 quarrelled. It was the loss of the support of the middle class that caused Louis Philippe to lose his throne in the most ignominious manner; and that support the monarch would not have forfeited, but for the persistence of M. Guizot in a policy which it would have been difficult to maintain under any circumstances, and which was enfeebled in 1847-8 by the gross corruption of some of its principal supporters. That the *bourgeoisie* intended to subvert the throne they had established, for the benefit of either the Republicans or the Imperialists, is not to be supposed; but their natural disgust with the wickedness of the government as it was at the beginning of 1848, and with the refusal of the minister to allow even the peaceful discussion of the reform question, was the occasion of the kingdom's fall, and of the establishment, first of the shadowy Republic, and then of the solid Empire.

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The events of 1848 furnished to Louis Napoleon the place whereon to stand, whence to move the French world. He must have lived and died an exile, but for the Revolution of February. The ability with which he profited by events suffices to show that he is entitled to be considered a great man as well as a great sovereign. That he had been born in the purple, and that he bore a great name, and that through the occurrence of several deaths he had become the legitimate heir of Napoleon, were favorable circumstances, and helped not a little to promote his purpose; but they could not alone have made him Emperor of the French, and the world's arbiter. There must have been extraordinary talent in the man who aspired as he did, or he would have failed as completely in 1848 as he had failed in 1836 and in 1840. But the real power of the man came out as soon as he found a standing-place. Previously to 1848, he could act only as a criminal in seeking his proper place, as he believed it to be. He had first to conquer before he could attempt to govern,—and to conquer, too, with the means of his enemy. All this was changed in 1848. Then he was safe in France, as he had been in England, and began the political race on equal terms with such men as Cavaignac and Ledru-Rollin. That he soon passed far ahead of them was, perhaps, as much due to circumstances as to his political abilities. The name of Bonaparte was associated with the idea of the restoration of order and prosperity, and this helped him with that large class of persons, embracing both rich men and poor men, who not only believe that “order is Heaven’s first law,” but that under certain conditions it is the supreme law, for the maintenance of which all other laws are to be set aside and disregarded. These men, whose organ and exponent was M. Cesar Romieu, who called so loudly for cannon to put down the revolutionists,—“even if it should come from Russia!”—and whose type of perfection is the churchyard, were all fanatical supporters of “the coming man,” and they assisted him along the course with all their might and strength. No matter how swiftly he drove, his chariot-wheels seemed to them to tarry. The very arguments that were made use of to induce other men to act against the rising Bonaparte were those which had the most effect in binding them to his cause. He would establish a cannonarchy, would he? Well, a cannonarchy was exactly what they desired, provided its powers should be directed, not against foreign monarchs, but against domestic Republicans. That a government of which he should be the head would disregard the constitution, would shackle the press, would limit speech, and would suppress the Assembly, was an argument in his favor, that, to their minds, was irresistible. Had they thought of the Russian War, and of the Italian War, and of the extinction of the Pope’s temporal power, and of the liberal home-policy that was adopted in 1860, as things possible to occur, Louis Napoleon

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would have remained Louis Napoleon to the end of his days, for all the support he would have received at their hands. They wished for a sort of high-constable, whose business it should be to maintain order by breaking the heads or seizing the persons of all who did not take their view of men's political duties. It is the custom to speak of this class of men as if they were peculiar to France, and to say that their existence there is one of the many reasons why that country can never long enjoy a period of constitutional liberty. This is not just to France. The French are a great people, who have their faults, but who are in no sense more servile than are Americans, or Englishmen, or Germans. Extreme disciples of order, men who are ready to sacrifice everything else for the privileges of making and spending or hoarding money in peace, are to be found in all countries; and nowhere are they more numerous, and nowhere is their influence greater or more noxious, than in the United States. The difference of populations considered, there are as many of them in Boston as in Paris; and our breed is ready to go as far in sacrificing freedom, and in treating right with contempt, as were their French brothers of 1848. The infirmity belongs, not to French nature, but to human nature.

Louis Napoleon received not a little assistance, in the early part of his French career, from the strongest of his political enemies. The friends of both branches of the Bourbons were his friends—at that time, and for their own purposes. A restoration was what they desired, and they held that it would be easier to convert the Comte de Chambord or the Comte de Paris into a king as the consequence of another Bonapartean usurpation, than as the consequence of the Republic's continuance. Louis Napoleon was to destroy the Republic, and they were to destroy him, with the aid of foreign armies. The fate which Cicero wished for Octavius, that he should be elevated and then destroyed, was what they meant for him. They counted upon the effect of that reaction which so soon set in against the revolutions of 1848, and which they did not believe would spare any government which had grown out of any one of those revolutions. They also believed the Prince to be a fool, and thought he would be a much easier person to be disposed of, after he had been sufficiently used, than any one of his rivals. They overrated their own power as much as they underrated his abilities; and down to the last moment, and when the contest had become one for life or death, they bore themselves as if they were sure that they were acting against a man who had been elevated solely through the force of circumstances, and who could not maintain his position. The *coup d'état* opened their eyes, but it was not until the event of the Russian War had secured for the Emperor the first place in Europe, that they became convinced that in the man who was the ruler of France they had a master. Even now, when the

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condition of every country within the circle of civilization bears evidence to the vast weight of Imperial France, it is not difficult to find Frenchmen who declare that the Emperor is a mere adventurer, and that he is only “a lucky fellow.” If they are right, what shall we think of all France? Does the reign of Napoleon III. serve only to illustrate the proverb, that among the blind the one-eyed man is a king?

The manner in which the French President became Emperor of the French has been much criticized. That some of his deeds, at the close of 1851, and in the early part of 1852, deserve censure, few of his intelligent admirers will be disposed to deny. His defence is, that it was impossible for him to act differently without forfeiting his life. The contest, in 1851, had assumed such a character, that it was evident that the one party or the other must be destroyed. We have M. Guizot's authority for saying that in French political contests no quarter is ever given, and that the vanquished become as the dead. French history shows that there is no exaggeration in this statement, and that every political leader in France must fight for his life as well as for his post, the loss of the latter placing the former in great peril. This is a characteristic of French politics to which sufficient attention has not been paid, in discussing the morality of French statesmen. In England, for many generations, and in the United States, down to the decision of the last Presidential election, a constitutional opposition was as much a political institution, and as completely a part of the machinery of government, as the administration itself. Formerly, opposition was not without its dangers in England, and, whichever party had possession of the government, it sought to crush out its opponents with all the vigor and venom of an American slavocrat. Charles I. sent Sir John Eliot to the Tower, by way of punishing him for the opposition he had made to unconstitutional government; and there he died, and there he was buried. The execution of Strafford, though as just a deed as ever was performed, must be allowed to have resulted from proceedings that belong to French politics rather than to those of England since the times of the Tudors. All through the reigns of the Stuart kings, and down to the Revolution, parties fought for safety as well as for spoils. A defeat was then often followed by a butchery. Hume, speaking of the political warfare that happened just before the Revolution of 1688, says that the “two parties, actuated by mutual rage, but cooped up within the narrow limits of the law, levelled with poisoned daggers the most deadly blows against each other's breast, and buried in their factious divisions all regard to truth, honor, and humanity.” This evil was gradually, but surely, removed from English politics by the triumph of the constitutional party. It lingered, however, for half a century, and after the accession of the House of Hanover caused the impeachment of Oxford

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and the exile of Bolingbroke and Ormond. The last pronounced appearance of it was in 1742, when Sir Robert Walpole's enemies, not content with his political fall, sought his life. They failed utterly, and for one hundred and twenty years the course of English politics has been strictly constitutional, an opposition party being, as it were, the complement of the administration or ministry. The same party divisions that existed in England under George II. substantially exist under the grand-daughter of his grandson. So has it been in the United States, though it would not be difficult to show that none of our parties have been so free from approaching to the verge of illegality as English parties have been since 1714; and the conduct of the present American opposition is simply detestable, and has destroyed the national constitution.

The French began their political imitation of the English in 1789. As in most imitations, caricature has largely predominated in it. The one thing that might advantageously have been imitated they have altogether neglected. They never have been able to comprehend the nature and the purpose of an opposition party, and hence every such party that has come into existence in France has been treated by the governing party as if it were composed of enemies of the State. When the Jacobins sent the Girondins to the scaffold, and when Robespierre and St. Just sent Danton and Desmoulins to the same place, and when the Thermidorians so disposed of Robespierre and St. Just, they did no more than has been done by other French political leaders, except that their measures were more trenchant than have been those of later statesmen of their country. The reason why the Revolution led to a military despotism was, that no party would tolerate its political foes, much less protect them in the exercise of the right of free discussion and legal action. The execution of Louis XVI. was but a solitary incident in the game that was played by the most excitable political gamblers that ever converted a nation into a card-table. He was slain, not so much because he was a king, or had been one, as because he was the natural chief of the Royal party, a party which the Republicans would not spare. Party after party rose and fell, the leaders perishing under the guillotine, or flying from their country, or being sent to Guiana. Despotism came as a relief to the people who were thus tormented by the bloody freaks of men who were energetic only as murderers. There probably never was a more popular government than Bonaparte's Consulship, in its first days. Soon, however, the old evil renewed itself in full force. A few men, the most conspicuous of whom was Carnot, confined their opposition to the policy of the government, and kept themselves within the limits of the law; but others were less scrupulous, and labored for the destruction of the government, and compassed the death of the governors. Jacobins were as bad as Royalists,



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and Royalists were no better than Jacobins. Confusion was as much the object of the party of order as it was that of the party of disorder. Men of all ranks, opinions, parties, and conditions were among the conspirators of those days, or in some way encouraged the conspirators, from Cadoudal, a hero of the Vendee, to Moreau, the hero of the Black Forest and Hohenlinden. The vigorous, and in some instances tyrannical, action of the government put a stop to this kind of opposition for some years. The seizure and execution of the Duc d'Enghien, though in itself not to be approved, was followed by a cessation of Royalist attempts against the person of the chief of the State. It was one of those terrible lessons by which constituted power sometimes teaches its enemies that the force of lawlessness is not necessarily confined to one side in a political controversy. Nothing contributed more to the establishment of the Empire than the violence of Bonaparte's enemies, as they favored the plan of establishing an hereditary monarchy, the existence of which should not be bound up with the existence of an individual. During the reign of Napoleon I. the opposition was quiet, but it was organized, and its conduct was from first to last illegal, as it corresponded with the banished princes, and with the foreign enemies of France. The Mallet affair, in 1812, which came so very near effecting the Emperor's dethronement when he was in the midst of his Russian disasters, shows how frail was his tenure of power when he was absent from Paris, and how extensive were the ramifications of the informal conspiracy that existed against him. "You have found the tail, but not the head," were the words in which the bold conspirator let his judges know that the danger was not over. The Legislative Body endeavored to act as an opposition party in France after the disasters of 1813, and the Emperor, after giving them a lecture, dismissed them. The Allies would never have dared to cross the French frontier, had they not been advised of the existence of disaffection, which was ready to become treason, in their enemy's country. The opposition to Louis XVIII.'s government was highly treasonable in its character; and so was that which Napoleon encountered during the Hundred Days. When the second Restoration had been effected, the French government found itself in a strange predicament. The extraordinary Chamber of Deputies which then met, "the Impracticable Chamber," was so intensely royalist in its sentiments, that it alarmed every reasonable friend of monarchy in Europe. It would have subjected the king himself to its will, in order that it might be free to punish the enemies of royalty with even more vigor and cruelty than the Jacobins had punished its friends. There was to be a revival of the Terror by the party which had suffered in 1793, and for the purpose of exterminating imperialists, republicans, and moderate monarchists. Lord Macaulay has compared this Chamber with the first

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English Parliament that was called after the restoration of the House of Stuart. The comparison is unfair to the Parliament. There had been a long and a bitter war between parties in England, and the Cavaliers remembered, because they were events of yesterday, the terrible series of defeats they had experienced, from Edgehill to Worcester. Between the date of the Battle of Worcester and the date of the Restoration there were less than nine years. The same generation that saw Charles I. beheaded saw Charles II. enter Whitehall. England had changed but little in the twenty years that elapsed between the meeting of the Long Parliament and the dissolution of the Convention Parliament. Very different was it in France. There parties had had no fighting in the field, save in Brittany and the Vendee. There the change had been as complete as if it had been half a century in the making. Twenty-three years had passed away since the fall of the monarchy, when the Impracticable Chamber met, to legislate for a new France in the spirit of the worst period of the reigns of the worst Bourbons. These ultra-royalists would have had their way, and the massacres of the Protestants would have been accompanied or followed by the destruction of all parties save the victors, but for the existence of circumstances which it is even now painful for Frenchmen to think of. The Allies occupied the country, and their influence was thrown in behalf of moderate counsels. The good-nature of Louis XVIII. was supported by the sound common-sense of Wellington, and by the humanity of Alexander; and so but few persons were punished for political offences. The conduct of the Chamber showed that the Deputies had no just conception of the nature either of a ministry or of an opposition. So it was, though with less violence, throughout the period known as the Restoration; and the Polignac movement of 1830, which led to the fall of the elder Bourbons, was a *coup d'etat*, the object being the destruction of the Charter. In Louis Philippe's reign, there were facts upon facts that establish the proposition that no French party then clearly comprehended the character of a political opposition; and it was the attempt of M. Guizot to prevent even the discussion of the reform question that was the occasion, though not the cause, of the Revolution of 1848. No sooner had the Republic been established than the Royalists began to conspire against its existence, while the Republicans themselves were far from being united, the *Reds* hating the *Blues* quite as intensely as they hated the *Whites*, or old Royalists; and beyond even the *Reds* were large numbers of men who, for the lack of a more definite name, have been called Socialists, who wanted something as vehemently as Brutus desired his purposes, but who would probably have been much puzzled to say what that something was, had the question been put to them by the agent of a power willing and able to gratify their wish.



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It was into such a political chaos as this that Louis Napoleon found himself plunged in 1848. He had a difficult part to fill; and that he did not succeed in satisfying most of those who had been most prominent in elevating him was inevitable from the discrepancy between his views of his position and their views of it. They had intended him to be a tool, and he was determined to be master of all the land. There was a contest for power, which ended in the *coup d'etat* of 1851. Victory waited on the heir of her old favorite. The contest was marked by many deeds, on both sides, not defensible on strict moral grounds, but which bear too close a resemblance to the ordinary course of French politics to admit of the actors being sweepingly condemned, as if they had poisoned a pure fountain. Neither party could afford to act with fairness, because each party was convinced that the other was seeking its destruction, according to the usual rule of Gallic political warfare. That the world should have heard much of the errors of the victor, while those of the vanquished have been charitably passed over, is but natural. Victors become objects of envy, while pity is the feeling that is created by thoughts of their foes. It is only in America that the beaten party is so insolent that the conquerors are fairly over-crowded by it. All the blunders, all the acts of violence of which the other side were guilty, have been forgotten, or are not alluded to, because parties are not held accountable for evils that never were perpetrated, though it was intended that they should take form and shape and bear fruit. It is charged against the Emperor, that he deliberately planned the destruction of the Republic, and that he ceased not to labor until his purpose had been effected. Admitting this charge to be strictly well founded, what is it more than can be brought against the very men who are so loud in preferring it? The Republic was doomed from the hour of its birth, and the final struggle between the Imperialists and the Royalists was made over its carcass. That struggle was neither a Pharsalia, in which two great men contended for supremacy in a republic, nor a Philippi, in which parties fought deliberately in support of certain principles, but an Actium; and the question to be decided was, With which of two energetic forms of force should the victory be? Louis Napoleon contended for the imperial form, for the rehabilitation of the scheme of his uncle, and for an opportunity to develop the Napoleonic ideas. The other side sought the restoration of the monarchy as it had been between 1814 and 1830, with Henry V. for their idol, as any attempt to make the Comte de Paris king must have failed, though in due time Henry V. might have been displaced, if not succeeded regularly, by the head of the Orleans family. Of the two parties to the struggle that followed the election of Louis Napoleon to the Presidency, that of the President was the more friendly to liberal

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institutions, and the most disposed to govern in accordance with modern sentiments. The President himself was attached to the liberal party, and leaned decidedly to the left wing of it. Circumstances had all tended to make him a Constitutionalist. His connections had been principally with those countries in which liberty is best understood, and whose histories are the histories of freedom. By birth he was a prince of Holland. He had lived much in Switzerland and in England, and he had visited the United States. That part of his youth in which the mind is formed he had passed in those years in which the Bonapartists and Liberals had been allies. His writings prove that he both understood and appreciated the constitutional system of government. Such a man was not likely to become a despot merely from choice, though circumstances might make him one for the time, as they made Fabius a dictator. His recent action, in extensively liberalizing the imperial system, and in providing for perfect freedom of discussion in the Senate and the Legislative Body,—a freedom of which the supporters of the Pope have thoroughly availed themselves,—confirms the belief that his original intention was to provide a free constitution for France. Had he done so, there would have been civil war in that country within a year from the time that he became master of it. He could not trust his enemies, who, could they have obtained power, would have granted him no mercy, and therefore had no right to expect it from him. Had they been successful, we should have heard much of their acts of usurpation and cruelty, and of the injustice with which the President and his party and policy had been treated. Severe criticism, often unfair both in matter and in manner, is that which every victorious party must experience, not only from those whom it has defeated, but from the world at large. This is one of the items in the details of the heavy price which the victors must pay for their victory, no matter where it is won, or what the character of the contest the issue of which it has decided. Men worship success, but they worship it much after the fashion that some savage tribes worship the gods created by their own hands, tearing and rending at one time the images that at another had been objects of their most abject devotion.

If we judge the conduct of Louis Napoleon by reference only to Napoleon III., we shall not be inclined to condemn it. His rule has not been a perfect one, but it has been the best that France has known for fifty years, not only for the French themselves, but for foreign peoples. He has lifted France out of that slough in which she had floundered under both branches of the Bourbons, and he has done so without being guilty of any act of injustice toward other nations. The greatness of the France of Napoleon I. was unpleasingly associated with the idea of the degradation of neighboring countries, which implied the ultimate fall of the Empire, as it could not be

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expected that Russians and Germans would be governed from Paris. Independence is what every people strong enough to vindicate its rights will have; and hence the men at St. Petersburg and Vienna and Berlin were certain to act against the men of Paris at the first favorable opportunity that should present itself. Their dependent state was an unnatural state, and when the reaction came, the torrent swept all before it. The fall of Napoleon I. was the consequence of the manner in which he rose to the greatest height ever achieved by a man in modern days. Napoleon III., whose power is really greater than that of his uncle, has incurred the enmity of no foreign people. He has led his armies into no European capital city, and he has levied no foreign contributions. When it was in his power to dictate terms to Russia, he astonished men, and even made them angry, by the extent of his moderation. His abrupt pause in his career of Italian success, no matter what the motive of it, enabled Austria to retire from a war in which she had found nothing but defeat, with the air of a victor. The only additions he has made to the territory of France—Savoy, Nice, and Monaco—were obtained by the fair consent of all those who had any right to be consulted on the changes that were made. We find nothing in his conduct that betrays any desire to humiliate his contemporaries, and a superiority to vulgar ideas of what constitutes triumph that is almost without a parallel. No man was ever treated more insolently by hereditary sovereigns, from Czar and Kaiser and King to petty German princelings; and this insolence he has never repaid in kind, nor sought to repay in any manner. He has foregone occasions for vengeance that legitimate monarchs would have turned to the fullest account for the gratification of their hatred. He has, apparently, none of that vanity which led Napoleon I. to be pleased with having his antechamber full of kings whose hearts were brimful of hatred of their lord and master. If he were to have an Erfurt Congress, it would be as plain and unostentatious an affair as that of his uncle was superficially grand and striking. He seems perpetually to have before his mind's eye what the Greeks called *the envy of the gods*, the divine Nemesis, to which he daily makes sacrifice. He is the most prosperous of men, but he is determined not to be prosperity's spoiled child. If the truth were known, it would probably be found that he has not a single personal enemy among the monarchs, all of whom would, as politicians, be glad to witness his fall. In their secret hearts they say that "Monsieur Bonaparte is a well-behaved man, to whom they could wish well in any other part than that which he prefers to hold." Their predecessors hated Napoleon I. personally, and with intense bitterness, which accounts for the readiness with which they took parts in the hunting of the eagle, and for the rancor with which they treated him when his turn came to drain the cup of humiliation to the very dregs. The dislike felt for Napoleon III. is simply political, and such dislike is not incompatible with liberality in judgment and generosity of action. Should it be his fortune to fall, there would be no St. Helena provided for him.

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The domestic rule of the Emperor of the French will bear comparison with that of any monarch which that people have ever had. It is not faultless, but it is as little open to criticism of a just nature as that of any European sovereign, and with reference to the changed position of sovereigns. We are not to compare Napoleon III. with Louis XIV., that sublime and ridiculous egotist, who seems never to have had a human feeling, except those feelings which humanity would be the better without. The French Revolution banished that breed of kings from Christendom, if not from the world. He must be compared with monarchs who have felt the responsibilities of their trust very differently from the man who called himself the State, who thought that twenty millions of people had been made to minister to his vanity, and who gently reproached God with ingratitude because of the victories of Eugene and Marlborough. "God, it appears, is forgetting us," he said, "notwithstanding all that we have done for Him." A monarch of this class is now as extinct as the mammoth, and traces of his footsteps excite the wonder of the disciples of political science. In these days, a monarch must rule mostly for the people, and largely by the people. He is only the popular chief in a country which has not a well-defined constitution over which time has thrown the mantle of reverence. The course of Napoleon III. has been in accordance with this view of his position. He is not the State, but he is the first man in the State. Under his lead and direction the French have known much material prosperity, and have added not a little to that wealth which, when judiciously used as a means, and not worshipped as the end of human exertion, is the source of so much happiness. The readiness with which the people, the masses of his subjects, subscribed to the great war-loans, contending for subscriptions as for valuable privileges, establishes both their prosperity under his government, and their confidence in that government's strength and permanence. That he has not made use of his power to stifle the expression of thought is clear from the numerous works that have been published, some of which were written for the purpose of attacking his dynasty,—authors of eminence choosing to pervert history by converting its volumes into huge partisan pamphlets, in which the subject handled and the object aimed at are alike libelled. He has kept the press, meaning the journals, more sharply reined up than Englishmen and Americans have approved or can approve; but as French journalists, instead of confining their political warfare to its proper use, are in the habit, when free to publish what they please, of assailing the very existence of the government itself, he has some excuse for his conduct. An English journal which should recommend the dethronement of Victoria would be as summarily silenced as ever was a French White, Blue, or Red paper. The most determined advocate of freedom of discussion must

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find it hard to disapprove of the suppression of the “Univers,” which, while availing itself of every possible license to advocate the extremest doctrines of despotism in Church and State, demanded the suppression of freedom of all kinds in every other quarter. It is an advantage to the enemies of free speech, that they can avail themselves of its existence to advocate restriction in its comprehensive sense, while their opponents cannot consistently demand that they shall be silenced. Under the liberal policy which has just been inaugurated in France, great advantages will be enjoyed by the enemies of the government, and of free principles generally; and the Emperor is reported to have said that he shall accept the logical consequences of that policy, let the result be what it may. What has thus far happened confirms this report; but it ought not to surprise us, if he should find himself compelled to have resort to measures of restriction not much different from those “warnings” that have been fatal to more than one journal in times past. The tendency in the French mind to illegal opposition, and of the French government to meet such opposition by harsh action, will not allow us to be very sanguine as to the workings of the experiment upon which the Emperor has entered. His chief object is to establish his dynasty, and he cannot tolerate attacks upon that; and attacks of that kind would form the staple of the opposition press, were it permitted to become as free as the press is in England and in the Northern States of America.

One of the charges that have been made against the Imperial system is, that it is a stratocracy, a mere government by the sword, and that it must pass away with the Emperor himself, or be continued in the person of some military man; so that France must degenerate into a vast Algiers, and be ruled by a succession of Deys. There is something plausible in this view of the subject, which has imposed upon many persons, and which is all the more imposing because the Emperor is fifty-three years old, while his only son has but completed his fifth year; and Prince Napoleon is not popular with the army, and is an object of both fear and dislike to the members of several powerful interests. The Imperialists have themselves principally to blame for this state of things, as they have encouraged and promulgated opinions that favor its existence. Clever historical writers have discovered a remarkable resemblance between the France of to-day and the Roman Empire of the days of Augustus. Napoleon I. was the modern Julius Caesar, and Napoleon III. is Octavius. The Emperor is writing a Life of Julius Caesar, and it is believed that it is his purpose to establish the fact that his family is playing the part which the family of Caesar played more than eighteen centuries ago. If one were disposed to be critical, it would not be difficult to point out, that, as the first Roman imperial dynasty became Claudian rather than Julian in its blood and character, after the death

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of Augustus, so has the French imperial dynasty a better claim to be considered of the family of Beauharnais than of the family of Bonaparte. This Caesarian game is a foolish one, and may be played to an ultimate loss. Of the difference between France as she is and Rome as she was in the times of the first Caesars it is not necessary to say much, for it presents itself to every cultivated mind. The Roman Empire was an aggregation of various nations, including the highest and lowest forms of human development then known, and stretching from the Atlantic to the Euphrates, and from the forests of Germany to the deserts of Africa. Over that vast and various collection of peoples a portion of Italy bore sway; and it was to break down the tyranny of that Italian rule that the Julian rule was created, and that the Republic was made to give way to the Empire.

The cause of the Caesars was the cause of the provincials against the Italians, of the masses in twenty lands against the aristocracy of but a part of one land, of many millions of sheep against a few select wolves. The revolution that was effected through the agency of Julius and Octavius was necessary for the continuance of civilization, which was threatened with extinction through the plundering processes of proprietors and proconsuls. The Roman Emperor was the shepherd, who, though he might shear his sheep close to their skins, and not unfrequently convert many of them into mutton, for his own profit or pleasure, would nevertheless protect them against the wolves. He stood between the imperial race, of which he was himself the first member, and all the other races that were to be found in his extensive and diversified dominions. The question that he settled was one of races, not merely one of parties and political principles. What resemblance, then, can there be between the French Emperor and the Roman Imperator, or between the quarrel decided by the Napoleons and that which was decided by the first two Caesars? There may be said to be some resemblance between them, from the fact that the French aristocracy, as a body, belong to the party that is hostile to the Bonapartes, and that it was the Roman aristocracy who were beaten at Pharsalia and politically destroyed at Philippi; but the nobility of France were ruined before the name of Bonaparte had been raised from obscurity, and the first Napoleon sought to please and to conciliate the remnants of that once brilliant order. There can be no comparison made between the two aristocracies; as the Roman was one of the ablest and most ferocious bodies of men that the world has ever seen, and made a long and desperate fight for the maintenance of its power,—while the French is effete, and it is difficult to believe that in the veins of its members runs the blood of the heroes of the days of the League, or even that of the *Frondeurs*. Their political action reminds us of nothing but the playing of children; and the best of the leaders of the opposition to the



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Imperial *regime* are new men, most of whose names were never heard of until the present century. The Imperial family, too, unlike that of Rome, is a new family. The democratic revolution of Rome, which led to the fall of the Republic, was enabled to triumph only because the movement was headed by one of the noblest-born of Romans, a patrician of the bluest blood, who claimed descent from Venus, and from the last of the Trojan heroes. No Roman had a loftier lineage than “the mighty Julius”; and when the place of Augustus passed to Tiberius, the third Emperor represented the Claudian *gens*, the most arrogant, overbearing, haughty, and cruel of all those patrician *gentes* that figure in the history of the republican times. He belonged, too, to the family of Nero, which was to the rest of the Claudian *gens* what that *gens* was to other men,—the representative of all that is peculiarly detestable in an oligarchical fraternity. The French Caesars are emphatically *novi homines*, the founder of their greatness not being in existence a century ago, and born of a poor family, which had never made any impression on history. There are abundant points of contrast to be found, when we examine the origin of Imperial Rome in connection with the origin of Imperial France, but few of resemblance.

Even in the bad elements of the modern Imperial rule there is little imitation of that of the Caesars. “The ordinary notion of absolute government, derived from the form it assumes in Europe at the present day,” says Merivale, “is that of a strict system of prevention, which, by means of a powerful army, an ubiquitous police, and a censorship of letters, anticipates every manifestation of freedom in thought or action, from whence inconvenience may arise to it. But this was not the system of the Caesarean Empire. Faithful to the traditions of the Free State, Augustus had quartered all his armies on the frontiers, and his successors were content with concentrating, cohort by cohort, a small, though trusty force, for their own protection in the capital. The legions were useful to the Emperor, not as instruments for the repression of discontent at home, but as faithful auxiliaries among whom the most dangerous of his nobles might be relegated, in posts which were really no more than honorable exiles. Nor was the regular police of the city an engine of tyranny. Volunteers might be found in every rank to perform the duty of spies; but it was apparently no part of the functions of the enlisted guardians of the streets to watch the countenances of the citizens, or beset their privacy. We hear of no intrusion into private assemblies, no dispersion of crowds in the streets..... They [the Emperors] made no effort to impose restraints upon thought. Freedom of thought may be checked in two ways, and modern despotism resorts in its restless jealousy to both. The one is, to guide ideas by seizing on the channels of education; the other,

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to subject their utterance to the control of a censorship. In neither one way nor the other did Augustus or Nero interfere at all. From the days of the Republic the system of education had been perfectly untrammelled. It was simply a matter of arrangement between the parties directly interested, the teacher and the learner. Neither State nor Church pretended to take any concern in it: neither priest nor magistrate regarded it with the slightest jealousy. Public opinion ranged, under ordinary circumstances, in perfect freedom, and under its unchecked influence both the aims and methods of education continued long to be admirably adapted to make intelligent men and useful citizens..... The same indulgence which was extended to education smiled upon the literature which flowed so copiously from it. There was no restriction upon writing or publication at Rome analogous to our censorships and licensing acts. The fact that books were copied by the hand, and not printed for general circulation, seems to present no real difficulty to the enforcement of such restrictions, had it been the wish of the government to enforce them. The noble Roman, indeed, surrounded by freedmen and clients of various ability, by rhetoricians and sophists, poets and declaimers, had within his own doors private aid for executing his literary projects; and when his work was compiled, he had in the slaves of his household the hands for multiplying copies, for dressing and binding them, and sending forth an edition, as we should say, of his work to the select public of his own class or society. The circulation of compositions thus manipulated might be to some extent surreptitious and secret. But such a mode of proceeding was necessarily confined to few. The ordinary writer must have had recourse to a professional publisher, who undertook, as a tradesman, to present his work for profit to the world. Upon these agents the government might have had all the hold it required: yet it never demanded the sight beforehand of any speech, essay, or satire which was advertised as about to appear. It was still content to punish after publication what it deemed to be censurable excesses. Severe and arbitrary as some of its proceedings were in this respect,... it must be allowed that these prosecutions of written works were rare and exceptional, and that the traces we discover of the freedom of letters, even under the worst of the Emperors, leave on the whole a strong impression of the general leniency of their policy in this particular."[A] This correct picture of the policy of Imperial Rome on this point shows that the ancient sovereigns of the first of empires were more liberal than are modern rulers of their class, and that the Caesars scorned to do that which has been common with the Bonapartes. The changes in the direction of freedom which Napoleon III. has recently made are really more Caesarean in their character than anything that he had previously done in connection with thought and public discussion. It ought to be added, however, that the Romans had no daily press, and that journalism, as we understand it, was as unknown to the Caesars as were steamships and rifled cannon. Had they been troubled with those daily showers of Sibylline leaves that so vex modern potentates, their magnanimity would have been severely tested, and they might have established as severe censorships as ever have been known in Paris or Vienna.



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[Footnote A: *A History of the Romans under the Empire*. By CHARLES MERIVALE, B.D., late Fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge. Vol. VI., pp. 224-231.]

Flattery has discovered a resemblance between the career of Napoleon III. and the career of Augustus, and it required the eyes of flattery to make such a discovery. The Frenchman is the equal of the Roman in talent, but the resemblance goes no farther. What resemblance can there be between the boy who became a statesman at twenty and the man who began his career at forty? between the youth who made himself master of the Roman situation in a few months and the elderly man whose position at fifty-three is by no means an assured one? between the man who at thirty-three had destroyed all rivals and competitors, and gathered into his person all the powers of the State, and the man who at a much later period of life is still engaged upon an experiment in politics? Augustus avenged the murder of Julius within a brief time after it had been perpetrated; Napoleon III. has never avenged the fall of *his* uncle, but has refrained from injuring his uncle's destroyers, when, apparently, he might have done so with profit to himself, and with the general approbation of the world. Augustus's public life knew but one signal calamity, the loss of the legions of Varus, which happened toward its close, and in his dying moments he could congratulate himself on having played well, which meant successfully, his part in the drama of life. Napoleon III.'s life has been full of calamities, and it remains yet to be seen whether history shall have to rank him among its favorites, or high in the list of those unfortunates against whom it has recorded sentence of everlasting condemnation. Should he live, and maintain his place, and bequeath his throne to his son, and that son be of an age to appreciate his position, and possessed of fair talent, he may pass for the modern Augustus; but thinking of him, and of the strange reverses of fortune that have happened since 1789 to men and to nations, we subscribe to the wisdom of the hackneyed Greek sentiment, that no man should be called fortunate until the seal of death shall have placed an everlasting and an impassable barrier between him and the cruel sports of Mutabilities which are played "to many men's decay."

In one respect it will be allowed by all but absolutists that the condition of Europe has changed greatly for the better in the last eleven years, as a consequence of the triumphs of the French Emperor. From the year 1815 to 1850, national independence was in its true sense unknown to Continental Europe. The ascendancy of Napoleon I. had small claim to faultlessness, but the men who led in the work of his overthrow proceeded as if they meant to make the world regret his fall. This is the secret—which secret is none—of the reaction that speedily took place in his favor, and which caused an alliance of Liberals and Jacobins

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and Imperialists to do honor to his memory; so that, being dead, he was from his island-sepulchre a more effective foe to legitimacy and the established order of things than he had been from St. Cloud and the Tuileries. It has been satirically said that a mythical Napoleon rose from the dust of the dead Emperor, who bore no moral resemblance to Europe's master of 1812. As to the resemblance between the master of a hundred legions and "the dead but sceptred sovereign" of 1824, who ruled men's spirits from his urn, we will not stop to inquire; but it can be positively asserted that the mythical Napoleon, if any such creation there was, was the work of the true Napoleon's destroyers. They earned the hatred and detestation of the greater part of the better classes in the civilized world; and as it is the nature of men to love those who have warred against the objects of their hate, nothing was more natural than for Europeans and Americans to turn fondly to the memory of one who had beaten and trampled upon every member of the Holy Alliance, and who had carried the tricolor, that emblem of revolution, to Vienna and Berlin and Moscow. Men wished to have their own feet upon the necks of Francis and Frederick William and Alexander, and therefore they were ready to forget the faults, and to remember only the virtues, of one who had enjoyed the luxury they so much coveted. It would be unreasonable to complain of that disposition of the public mind toward Napoleon I. which prevailed from about the date of his death to that of the restoration of his dynasty in the person of his nephew, or to sneer at the inconsistency of "that many-headed monster thing," the people, who had shouted over the decisions of Vittoria and Leipsic, and before a decade had expired were regretting that those decisions could not be reversed; for the change was the consequence of the operations of an immutable law, of that reaction which dogs the heels of all conquerors. The legitimate despots, whose union had been too much for the parvenu despot, established a tyranny over Europe that threatened to stunt the human mind, and which would have left the world hopeless, if England had not resolved to part company with her military allies. But her condemnation of their policy did not prevent its development. Even the events of 1830 did not restore national freedom to the Continent; and fifteen years after the overthrow of the elder Bourbons, the partitioners of Poland could unite, in defiance of their plighted faith, to destroy the independence of Cracow, the last shadowy remnant of old and glorious Poland. The ascendancy of Napoleon III. has put a stop to such proceedings as were common from the invasion of France, in 1815, to the invasion of Hungary, in 1849. He has, to be sure, interfered in the affairs of foreign countries, but his acts of interference have been made against the strong, and not against the weak. He interfered to protect Turkey when she was threatened with destruction

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by Russia, and he did so with success. He interfered to protect the Italians against the hordes of Austria, and with such effect that the *Kingdom of Italy* has been called into existence through his action, when there was not another sovereign in the world who would have fired a shot to prevent the whole Italian Peninsula, and the great islands of Sicily and Sardinia, from becoming Austrian provinces. He interfered to protect the Christians of the East against the fire and sword of the Mussulmans, and it is under the shadow of the French flag alone that Christianity can be preached in the Lebanon and in the Hollow Syria, in the aged Damascus and in the historical Sidon. He has interfered to assist England in China, whereby there has been a new world, as it were, opened to the enterprise of commerce. He has falsified the predictions of those who have seen in him only the enemy of England, and who have told us twice a year, for nine years past, that he would attempt to throw his legions into Kent, and to march them upon London. He has added nothing to the territory of France that has not been honorably acquired. Having thus redeemed Europe from degradation, and not having justified the fears of those who expected him to renew the old duel between France and England, his continued prosperity may be earnestly desired by Liberals everywhere, and with perfect consistency; for can any intelligent man venture to say that there would be any hope for a better state of things, either for France or for Europe at large, should his rule be changed for that of either branch of the Bourbons, or for that of the Republicans, Red or Blue? Considering the good that he has done, and the evil that he might have done, and yet has refrained from doing, he will compare advantageously with any living ruler; and mankind can overlook his errors in view of his virtues,—save and except those men whom he vanquished at their own weapons, and whose chief regret it is, that, being no better political moralists than was the Prince-President, their immorality was fruitless, while his, according to their interpretation of his history, gave him empire. Other men, whom his success has not consigned to partisan darkness, will judge him more justly, and say that his victory was the proper meed of superior ability, and that whatever was vicious in his manner of acquiring power has been redeemed by the use he has almost invariably made of that power. He is not without sin; but if he shall not die until he shall be stoned by saints selected from governments and parties, his existence will be prolonged until doomsday.

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## CONCERNING THINGS SLOWLY LEARNT.

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You will see in a little while what sort of things they are which I understand by *Things Slowly Learnt*. Some are facts, some are moral truths, some are practical lessons; but the great characteristic of all those which are to be thought of in this essay is, that we have to learn them and act upon them in the face of a strong bias to think or act in an opposite way. It is not that they are so difficult in themselves, not that they are hard to be understood, or that they are supported by arguments whose force is not apparent to every mind. On the contrary, the things which I have especially in view are very simple, and for the most part quite unquestionable. But the difficulty of learning them lies in this: that, as regards them, the head seems to say one thing and the heart another. We see plainly enough what we ought to think or to do; but we feel an irresistible inclination to think or to do something else. It is about three or four of these things that we are going, my friend, to have a little quiet talk. We are going to confine our view to a single class, though possibly the most important class, in the innumerable multitude of Things Slowly Learnt.

The truth is, a great many things are slowly learnt. I have lately had occasion to observe that the Alphabet is one of these. I remember, too, in my own sorrowful experience, how the Multiplication Table was another. A good many years since, an eminent dancing-master undertook to teach a number of my schoolboy companions a graceful and easy deportment; but comparatively few of us can be said as yet to have thoroughly attained it. I know men who have been practising the art of extempore speaking for many years, but who have reached no perfection in it, and who, if one may judge from their confusion and hesitation when they attempt to speak, are not likely ever to reach even decent mediocrity in that wonderful accomplishment. Analogous statements might be made, with truth, with regard to my friend Mr. Snarling's endeavors to produce magazine articles; likewise concerning his attempts to skate, and his efforts to ride on horseback unlike a tailor. Some folk learn with remarkable slowness that Nature never intended them for wits. There have been men who have punned, ever more and more wretchedly, to the end of a long and highly respectable life. People submitted in silence to the infliction; no one liked to inform those reputable individuals that they had better cease to make fools of themselves. This, however, is part of a larger subject, which shall be treated hereafter.

On the other hand, there are things which are very quickly learnt,—which are learnt by a single lesson. One liberal tip, or even a few kind words heartily said, to a manly little schoolboy, will establish in his mind the rooted principle that the speaker of the words or the bestower of the tip is a jolly and noble specimen of humankind. Boys are great physiognomists: they read a man's nature at a glance. Well

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I remember how, when going to and from school, a long journey of four hundred miles, in days when such a journey implied travel by sea as well as by land, I used to know instantly the gentlemen or the railway officials to whom I might apply for advice or information. I think that this intuitive perception of character is blunted in after years. A man is often mistaken in his first impression of man or woman; a boy hardly ever. And a boy not only knows at once whether a human being is amiable or the reverse, he knows also whether the human being is wise or foolish. In particular, he knows at once whether the human being always means what he says, or says a great deal more than he means. Inferior animals learn some lessons quickly. A dog once thrashed for some offence knows quite well not to repeat it. A horse turns for the first time down the avenue to a house where he is well fed and cared for; next week, or next month, you pass that gate, and though the horse has been long taught to submit his will to yours, you can easily see that he knows the place again, and that he would like to go back to the stable with which, in his poor, dull, narrow mind, there are pleasant associations. I would give a good deal to know what a horse is thinking about. There is something very curious and very touching about the limited intelligence and the imperfect knowledge of that immaterial principle in which the immaterial does not imply the immortal. And yet, if we are to rest the doctrine of a future life in any degree upon the necessity of compensation for the sufferings and injustice of the present, I think the sight of the cab-horses of any large town might plead for the admission of some quiet world of green grass and shady trees, where there should be no cold, starvation, over-work, or flogging. Some one has said that the most exquisite material scenery would look very cold and dead in the entire absence of irrational life. Trees suggest singing-birds; flowers and sunshine make us think of the drowsy bees. And it is curious to think how the future worlds of various creeds are described as not without their lowly population of animals inferior to man. We know what the "poor Indian" expects shall bear him company in his humble heaven; and possibly various readers may know some dogs who in certain important respects are very superior to certain men. You remember how, when a war-chief of the Western prairies was laid by his tribe in his grave, his horse was led to the spot in the funeral procession, and at the instant when the earth was cast upon the dead warrior's dust, an arrow reached the noble creature's heart, that in the land of souls the man should find his old friend again. And though it has something of the grotesque, I think it has more of the pathetic, the aged huntsman of Mr. Assheton Smith desiring to be buried by his master, with two horses and a few couples of dogs, that they might all be ready to start together when they met again far away.

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This is a deviation; but that is of no consequence. It is of the essence of the present writer's essays to deviate from the track. Only we must not forget the thread of the discourse; and after our deviation we must go back to it. All this came of our remarking that some things are very quickly learnt; and that certain inferior classes of our fellow-creatures learn them quickly. But deeper and larger lessons are early learnt.

Thoughtful children, a very few years old, have their own theory of human nature. Before studying the metaphysicians, and indeed while still imperfectly acquainted with their letters, young children have glimpses of the inherent selfishness of humanity. I was recently present when a small boy of three years old, together with his sister, aged five, was brought down to the dining-room at the period of dessert. The small boy climbed upon his mother's knee, and began by various indications to display his affection for her. A stranger remarked what an affectionate child he was. "Oh," said the little girl, "he suspects (by which she meant *expects*) that he is going to get something to eat!" Not Hobbes himself had reached a clearer perception or a firmer belief of the selfish system in moral philosophy. "He is always very affectionate," the youthful philosopher proceeded, "when he suspects he is going to get something good to eat!"

By *Things Slowly Learnt* I mean not merely things which are in their nature such that it takes a long time to learn them,—such as the Greek language, or the law of vendors and purchasers. These things indeed take long time and much trouble to learn; but once you have learnt them, you know them. Once you have come to understand the force of the second aorist, you do not find your heart whispering to you, as you are lying awake at night, that what the grammar says about the second aorist is all nonsense; you do not feel an inveterate disposition, gaining force day by day, to think concerning the second aorist just the opposite of what the grammar says. By *Things Slowly Learnt*, I understand things which it is very hard to learn at the first, because, strong as the reasons which support them are, you find it so hard to make up your mind to them. I understand things which you can quite easily (when it is fairly put to you) see to be true, but which it seems as if it would change the very world you live in to accept. I understand things you discern to be true, but which you have all your life been accustomed to think false, and which you are extremely anxious to think false. And by *Things Slowly Learnt* I understand things which are not merely very hard to learn at the first, but which it is not enough to learn for once ever so well. I understand things which, when you have made the bitter effort and admitted to be true and certain, you put into your mind to keep (so to speak); and hardly a day has passed, when a soft, quiet hand seems to begin to crumble them down and to wear them



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away to nothing. You write the principle which was so hard to receive upon the tablet of your memory; and day by day a gentle hand comes over it with a bit of india-rubber, till the inscription loses its clear sharpness, grows blurred and indistinct, and finally quite disappears. Nor is the gentle hand content even then; but it begins, very faintly at first, to trace letters which bear a very different meaning. Then it deepens and darkens them day by day, week by week, till at a month's or a year's end the tablet of memory bears, in great, sharp, legible letters, just the opposite thing to that which you had originally written down there. These are my *Things Slowly Learnt*: things you learn at first in the face of a strong bias against them; things, when once taught, you gradually forget, till you come back again to your old way of thinking. Such things, of course, lie within the realm to which extends the influence of feeling and prejudice. They are things in the accepting of which both head and heart are concerned. Once convince a man that two and two make four, and he learns the truth without excitement, and he never doubts it again. But prove to a man that he is of much less importance than he has been accustomed to think,—or prove to a woman that her children are very much like those of other folk,—or prove to the inhabitant of a country parish that Britain has hundreds of parishes which in soil and climate and production are just as good as his own,—or prove to the great man of a little country town that there are scores of towns in this world where the walks are as pleasant, the streets as well paved, and the population as healthy and as well conducted; and in each such case you will find it very hard to convince the individual at the time, and you will find that in a very short space the individual has succeeded in entirely escaping from the disagreeable conviction. You may possibly find, if you endeavor to instil such belief into minds of but moderate cultivation, that your arguments will be met less by force of reason than by roaring of voice and excitement of manner; you may find that the person you address will endeavor to change the issue you are arguing, to other issues, wholly irrelevant, touching your own antecedents, character, or even personal appearance; and you may afterwards be informed by good-natured friends, that the upshot of your discussion had been to leave on the mind of your acquaintance the firm conviction that you yourself are intellectually a blockhead and morally a villain. And even when dealing with human beings who have reached that crowning result of a fine training, that they shall have got beyond thinking a man their “enemy because he tells them the truth,” you may find that you have rendered a service like that rendered by the surgeon's amputating knife,—salutary, yet very painful,—and leaving forever a sad association with your thought and your name. For among the things we slowly learn are truths and lessons which it goes terribly against the grain to learn at first, which must be driven into us time after time, and which perhaps are never learnt completely.

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One thing very slowly learnt by most human beings is, that they are of no earthly consequence beyond a very small circle indeed, and that really nobody is thinking or talking about them. Almost every commonplace man and woman in this world has a vague, but deeply-rooted belief that they are quite different from anybody else, and of course quite superior to everybody else. It may be in only one respect they fancy they are this, but that one respect is quite sufficient. I believe, that, if a grocer or silk-mercantile in a little town has a hundred customers, each separate customer lives on under the impression that the grocer or the silk-mercantile is prepared to give to him or her certain advantages in buying and selling which will not be accorded to the other ninety-nine customers. "Say it is for Mrs. Brown," is Mrs. Brown's direction to her servant, when sending for some sugar; "say it is for Mrs. Brown, and he will give it a little better." The grocer, keenly alive to the weaknesses of his fellow-creatures, encourages this notion. "This tea," he says, "would be four-and-sixpence a pound *to any one else*, but *to you* it is only four-and-threepence." Judging from my own observation, I should say that retail dealers trade a good deal upon this singular fact in the constitution of the human mind, that it is inexpressibly bitter to most people to believe that they stand on the ordinary level of humanity,—that, in the main, they are just like their neighbors. Mrs. Brown would be filled with unutterable wrath, if it were represented to her that the grocer treats her precisely as he does Mrs. Smith, who lives on one side of her, and Mrs. Snooks, who lives on the other. She would be still more angry, if you asked her what earthly reason there is why she should in any way be distinguished beyond Mrs. Snooks and Mrs. Smith. She takes for granted she is quite different from them, quite superior to them. Human beings do not like to be classed,—at least, with the class to which in fact they belong. To be classed at all is painful to an average mortal, who firmly believes that there never was such a being in this world. I remember one of the cleverest friends I have—one who assuredly cannot be classed intellectually, except in a very small and elevated class—telling me how mortified he was, when a very clever boy of sixteen, at being classed at all. He had told a literary lady that he admired Tennyson. "Yes," said the lady, "I am not surprised at that: there is a class of young men who like Tennyson at your age." It went like a dart to my friend's heart. *Class of young men*, indeed! Was it for *this* that I outstripped all competitors at school, that I have been fancying myself a unique phenomenon in Nature, *different* at least from every other being that lives, that I should be spoken of as one of a *class of young men*? Now in my friend's half-playful reminiscence I see the exemplification of a great fact in human nature.



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Most human beings fancy themselves, and all their belongings, to be quite different from all other beings and the belongings of all other beings. I heard an old lady, whose son is a rifleman, and just like all the other volunteers of his corps, lately declare, that, on the occasion of a certain grand review, her Tom looked so entirely different from all the rest. No doubt he did to her, poor old lady,—for he was her own. But the irritating thing was, that the old lady wished it to be admitted that Tom's superiority was an actual fact, equally patent to the eyes of all mankind. Yes, my friend: it is a thing very slowly learnt by most men, that they are very much like other people. You see the principle which underlies what you hear so often said by human beings, young and old, when urging you to do something which it is against your general rule to do. "Oh, but you might do it *for me!*" Why for you more than for any one else? would be the answer of severe logic. But a kindly man would not take that ground: for doubtless the *Me*, however little to every one else, is to each unit in humankind the centre of all the world.

Arising out of this mistaken notion of their own difference from all other men is the fancy entertained by many, that they occupy a much greater space in the thoughts of others than they really do. Most folk think mainly about themselves and their own affairs. Even a matter which "everybody is talking about" is really talked about by each for a very small portion of the twenty-four hours. And a name which is "in everybody's mouth" is not in each separate mouth for more than a few minutes at a time. And during those few minutes, it is talked of with an interest very faint, when compared with that you feel for yourself. You fancy it a terrible thing, when you yourself have to do something which you would think nothing about, if done by anybody else. A lady grows sick, and has to go out of church during the sermon. Well, you remark it; possibly, indeed, you don't; and you say, "Mrs. Thomson went out of church to-day; she must be ill"; and there the matter ends. But a day or two later you see Mrs. Thomson, and find her quite in a fever at the awful fact. It was a dreadful trial, walking out, and facing all the congregation: they must have thought it so strange; she would not run the risk of it again for any inducement. The fact is just this: Mrs. Thomson thinks a great deal of the thing, because it happened to herself. It did not happen to the other people, and so they hardly think of it at all. But nine in every ten of them, in Mrs. Thomson's place, would have Mrs. Thomson's feeling; for it is a thing which you, my reader, slowly learn, that people think very little about you.

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Yes, it is a thing slowly learnt,—by many not learnt at all. How many persons you meet walking along the street who evidently think that everybody is looking at them! How few persons can walk through an exhibition of pictures at which are assembled the grand people of the town and all their own grand acquaintances, in a fashion thoroughly free from self-consciousness! I mean without thinking of themselves at all, or of how they look; but in an unaffected manner, observing the objects and beings around them. Men who have attained recently to a moderate eminence are sometimes, if of small minds, much affected by this disagreeable frailty. Small literary men, and preachers with no great head or heart, have within my own observation suffered from it severely. I have witnessed a poet, whose writing I have never read, walking along a certain street. I call him a poet to avoid periphrasis. The whole get-up of the man, his dress, his hair, his hat, the style in which he walked, showed unmistakably that he fancied that everybody was looking at him, and that he was the admired of all admirers. In fact, nobody was looking at him at all. Some time since I beheld a portrait of a very, very small literary man. It was easy to discern from it that the small author lives in the belief, that, wherever he goes, he is the object of universal observation. The intense self-consciousness and self-conceit apparent in that portrait were, in the words of Mr. Squeers, “more easier conceived than described.” The face was a very commonplace and rather good-looking one: the author, notwithstanding his most strenuous exertions, evidently could make nothing of the features to distinguish him from other men. But the length of his hair was very great: and, oh, what genius he plainly fancied glowed in those eyes! I never in my life witnessed such an extraordinary glare. I do not believe that any human being ever lived whose eyes habitually wore that expression: only by a violent effort could the expression be produced, and then for a very short time, without serious injury to the optic nerves. The eyes were made as large as possible; and the thing after which the poor fellow had been struggling was that peculiar look which may be conceived to penetrate through the beholder, and pierce his inmost thoughts. I never beheld the living original, but, if I saw him, I should like in a kind way to pat him on the head, and tell him that *that* sort of expression would produce a great effect on the gallery of a minor theatre. The other day I was at a public meeting. A great crowd of people was assembled in a large hall: the platform at one end of it remained unoccupied till the moment when the business of the meeting was to begin. It was an interesting sight for any philosophic observer seated in the body of the hall to look at the men who by-and-by walked in procession on to the platform, and to observe the different ways in which they walked in. There were several very great

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and distinguished men: every one of these walked on to the platform and took his seat in the most simple and unaffected way, as if quite unconscious of the many eyes that were looking at them with interest and curiosity. There were many highly respectable and sensible men, whom nobody cared particularly to see, and who took their places in a perfectly natural manner, as though well aware of the fact. But there were one or two small men, struggling for notoriety; and I declare it was pitiful to behold their entrance. I remarked one, in particular, who evidently thought that the eyes of the whole meeting were fixed upon himself, and that, as he walked in, everybody was turning to his neighbor, and saying with agitation, "See, that's Snooks!" His whole gait and deportment testified that he felt that two or three thousand eyes were burning him up: you saw it in the way he walked to his place, in the way he sat down, in the way he then looked about him. If anyone had tried to get up three cheers for Snooks, Snooks would not have known that he was being made a fool of. He would have accepted the incense of fame as justly his due. There once was a man who entered the Edinburgh theatre at the same instant with Sir Walter Scott. The audience cheered lustily; and while Sir Walter modestly took his seat, as though unaware that those cheers were to welcome the Great Magician, the other man advanced with dignity to the front of the box, and bowed in acknowledgment of the popular applause. This of course was but a little outburst of the great tide of vain self-estimation which the man had cherished within his breast for years. Let it be said here, that an affected unconsciousness of the presence of a multitude of people is as offensive an exhibition of self-consciousness as any that is possible. Entire naturalness, and a just sense of a man's personal insignificance, will produce the right deportment. It is very irritating to see some clergymen walk into church to begin the service. They come in, with eyes affectedly cast down, and go to their place without ever looking up, and rise and begin without one glance at the congregation. To stare about them, as some clergymen do, in a free and easy manner, befits not the solemnity of the place and the worship; but the other is the worse thing. In a few cases it proceeds from modesty; in the majority from intolerable self-conceit. The man who keeps his eyes downcast in that affected manner fancies that everybody is looking at him; there is an insufferable self-consciousness about him; and he is much more keenly aware of the presence of other people than the man who does what is natural, and looks at the people to whom he is speaking. It is not natural nor rational to speak to one human being with your eyes fixed on the ground; and neither is it natural or rational to speak to a thousand. And I think that the preacher who feels in his heart that he is neither wiser nor better than his fellow-sinners to

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whom he is to preach, and that the advices he addresses to them are addressed quite as solemnly to himself, will assume no conceited airs of elevation above them, but will unconsciously wear the demeanor of any sincere worshipper, somewhat deepened in solemnity by the remembrance of his heavy personal responsibility in leading the congregation's worship; but assuredly and entirely free from the vulgar conceit which may be fostered in a vulgar mind by the reflection, "Now everybody is looking at me!" I have seen, I regret to say, various distinguished preachers whose pulpit demeanor was made to me inexpressibly offensive by this taint of self-consciousness. And I have seen some, with half the talent, who made upon me an impression a thousandfold deeper than ever was made by the most brilliant eloquence; because the simple earnestness of their manner said to every heart, "Now I am not thinking in the least about myself, or about what you may think of me: my sole desire is to impress on your hearts these truths I speak, which I believe will concern us all forever!" I have heard great preachers, after hearing whom you could walk home quite at your ease, praising warmly the eloquence and the logic of the sermon. I have heard others, (infinitely greater in my poor judgment,) after hearing whom you would have felt it profanation to criticize the literary merits of their sermon, high as those were: but you walked home thinking of the lesson and not of the teacher, solemnly revolving the truths you had heard, and asking the best of all help to enable you to remember them and act upon them.

There are various ways in which self-consciousness disagreeably evinces its existence; and there is not one, perhaps, more disagreeable than the affected avoidance of what is generally regarded as egotism. Depend upon it, my reader, that the straightforward and natural writer who frankly uses the first person singular, and says, "I think thus and thus," "I have seen so and so," is thinking of himself and his own personality a mighty deal less than the man who is always employing awkward and roundabout forms of expression to avoid the use of the obnoxious *I*. Every such periphrasis testifies unmistakably that the man was thinking of himself; but the simple, natural writer, warm with his subject, eager to press his views upon his readers, uses the *I* without a thought of self, just because it is the shortest, most direct, and most natural way of expressing himself. The recollection of his own personality probably never once crossed his mind during the composition of the paragraph from which an ill-set critic might pick out a score of *I*-s. To say, "It is submitted" instead of "I think," "It has been observed" instead of "I have seen," "The present writer" instead of "I," is much the more really egotistical. Try to write an essay without using that vowel which some men think the very shibboleth of egotism, and the remembrance of yourself will be

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in the background of your mind all the time you are writing. It will be always intruding and pushing in its face, and you will be able to give only half your mind to your subject. But frankly and naturally use the *I*, and the remembrance of yourself vanishes. You are grappling with the subject; you are thinking of it, and of nothing else. You use the readiest and most unaffected mode of speech to set out your thoughts of it. You have written *I* a dozen times, but you have not thought of yourself once.

You may see the self-consciousness of some men strongly manifested in their handwriting. The handwriting of some men is essentially affected,—more especially their signature. It seems to be a very searching test whether a man is a conceited person or an unaffected person, to be required to furnish his autograph to be printed underneath his published portrait. I have fancied I could form a theory of a man's whole character from reading, in such a situation, merely the words, "Very faithfully yours, Eusebius Snooks," You could see that Mr. Snooks was acting, when he wrote that signature. He was thinking of the impression it would produce on those who saw it. It was not the thing which a man would produce who simply wished to write his name legibly in as short a time and with as little needless trouble as possible. Let me say with sorrow that I have known even venerable bishops who were not superior to this irritating weakness. Some men aim at an aristocratic hand; some deal in vulgar flourishes. These are the men who have reached no farther than that stage at which they are proud of the dexterity with which they handle their pen. Some strive after an affectedly simple and student-like hand; some at a dashing and military style. But there may be as much self-consciousness evinced by handwriting as by anything else. Any clergyman who performs a good many marriages will be impressed by the fact that very few among the humbler classes can sign their name in an unaffected way. I am not thinking of the poor bride who shakily traces her name, or of the simple bumpkin who slowly writes his, making no secret of the difficulty with which he does it. These are natural and pleasing. You would like to help and encourage them. But it is irritating, when some forward fellow, after evincing his marked contempt for the slow and cramped performances of his friends, jauntily takes up the pen and dashes off his signature at a tremendous rate and with the air of an exploit, evidently expecting the admiration of his rustic friends, and laying a foundation for remarking to them on his way home that the parson could not touch him at penmanship. I have observed with a little malicious satisfaction that such persons, arising in their pride from the place where they wrote, generally smear their signature with their coat-sleeve, and reduce it to a state of comparative illegibility. I like to see the smirking, impudent creature a little taken down.

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But it is endless to try to reckon up the fashions in which people show that they have not learnt the lesson of their own unimportance. Did you ever stop in the street and talk for a few minutes to some old bachelor? If so, I dare say you have remarked a curious phenomenon. You have found that all of a sudden the mind of the old gentleman, usually reasonable enough, appeared stricken into a state approaching idiocy, and that the sentence which he had begun in a rational and intelligible way was ending in a maze of wandering words, signifying nothing in particular. You had been looking in another direction, but in sudden alarm you look straight at the old gentleman to see what on earth is the matter; and you discern that his eyes are fixed on some passer-by, possibly a young lady, perhaps no more than a magistrate or the like, who is by this time a good many yards off, with the eyes still following, and slowly revolving on their axes so as to follow without the head being turned round. It is this spectacle which has drawn off your friend's attention; and you notice his whole figure twisted into an ungainly form, intended to be dignified or easy, and assumed because he fancied that the passerby was looking at him. Oh the pettiness of human nature! Then you will find people afraid that they have given offence by saying or doing things which the party they suppose offended had really never observed that they had said or done. There are people who fancy that in church everybody is looking at them, when in truth no mortal is taking the trouble to do so. It is an amusing, though irritating sight, to behold a weak-minded lady walking into church and taking her seat under this delusion. You remember the affected air, the downcast eyes, the demeanor intended to imply a modest shrinking from notice, but through which there shines the real desire, "Oh, for any sake, look at me!" There are people whose voice is utterly inaudible in church six feet off, who will tell you that a whole congregation of a thousand or fifteen hundred people was listening to their singing. Such folk will tell you that they went to a church where the singing was left too much to the choir, and began to sing as usual, on which the entire congregation looked round to see who it was that was singing, and ultimately proceeded to sing lustily too. I do not remember a more disgusting exhibition of vulgar self-conceit than I saw a few months ago at Westminster Abbey. It was a weekday afternoon service, and the congregation was small. Immediately before me there sat an insolent boor, who evidently did not belong to the Church of England. He had walked in when the prayers were half over, having with difficulty been made to take off his hat, and his manifest wish was to testify his contempt for the whole place and service. Accordingly he persisted in sitting, in a lounging attitude, when the people stood, and in standing up and staring about with an air of curiosity while they



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knelt. He was very anxious to convey that he was not listening to the prayers; but rather inconsistently, he now and then uttered an audible grunt of disapproval. No one can enjoy the choral service more than I do, and the music that afternoon was very fine; but I could not enjoy it or join in it as I wished, for the disgust I felt at the animal before me, and for my burning desire to see him turned out of the sacred place he was profaning. But the thing which chiefly struck me about the individual was not his vulgar and impudent profanity; it was his intolerable self-conceit. He plainly thought that every eye under the noble old roof was watching all his movements. I could see that he would go home and boast of what he had done, and tell his friends that all the clergy, choristers, and congregation had been awestricken by him, and that possibly word had by this time been conveyed to Lambeth or Fulham of the weakened influence and approaching downfall of the Church of England. I knew that the very thing he wished was that some one should rebuke his conduct, otherwise I should certainly have told him either to behave with decency or to be gone.

I have sometimes witnessed a curious manifestation of this vain sense of self-importance. Did you ever, my reader, chance upon such a spectacle as this: a very commonplace man, and even a very great blockhead, standing in a drawing-room where a large party of people is assembled, with a grin of self-complacent superiority upon his unmeaning face? I am sure you understand the thing I mean. I mean a look which conveyed, that, in virtue of some hidden store of genius or power, he could survey with a calm, cynical loftiness the little conversation and interests of ordinary mortals. You know the kind of interest with which a human being would survey the distant approaches to reason of an intelligent dog or a colony of ants. I have seen this expression on the face of one or two of the greatest blockheads I ever knew. I have seen such a one wear it while clever men were carrying on a conversation in which he could not have joined to have saved his life. Yet you could see that (who can tell how?) the poor creature had somehow persuaded himself that he occupied a position from which he could look down upon his fellow-men in general. Or was it rather that the poor creature knew he was a fool, and fancied that thus he could disguise the fact? I dare say there was a mixture of both feelings.

You may see many indications of vain self-importance in the fact that various persons, old ladies for the most part, are so ready to give opinions which are not wanted, on matters of which they are not competent to judge. Clever young curates suffer much annoyance from these people: they are always anxious to instruct the young curates how to preach. I remember well, ten years ago, when I was a curate (which in Scotland we call an *assistant*) myself, what advices I used to receive (quite unsought by me) from

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well-meaning, but densely stupid old ladies. I did not think the advices worth much, even then; and now, by longer experience, I can discern that they were utterly idiotic. Yet they were given with entire confidence. No thought ever entered the heads of these well-meaning, but stupid individuals, that possibly they were not competent to give advice on such subjects. And it is vexatious to think that people so stupid may do serious harm to a young clergyman by head-shakings and sly innuendoes as to his orthodoxy or his gravity of deportment. In the long run they will do no harm, but at the first start they may do a good deal of mischief. Not long since, such a person complained to me that a talented young preacher had taught unsound doctrine. She cited his words. I showed her that the words were taken *verbatim* from the "Confession of Faith," which is our Scotch Thirty-Nine Articles. I think it not unlikely that she would go on telling her tattling story just the same. I remember hearing a stupid old lady say, as though her opinion were quite decisive of the question, that no clergyman ought to have so much as a thousand a year; for, if he had, he would be sure to neglect his duty. You remember what Dr. Johnson said to a woman who expressed some opinion or other upon a matter she did not understand. "Madam," said the moralist, "before expressing your opinion, you should consider what your opinion is worth." But this shaft would have glanced harmlessly from off the panoply of the stupid and self-complacent old lady of whom I am thinking. It was a fundamental axiom with her that her opinion was entirely infallible. Some people would feel as though the very world were crumbling away under their feet, if they realized the fact that they could go wrong.

Let it here be said, that this vain belief of their own importance, which most people cherish, is not at all a source of unmixed happiness. It will work either way. When my friend, Mr. Snarling, got his beautiful poem printed in the county newspaper, it no doubt pleased him to think, as he walked along the street, that every one was pointing him out as the eminent literary man who was the pride of the district, and that the whole town was ringing with that magnificent effusion. Mr. Tennyson, it is certain, felt that his crown was being reft away. But, on the other hand, there is no commoner form of morbid misery than that of the poor nervous man or woman who fancies that he or she is the subject of universal unkindly remark. You will find people, still sane for practical purposes, who think that the whole neighborhood is conspiring against them, when in fact nobody is thinking of them.

All these pages have been spent in discussing a single thing slowly learnt: the remaining matters to be considered in this essay must be treated briefly.



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Another thing slowly learnt is that we have no reason or right to be angry with people because they think poorly of us. This is a truth which most people find it very hard to accept, and at which, probably, very few arrive without pretty long thought and experience. Most people are angry, when they are informed that some one has said that their ability is small, or that their proficiency in any art is limited. Mrs. Malaprop was very indignant, when she found that some of her friends had spoken lightly of her parts of speech. Mr. Snarling was wroth, when he learned that Mr. Jollikin thought him no great preacher. Miss Brown was so, on hearing that Mr. Smith did not admire her singing; and Mr. Smith, on learning that Miss Brown did not admire his horsemanship. Some authors feel angry, on reading an unfavorable review of their book. The present writer has been treated very, very kindly by the critics,—far more so than he ever deserved; yet he remembers showing a notice of him, which was intended to extinguish him for all coming time, to a warm-hearted friend, who read it with gathering wrath, and, vehemently starting up at its close, exclaimed, (we knew who wrote the notice,)—"Now I shall go straight and kick that fellow!" Now all this is very natural; but assuredly it is quite wrong. You understand, of course, that I am thinking of unfavorable opinions of you, honestly held, and expressed without malice. I do not mean to say that you would choose for your special friend or companion one who thought meanly of your ability or your sense; it would not be pleasant to have him always by you; and the very fact of his presence would tend to keep you from doing justice to yourself. For it is true, that, when with people who think you very clever and wise, you really are a good deal cleverer and wiser than usual; while with people who think you stupid and silly, you find yourself under a malign influence which tends to make you actually so for the time. If you want a man to gain any good quality, the way is to give him credit for possessing it. If he has but little, give him credit for all he has, at least; and you will find him daily get more. You know how Arnold made boys truthful; it was by giving them credit for truth. Oh that we all fitly understood that the same grand principle should be extended to all good qualities, intellectual and moral! Diligently instil into a boy that he is a stupid, idle, bad-hearted blockhead, and you are very likely to make him all *that*. And so you can see that it is not judicious to choose for a special friend and associate one who thinks poorly of one's sense or one's parts. Indeed, if such a one honestly thinks poorly of you, and has any moral earnestness, you could not get him for a special friend, if you wished it. Let us choose for our companions (if such can be found) those who think well and kindly of us, even though we may know within ourselves that they think too kindly and too well. For that favorable estimation will

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bring out and foster all that is good in us. There is between this and the unfavorable judgment all the difference between the warm, genial sunshine, that draws forth the flowers and encourages them to open their leaves, and the nipping frost or the blighting east-wind, that represses and disheartens all vegetable life. But though thus you would not choose for your special companion one who thinks poorly of you, and though you might not even wish to see him very often, you have no reason to have any angry feeling towards him. He cannot help his opinion. His opinion is determined by his lights. His opinion, possibly, founds on those aesthetic considerations as to which people will never think alike, with which there is no reasoning, and for which there is no accounting. God has made him so that he dislikes your book, or at least cannot heartily appreciate it; and that is not his fault. And, holding his opinion, he is quite entitled to express it. It may not be polite to express it to yourself. By common consent it is understood that you are never, except in cases of absolute necessity, to say to any man that which is disagreeable to him. And if you go, and, without any call to do so, express to a man himself that you think poorly of him, he may justly complain, not of your unfavorable opinion of him, but of the malice which is implied in your needlessly informing him of it. But if any one expresses such an unfavorable opinion of you in your absence, and some one comes and repeats it to you, be angry with the person who repeats the opinion to you, not with the person who expressed it. For what you do not know will cause you no pain. And all sensible folk, aware how estimates of any mortal must differ, will, in the long run, attach nearly the just weight to any opinion, favorable or unfavorable.

Yes, my friend, utterly put down the natural tendency in your heart to be angry with the man who thinks poorly of you. For you have, in sober reason, no right to be angry with him. It is more pleasant, and indeed more profitable, to live among those who think highly of you—It makes you better. You actually grow into what you get credit for. Oh, how much better a clergyman preaches to his own congregation, who listen with kindly and sympathetic attention to all he says, and always think too well of him, than to a set of critical strangers, eager to find faults and to pick holes! And how heartily and pleasantly the essayist covers his pages which are to go into a magazine whose readers have come to know him well, and to bear with all his ways! If every one thought him a dull and stupid person, he could not write at all: indeed, he would bow to the general belief, and accept the truth that he is dull and stupid. But further, my reader, let us be reasonable, when it is pleasant; and let us sometimes be irrational, when *that* is pleasant too. It is natural to have a very kindly feeling to those who think well of us. Now, though, in

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severe truth, we have no more reason for wishing to shake hands with the man who thinks well of us than for wishing to shake the man who thinks ill of us, yet let us yield heartily to the former pleasant impulse. It is not reasonable, but it is all right. You cannot help liking people who estimate you favorably and say a good word of you. No doubt we might slowly learn not to like them more than anybody else; but we need not take the trouble to learn *that* lesson. Let us all, my readers, be glad if we can reach that cheerful position of mind at which my eloquent friend SHIRLEY and I have long since arrived: that we are extremely gratified when we find ourselves favorably reviewed, and not in the least angry when we find ourselves reviewed unfavorably; that we have a very kindly feeling towards such as think well of us, and no unkind feeling whatever to those who think ill of us. Thus, at the beginning of the month, we look with equal minds at the newspaper notices of our articles; we are soothed and exhilarated when we find ourselves described as sages, and we are amused and interested when we find ourselves shown up as little better than geese.

Of course, it makes a difference in the feeling with which you ought to regard any unfavorable opinion of you, whether spoken or written, if the unfavorable opinion which is expressed be plainly not honestly held, and be maliciously expressed. You may occasionally hear a judgment expressed of a young girl's music or dancing, of a gentleman's horses, of a preacher's sermons, of an author's books, which is manifestly dictated by personal spite and jealousy, and which is expressed with the intention of doing mischief and giving pain to the person of whom the judgment is expressed. You will occasionally find such judgments supported by wilful misrepresentation, and even by pure invention. In such a case as this, the essential thing is not the unfavorable opinion; it is the malice which leads to its entertainment and expression. And the conduct of the offending party should be regarded with that feeling which, on calm thought, you discern to be the right feeling with which to regard malice accompanied by falsehood. Then, is it well to be angry here? I think not. You may see that it is not safe to have any communication with a person who will abuse and misrepresent you; it is not safe, and it is not pleasant. But don't be angry. It is not worth while. That old lady, indeed, told all her friends that you said, in your book, something she knew quite well you did not say. Mr. Snarling did the like. But the offences of such people are not worth powder and shot; and besides this, my friend, if you saw the case from their point of view, you might see that they have something to say for themselves. You failed to call for the old lady so often as she wished you should. You did not ask Mr. Snarling to dinner. These are bad reasons for pitching into you; but still they are reasons; and Mr. Snarling and the old lady, by long brooding over them, may have come to think that they are very just and weighty reasons. And did you never, my friend, speak rather unkindly of these two persons? Did you never give a ludicrous account of their goings-on, or even an ill-set account, which some kind friend was sure to repeat to them?

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Ah, my reader, don't be too hard on Snarling; possibly you have yourself done something very like what he is doing now. Forgive, as you need to be forgiven! And try to attain that quite attainable temper in which you will read or listen to the most malignant attack upon you with curiosity and amusement, and with no angry feeling at all. I suppose great people attain to this: I mean cabinet-ministers and the like, who are daily flayed in print somewhere or other. They come to take it all quite easily. And if they were pure angels, somebody would attack them. Most people, even those who differ from him, know, that, if this world has a humble, conscientious, pious man in it, that man is the present Archbishop of Canterbury: yet last night I read in a certain powerful journal, that the great characteristics of that good man are cowardice, trickery, and simple rascality! Honest Mr. Bumpkin, kind-hearted Miss Goodbody, do you fancy that *you* can escape?

Then we ought to try to fix it in our mind, that, in all matters into which taste enters at all, the most honest and the most able men may hopelessly, diametrically, differ: original idiosyncrasy has so much to say here; and training has also so much. One cultivated and honest man has an enthusiastic and most real love and enjoyment of Gothic architecture, and an absolute hatred for that of the classic revival; another man, equally cultivated and honest, has tastes which are the logical contradictory of these. No one can doubt the ability of Byron, or of Sheridan; yet each of them thought very little of Shakspeare. The question is, *What suits you?* You may have the strongest conviction that you ought to like an author; you may be ashamed to confess that you don't like him; and yet you may feel that you detest him. For myself, I confess with shame, and I know the reason is in myself, I cannot for my life see anything to admire in the writings of Mr. Carlyle. His style, both of thought and language, is to me insufferably irritating. I tried to read the "Sartor Resartus," and could not do it. So if all people who have learned to read English were like me, Mr. Carlyle would have no readers. Happily, the majority, in most cases, possesses the normal taste. At least there is no further appeal than to the deliberate judgment of the majority of educated men. I confess, further, that I would rather read Mr. Helps than Milton: I do not say that I think Mr. Helps the greater man, but that I feel he suits me better. I value the "Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table" more highly than all the writings of Shelley put together. It is a curious thing to read various reviews of the same book,—particularly if it be one of those books which, if you like at all, you will like very much, and which, if you don't like, you will absolutely hate. It is curious to find opinions flatly contradictory of one another set forth in those reviews by very able, cultivated, and unprejudiced

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men. There is no newspaper published in Britain which contains abler writing than the "Edinburgh Scotsman." And of course no one need say anything as to the literary merits of the "Times." Well, one day within the last few months, the "Times" and the "Scotsman" each published a somewhat elaborate review of a certain book. The reviews were flatly opposed to one another; they had no common ground at all; one said the book was extremely good, and the other that it was extremely bad. You must just make up your mind that in matters of taste there can be no unvarying standard of truth. In aesthetic matters, truth is quite relative. What is bad to you is good to me, perhaps. And indeed, if one might adduce the saddest of all possible proofs how even the loftiest and most splendid genius fails to commend itself to every cultivated mind, it may suffice to say, that that brilliant "Scotsman" has on several occasions found fault with the works of A.K.H.B.!

If you, my reader, are a wise and kind-hearted person, (as I have no doubt whatever but you are,) I think you would like very much to meet and converse with any person who has formed a bad opinion of you. You would take great pleasure in overcoming such a one's prejudice against you; and if the person were an honest and worthy person, you would be almost certain to do so. Very few folk are able to retain any bitter feeling towards a man they have actually talked with, unless the bitter feeling be one which is just. And a very great proportion of all the unfavorable opinions which men entertain of their fellow-men found on some misconception. You take up somehow an impression that such a one is a conceited, stuck-up person: you come to know him, and you find he is the frankest and most unaffected of men. You had a belief that such another was a cynical, heartless being, till you met him one day coming down a long black stair, in a poor part of the town, from a bare chamber in which is a little sick child, with two large tears running down his face; and when you enter the poor apartment, you learn certain facts as to his quiet benevolence which compel you suddenly to construct a new theory of that man's character. It is only people who are radically and essentially bad whom you can really dislike after you come to know them. And the human beings who are thus essentially bad are very few. Something of the original Image lingers yet in almost every human soul: and in many a homely, commonplace person, what with vestiges of the old, and a blessed planting-in of something new, there is a vast deal of it. And every human being, conscious of honest intention and of a kind heart, may well wish that the man who dislikes and abuses him could just know him.

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But there are human beings whom, if you are wise, you would not wish to know you too well: I mean the human beings (if such there should be) who think very highly of you, —who imagine you very clever and very amiable. Keep out of the way of such! Let them see as little of you as possible. For, when they come to know you well, they are quite sure to be disenchanted. The enthusiastic ideal which young people form of any one they admire is smashed by the rude presence of facts. I have got somewhat beyond the stage of feeling enthusiastic admiration, yet there are two or three living men whom I should be sorry to see: I know I should never admire them so much any more. I never saw Mr. Dickens: I don't want to see him. Let us leave Yarrow unvisited: our sweet ideal is fairer than the fairest fact. No hero is a hero to his valet: and it may be questioned whether any clergyman is a saint to his beadle. Yet the hero may be a true hero, and the clergyman a very excellent man: but no human being can bear too close inspection. I remember hearing a clever and enthusiastic young lady complain of what she had suffered, on meeting a certain great bishop at dinner. No doubt he was dignified, pleasant, clever; but the mysterious halo was no longer round his head. Here is a sad circumstance in the lot of a very great man: I mean such a man as Mr. Tennyson or Professor Longfellow. As an elephant walks through a field, crushing the crop at every step, so do these men advance through life, smashing, every time they dine out, the enthusiastic fancies of several romantic young people.

This was to have been a short essay. But you see it is already long; and I have treated only two of the four Things Slowly Learnt which I had noted down. After much consideration I discern several courses which are open to me:—

1. To ask the editor to allow me forty or fifty pages of the magazine for my essay.
2. To stop at once, and allow it to remain forever a secret what the two remaining things are.
3. To stop now, and continue my subject in a future number of the magazine.
4. To state briefly what the two things are, and get rid of the subject at once.

The fundamental notion of Course No. 1 is manifestly vain. The editor is doubtless well aware that about sixteen pages is the utmost length of essay which his readers can stand. Nos. 2 and 3, for reasons too numerous to state, cannot be adopted. And thus I am in a manner compelled to adopt Course No. 4.

The first of the two things is a practical lesson. It is this: to allow for human folly, laziness, carelessness, and the like, just as you allow for the properties of matter, such as weight, friction, and the like, without being surprised or angry at them. You know, that, if a man is lifting a piece of lead, he does not think of getting into a rage because it is heavy; or if a man is dragging a tree along the ground, he does not get into a rage because



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it ploughs deeply into the earth as it comes. He is not surprised at these things. They are nothing new. It is just what he counted on. But you will find that the same man, if his servants are lazy, careless, and forgetful, or if his friends are petted, wrong-headed, and impracticable, will not only get quite angry, but will get freshly angry at each new action which proves that his friends or servants possess these characteristics. Would it not be better to make up your mind that such things are characteristic of humanity, and so that you must look for them in dealing with human beings? And would it not be better, too, to regard each new proof of laziness, not as a new thing to be angry with, but merely as a piece of the one great fact that your servant is lazy, with which you get angry once for all, and have done with it? If your servant makes twenty blunders a day, do not regard them as twenty separate facts at which to get angry twenty several times: regard them just as twenty proofs of the one fact that your servant is a blunderer; and be angry just once, and no more. Or if some one you know gives twenty indications in a day that he or she (let us say she) is of a petted temper, regard these merely as twenty proofs of one lamentable fact, and not as twenty different facts to be separately lamented. You accept the fact that the person is petted and ill-tempered: you regret it and blame it once for all. And after this once you take as of course all new manifestations of pettedness and ill-temper. And you are no more surprised at them, or angry with them, than you are at lead for being heavy, or at down for being light. It is their nature, and you calculate on it, and allow for it.

Then the second of the two remaining things is this,—that you have no right to complain, if you are postponed to greater people, or if you are treated with less consideration than you would be, if you were a greater person. Uneducated people are very slow to learn this most obvious lesson. I remember hearing of a proud old lady who was proprietor of a small landed estate in Scotland. She had many relations,—some greater, some less. The greater she much affected, the less she wholly ignored. But they did not ignore *her*; and one morning an individual arrived at her mansion-house, bearing a large box on his back. He was a travelling peddler; and he sent up word to the old lady that he was her cousin, and hoped she would buy something from him. The old lady indignantly refused to see him, and sent orders that he should forthwith quit the house. The peddler went; but, on reaching the courtyard, he turned to the inhospitable dwelling, and in a loud voice exclaimed, in the ears of every mortal in the house, “Ay, if I had come in my carriage-and-four, ye wad have been proud to have ta’en me in!” The peddler fancied that he was hurling at his relative a scathing sarcasm: he did not see that he was simply stating a perfectly unquestionable fact. No doubt earthly, if he

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had come in a carriage-and-four, he would have got a hearty welcome, and he would have found his claim of kindred eagerly allowed. But he thought he was saying a bitter and cutting thing, and (strange to say) the old lady fancied she was listening to a bitter and cutting thing. He was merely expressing a certain and innocuous truth. But though all mortals know that in this world big people meet greater respect than small, (and quite right too,) most mortals seem to find the principle a very unpleasant one, when it comes home to themselves. And we learn but slowly to acquiesce in seeing ourselves plainly subordinated to other people. Poor Oliver Goldsmith was very angry, when at the club one night he was stopped in the middle of a story by a Dutchman, who had noticed that the Great Bear was rolling about in preparation for speaking, and who exclaimed to Goldsmith, "Stop, stop! Doctor Shonson is going to speak!" Once I arrived at a certain railway station. Two old ladies were waiting to go by the same train. I knew them well, and they expressed their delight that we were going the same way. "Let us go in the same carriage," said the younger, in earnest tones; "and will you be so very kind as to see about our luggage?" After a few minutes of the lively talk of the period and district, the train came up. I feel the tremor of the platform yet. I handed my friends into a carriage, and then saw their baggage placed in the van. It was a station at which trains stop for a few minutes for refreshments. So I went to the door of the carriage into which I had put them, and waited a little before taking my seat. I expected that my friends would proceed with the conversation which had been interrupted; but to my astonishment I found that I had become wholly invisible to them. They did not see me and speak to me at all. In the carriage with them was a living peer, of wide estates and great rank, whom they knew. And so thoroughly did he engross their eyes and thoughts and words, that they had become unaware of my presence, or even my existence. The stronger sensation rendered them unconscious of the weaker. Do you think I felt angry? No, I did not. I felt very much amused. I recognized a slight manifestation of a grand principle. It was a straw showing how a current sets, but for which Britain would not be the country it is. I took my seat in another carriage, and placidly read my "Times." There was one lady in that carriage. I think she inferred, from the smiles which occasionally for the first few miles overspread my countenance without apparent cause, that my mind was slightly disordered.



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These are the two things already mentioned. But you cannot understand, friendly reader, what an effort it has cost me to treat them so briefly, The experienced critic will discern at a glance that the author could easily have made sixteen pages out of the material you have here in two. The author takes his stand upon this,—that there are few people who can beat out thought so thin, or say so little in such a great number of words. But I remember how a very great prelate (who could compress all I have said into a page and a half) once comforted me by telling me that for the consumption of many minds it was desirable that thought should be very greatly diluted; that quantity as well as quality is needful in the dietetics both of the body and the mind. With this soothing reflection I close the present essay.

### **AMERICAN NAVIGATION:**

ITS CHECKS, ITS PROGRESS, ITS DANGERS.—THE BIRTH OF THE NAVY.—THE EMBARGO.

In these palmy days of Commerce it is difficult to conceive the distress which attended the Embargo. To form some idea of its effects at a period when the nation engrossed most of the carrying trade of the world, let us imagine a message from Washington announcing that Congress, after a few midnight-sessions, has suddenly resolved to withdraw our ships from the ocean, and to export nothing from New York, or any other seaport; that it requires the merchant to dismantle his ships and leave them to decay at the wharves; that it calls upon two hundred thousand masters and mariners, who now plough the main, to seek their bread ashore; that it forbids even the fisherman to launch his chebacco-boat or follow his gigantic prey upon the deep; that it subjects the whole coastwise trade to onerous bonds and the surveillance of custom-house officers; that it interdicts all exports by land to Canada, New Brunswick, or Mexico.

Imagine for a moment five million tons of shipping detained, thousands of seamen reduced to want, the trades of the ship-builder, joiner, rigger, and sail-maker stopped, the masses of produce now seeking the coast for shipment arrested on their way by the entire cessation of demand, the banker and insurer idle, the commissioners of bankruptcy, the sheriff, and the jailer busy. Imagine the whole country, in the midst of a prosperous commerce, thus suddenly brought to a stand. Imagine the navigation, the produce, and the merchandise of the nation thus suddenly embargoed by one great seizure, upon the plea that they might possibly be seized abroad, and some faint idea may be formed of the alarm, distress, and indignant feeling which pervaded the entire seaboard under the Embargo of 1807. At the period in question the distressed seamen and ruined merchants had no railways, scarcely an ordinary road to the West. Manufactures were almost unknown, the mechanic arts were undeveloped, and consequently the exclusion from the sea was felt with double force.

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Why, urged the merchant and the mariner, should our property perish and our children go supperless to bed, when we can insure our ships and still make large profits? Would the planter reconcile himself to a law which forbade him to harness his teams or use the hoe or the plough, and bade him lie down and die of hunger beside fruitful fields? Does the Constitution of the Union, which empowers Congress to regulate commerce, authorize its destruction? And if it is the intent of Government merely to protect our ships abroad, why are foreign vessels forbidden to purchase or export our perishing fish and provisions? and why is our property to be confiscated and heavy fines to be imposed, if we send it across the Canada line, where there is no risk of seizure?—And when, in the progress of events, it became apparent that France approved of our Embargo, and that England, opening new marts for her trade and new sources of supplies in Russia, Spain, India, and Spanish America, was without a rival on the ocean, monopolizing the trade and becoming the carrier of the world, it was impossible to reconcile the Eastern States to this general interdict.

Many a rich man was ruined, many a prosperous town was utterly prostrated by the shock. Property, real and personal, fell from thirty to sixty per cent., affecting by its fall all classes of society. A spirit of hostility to the party in power was engendered, which outlasted the war with England, and continued to glow until Monroe had adopted the great Federal measures of a navy, a military academy, and an enlarged system of coast-defence.

Half a century has now elapsed since the signal failure of the Embargo. The theorists who planned it, the cabinet that adopted it, the politicians who blindly sustained it have passed from the stage. Angry feelings have subsided. The measure itself has become a part of the history of the country; but now that our commerce has again expanded, now that our navigation, for at least a quarter of a century, has continued to progress until it has outstripped that of Great Britain in speed, despatch, and capacity to carry, now that it knows no superior either in ancient or modern times, it is a fitting moment to investigate the causes and effects of the measure which once arrested its progress. Its history is replete with lessons; and if our late President has failed in other particulars, he at least cautioned us, in his inaugural address, “that our commerce and navigation are again exceeding the means provided for their defence,” and recommended “an increase of a navy now inadequate to the protection of our vast tonnage afloat,” greater than that of any other nation, “as well as to the defence of our extended sea-coast.” To ascertain and appreciate the true causes of the Embargo, we must ascend to the origin of our commerce and trace it downward.

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The Pilgrims who sought freedom in New England were enterprising men. The country in which they landed kindled a commercial spirit. Natural ports and havens, vast forests of pine and oak suitable for spars and timber, abundance of fish and whales, and the occasional failure of their crops, all invited them to the deep. Under the rule of Governor Winthrop, the shallop *Blessing of the Bay* was built at his Ten Hills farm, and made a voyage to Virginia. Boats, soon followed by sloops, engaged in the fisheries; brigs and ships were built for the trade with England. Boston became noted for ship-building, and Portsmouth supplied the royal navy with spars. The fleet which took Port Royal in 1710 was composed principally of American ships. The New England volunteers who in 1745 captured the fortress of Louisburg from the veteran troops of France were conveyed by ten American ships of war.

As early as 1765, six hundred sail from Massachusetts were engaged in the fisheries, and many American vessels pursued the trade to England, Spain, and the West Indies. The towns of Salem, Marblehead, and Gloucester were almost surrounded by fish-flakes. Fish, lumber, and provisions were the great basis of trade. Ships were built and laden with timber, and sold with their lading in English ports. Cargoes were made up of fish, live stock, and boards, for the West India Islands. The returns were shipped to Spain and Portugal, and there exchanged for silk, iron, fruit, wines, and bills on England. Occasionally ships joined the Jamaica fleet, or adventured on bolder voyages to the French islands; but the admiralty courts at Tortola and New Providence, often supposed to be in league with English admirals, repressed the spirit of adventure, and annually condemned American ships on the most frivolous pretences. The fame of American whalers had already reached England. Burke, in his celebrated speech on America, alludes to their enterprise. "We find them," he says, "in the deepest frozen recesses of Hudson's Bay, and again beneath the frozen serpent of the South.....What sea is not vexed by their fisheries? what climate is not witness to their toils?"

No record is to be found of the shipping of the Colonies prior to the Revolution, but there is reason to suppose that it must have exceeded two hundred thousand tons. During the Revolution the merchantmen went generally to decay or were captured. Some were equipped as privateers. But after seven years a ship is in its dotage. New vessels were built and armed. The models which figure in old pictures, with high sterns and bows, proved too clumsy for war, and modern forms were adopted. At least five hundred armed vessels were fitted out in the commercial States, and among them one hundred and fifty-eight from the single port of Salem. Some of these vessels mounted twenty guns; they captured large numbers of English vessels, and performed feats on the ocean as brilliant as any upon the land. At the close of the war, our shipping, although it included many prizes, was undoubtedly reduced; but it had changed its character. Our ships had improved in size and speed, and were manned by officers and seamen who had measured their strength with Englishmen, and acknowledged no superiors. From the Peace of 1783 to the Embargo of 1807, a period of twenty-four years, is a remarkable epoch in the history of American navigation.

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At the close of the war, the country was exhausted by its long and protracted struggle with the colossal power of England. The Eastern States, which furnished most of the shipping, had made great sacrifices, and had contributed more than their share in men, money, and ships to the common defence. They were creditor States, and their means were locked up in "final settlements." Their remaining capital was insufficient to equip their vessels and give them full cargoes. The country was impoverished, too, by the suits of foreign creditors, to whom our merchants had become deeply indebted before the war. Under these circumstances, commerce was slowly resumed. For several years our exports did not exceed ten millions. But our merchants were not disheartened; they gradually enlarged their trade and extended their field of adventure; privateers were put into the India trade, and entered into successful rivalry with the more cumbrous ships of the East India Companies. The new Constitution was adopted, the public debt funded, and duties imposed to meet the interest. The war-worn officer, the patriotic merchant, and the humble capitalist, who had relied on the honor and justice of the country, were paid in public stocks which found favor abroad. Old capital was resuscitated and became the basis of commerce.

In 1793 our tonnage had risen to 488,000 tons; and in 1799 it had grown to 939,488 tons, and was still increasing. The aggressions of France in 1798 and 1799 were met with a bold spirit and proved of brief continuance, a proper chastisement was inflicted on the corsairs of Africa, the honor of the flag was maintained, our commerce moved onward until the close of 1807, and by the official report of that year our tonnage had increased to 1,208,735 tons, or at least five hundred per cent. in the first twenty-four years after the close of the war. The revenue had risen to fifteen millions, and the official report of the Treasurer showed a balance in the Treasury of eighteen millions in bonds and money; it stated, also, that twenty-six millions of the public debt had been extinguished in the seven years preceding. Our ships, too, had become the great carriers of the deep; our exports for 1807 were \$108,343,750, of which \$59,622,558 were of foreign origin; our ports, remote from the seat of war, had become the depots of goods; and our commerce, whitening the surface of every ocean, had begun to tempt the cupidity of contending nations. In 1807, the United States, in addition to its domestic produce, which went principally to English ports, exported of foreign goods, in round numbers, to

Holland, . . . . .	\$14,000,000
French ports, . . . . .	13,000,000
Spanish " . . . . .	14,000,000
Italian " . . . . .	5,500,000
Danish " . . . . .	2,500,000
English and other ports,.	10,000,000

In those prosperous days of navigation, during the first period of twenty-four years after the Peace

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of 1783, the merchants of our country were accumulating riches; but a check was given to their prosperity by the Embargo, closely followed by acts of non-intercourse, by war, and by sixteen years of debility which ensued. In 1814, our tonnage was diminished to 1,159,288 tons, a point actually below that of 1807; and at the close of the second epoch of twenty-four years, in 1831, during which our population had doubled, the tonnage remained at 1,267,846 tons, having virtually made no progress in the second epoch of twenty-four years, commencing with the Embargo.

We now enter upon the third epoch of equal length, from 1831 to 1855, which stands out in bold relief a striking contrast to the gloomy period which it followed, and bears some resemblance to the epoch which preceded the Embargo, showing the recuperative power of a commerce destined to float after the most disastrous shipwreck.

Peace had continued down to 1831; the debt incurred during the war was at length reduced; new breeds of sheep were imported, and manufactures, aided by new inventions, were established on a permanent basis; our new fabrics began to demand more raw material; the culture of cotton was thus extended; railways were constructed; England, relaxing her commercial code, opened her marts to our breadstuffs; the great discovery of gold followed. Each of these causes gave an impulse to navigation, and at the close of the third epoch of twenty-four years, in 1855, our tonnage had outstripped that of England both in amount and effective power, and had risen by the official report to 5,212,000 tons, exhibiting a gain of more than three hundred per cent. The ratio of its advance may be inferred from the following table:—

Tonnage of ships built in 1818	55,856
do. do. 1831	85,962
do. do. 1832	144,539
do. do. 1848	318,072
do. do. 1855	583,451

Let us contrast these three epochs we have named. During the first, our navigation sprang from infancy to manhood, surmounting all obstacles and bidding defiance to all foes. In the second, in the vigor of manhood, it was withdrawn by a mysterious and pusillanimous policy from the ocean. This very timidity invited aggression, seizures and war followed, and the growth was checked for nearly the fourth of a century. In the third epoch it resumed its onward march, stimulating improvement, and thereby accelerating its own progress, until at length the offspring has surpassed the parent and taken the lead in navigation. Mark the contrast: the three epochs were of equal length: the first witnessed a growth of five hundred per cent.; in the second there was an entire paralysis; in the third, renewed progress of more than three hundred per cent.

What were the causes that confined the young giant to a Procrustean bed for a quarter of a century?

The subject has become history, and we can now calmly investigate it by the light of the past and the present. May not this investigation illumine the path of the future? Let us examine the maritime policy of our nation during each period.

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At the close of the Revolution there was no navy, and few ships to be protected. Our private armed vessels were converted into merchantmen, our solitary ship of the line was presented to France, and we had no frigates worth preserving.

The first great effort of the country was to form a constitution; the second, to provide for the creditors who had sustained the nation; the third, to provide a revenue to meet expenses and interest. And these were all successful. As commerce advanced, the Federal party under Washington revived the idea of a navy, and on March 11th, 1794, against the opposition of Madison, they carried a bill through Congress for the construction of six frigates. Under this bill, the Constitution, Constellation, and United States, all since identified with the fame of our country, were commenced, but they were not launched until the accession of John Adams in 1797.

Washington, in his Farewell Address, gave the sanction of his name to a navy, as well as to the West Point Academy, and to a system of harbor-defence. He thus marked out the great outlines; but the founder of the navy was John Adams. Nurtured among the hardy sons of Massachusetts, familiar with their exploits upon the ocean during the war both in private and public service, he felt assured of their ability to cope with the Mistress of the Seas. When France seized our ships and undertook to involve us in European wars, Adams renounced her alliance and called for the creation of a navy. In his annual message in 1797, he spoke of "a navy as next to the militia the natural defence of the United States." In 1798 the three frigates above-mentioned were finished and sent to sea, and soon after the Constellation captured the Insurgent. During the same year Congress voted to construct six more frigates, twelve sloops-of-war, and six smaller vessels, and appropriated a million for the frames of six ships of the line, two millions for timber, and fifty thousand dollars for two dock-yards. At the same time, in response to a vote of Congress authorizing the acceptance of additional ships, \$711,700 were subscribed, and the frigates Essex, Connecticut, Merrimack, and other vessels, constructed and turned over to the Government by the merchants of Salem, Newburyport, Hartford, and other seaports.

To illustrate the spirit with which the merchants responded to the call for a navy, we may cite the action of the Federal county of Essex, none of whose towns at that period contained over ten thousand inhabitants. This county had contributed more armed ships and men to the War of the Revolution than any other county in the Union, and was conspicuous for its enterprise and patriotism before the embargo, non-intercourse, and war had crushed its commerce.

The merchants of Essex assembled and subscribed the funds for the frigates Essex and Merrimack, the first of which was built at Salem and the other at Newburyport, and both of New-England oak; and this effort was the more remarkable, as they advanced the money while the Government found it difficult to borrow at eight per cent., and these patriotic men afterwards took their pay in depreciated six per cent. stock at par.



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We have not the history of the Merrimack; but the Essex, a frigate of thirty-two guns, begun in April, was launched in September, 1799, and the best commentary upon the policy of the measure and upon the skill and fidelity of her builders is the fact that she proved the fastest ship in the navy, that she lasted thirty-eight years, namely, till 1837, that she cost for hull, spars, sails, and rigging, when ready to receive her armament and stores, but \$75,473.59, and that under the gallant Porter, in the War of 1812, she captured the British corvette Alert, of twenty guns, a transport with one hundred and ninety-seven troops for Canada, and twenty-three other prizes, valued at two millions of dollars; she also broke up the British whale-fishing in the Pacific; and when finally captured at Valparaiso by two ships of superior force, who would not venture within reach of her carronades, she fought a battle of three hours' duration, which does honor to the country. While this frigate was building, so fast did the timber come in, that the spirited contractor, Mr. Briggs, was obliged to insert the following notice in the Salem paper to check the supply.

"THE SALEM FRIGATE.

"Through the medium of the Gazette the subscriber pays his acknowledgments to the good people of the County of Essex, for their spirited exertions in bringing down the trees of the Forest for building the Frigate.

"In the short space of four weeks the full complement of timber has been furnished. Those who have contributed to their country's defence are invited to come forward and receive the reward of their patriotism. They are informed that with the permission of a kind Providence who hath hitherto favored the undertaking, that

"Next September is the time  
When we'll launch her from the strand,  
And our cannon load and prime  
With tribute due to Talleyrand."

The promise was fulfilled on September 30th, 1799. The hills in the vicinity and the rocks upon the shores were covered with people assembled to witness the launch, and the guns of the frigate were planted on an eminence "to speak aloud the joy of the occasion."

A correspondent of the "Gazette" gave the following jubilant account of the affair.

"And Adams said, Let there be a Navy, and there was a Navy. To build a navy was the advice of our venerable sage. How far it has been adhered to is demonstrated by almost every town' in the United States that is capable of floating a Galley or Gunboat. Salem has not been backward in this laudable design; impressed with a due sense of the importance of a Navy, the patriotic citizens of this town put out a subscription and thereby obtained an equivalent for building a vessel of force. Among the foremost in

this good work were Messrs. Derby & Gray, who set the example by subscribing ten thousand dollars each,—but, alas, the former is no more; we trust his good deeds follow him. Yesterday the stars and stripes were unfurled on board the Frigate Essex, and at twelve o'clock she made a majestic movement into her destined element, there to join her sister-craft in repelling foreign invasion and maintaining the rights and liberties of 'a great, free, peaceful, and independent Republic.'"

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The early reports under Adams give the estimated cost of a ship of the line as \$400,000; and the first frigates actually cost as follows:—

Constellation	\$314,212
Constitution	302,718
United States	299,336
President	220,910
Chesapeake	220,679
Congress	197,246
Essex, with armament and stores	139,202

In 1799 the estimates for the navy were raised to four millions and a half, and large appropriations were continued in 1800. Under these appropriations several navy-yards were established, and frames of live-oak and cedar were furnished for eight ships of the line. The energy of the Administration produced corresponding effects, convoys were provided for our merchantmen, insurance fell from twenty to ten per cent., and France, impressed by our spirit and armament, retired from the contest.

At the close of 1800 the navy had made great progress; and the Secretary of the Navy, Hon. Benjamin Stoddard of Baltimore, proposed in 1801 an annual appropriation of one million for its increase.

But in 1801 the spirited administration of Adams came to an end. He had favored the payment of the national debt; he had dared to anticipate the future, to impose taxes and provide ships; he had aided the formation of a military academy and advocated a system of coast-defence, and had boldly asserted our national rights against the French Republic; and yet he loved peace so well, that, against the advice and wishes of his party and his cabinet, he sent a minister to France, who made an honorable treaty. Posterity sees little to censure in all these measures, for they evince the courage and forecast of the great Statesman of the Revolution; but they were assailed by his opponents, and aided in effecting his defeat.

Jefferson came into power as the advocate of retrenchment and reform,—captivating terms! Under his administration the military academy was thrown into the shade, the coast-defences were forgotten, most of the new frigates and sloops built by patriotic citizens were sold, the navy reduced to ten frigates, half of which were suffered to decay, the frames of the ships of the line were used for repairs, and the appropriations for the increase of the navy were reduced to the pitiful sum of a quarter of a million, which was applied principally to gunboats. Of these Jefferson built no less than one hundred and seventy, at a cost of \$10,500 each,—incurring for the construction and maintenance of this flotilla an expense of nearly three millions, without a particle of benefit to the country.

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We would not detract from the services of Jefferson. Posterity will honor him as the Patriot of the Revolution, as the champion of the rights of man; but will it not trace to his policy as a statesman, in the cabinet of Washington, in the opposition to Adams, and in the office of President, the grave errors from which sprang the embargo, non-intercourse, and the second war with England? At the close of his administration in 1809, he claimed credit for having left eighteen millions in the Treasury after payment of twenty-six millions of the debt of the Revolution in less than seven years, and his successor, Madison, in 1812, had over eleven millions in funds and cash in the Treasury after the extinguishment of forty-nine millions of the Revolutionary debt,—the expenses of Government, in the mean time, exclusive of the debt, having averaged from five to seven millions only. But parsimony is not always economy.

The embargo cost the nation at least forty millions; non-intercourse twenty more; the war in three years added one hundred and thirteen millions to the debt, with at least an equal loss by the sacrifice of commerce and heavy drafts by taxes: and if the embargo, non-intercourse, and war can be traced to the loss of the navy, we find a saving of a million per annum in ships dearly purchased by a loss of capital which, at compound interest, would exceed to-day one-third the computed wealth of the nation.

Had the policy of Adams been continued from 1800 to 1808, the annual million, aided by the live-oak and cedar frames, the three millions paid for gun-boats, and the frigates on hand when Jefferson came into power, would have provided or placed upon the stocks ten ships of the line, forty frigates, and ten sloops-of-war. If with the increase of revenue this estimate had been doubled in 1808, the material collected and the ships held back until the latter part of 1812, the country would have been supplied with twenty sail of the line, fifty frigates, and thirty sloops-of-war,—a force which would have employed at least threefold its number of English ships, upon our coast, upon the passage, and in the dock-yards. Impressment, orders in council, paper blockades, would have gone down before such a force of American ships ere one-tenth of it had left our harbors; for England, distressed for men and at war with the Continent, could not have spared the ships required to meet such a navy. The reports of Jefferson and Madison now make it apparent, that, without omitting to pay one instalment of the debt, they could have carried out the policy of Adams and provided a navy the very aspect of which would have commanded the respect and deference of the only foe we had occasion to dread.

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This point is most forcibly illustrated by the speeches of Lowndes and Cheves of South Carolina in Congress a few years later, cited by Henry Clay in 1812, in which they very justly say,—“If England should determine to station permanently on our coast a squadron of twelve ships of the line, she would require for this service thirty-six ships of the line, one-third in port repairing, one-third on the passage, and one-third on the station; but that is a force which it has been shown England, with her limited navy, could not spare for the American service.” For once, at least, two of the gifted sons of South Carolina sustained the views of Massachusetts. The War of the Revolution and the War of 1812 have both demonstrated that England can maintain no permanent blockade through the winter on our waters, and the largest fleet upon our Atlantic coast during the last war did not exceed twenty sail of armed vessels of all sizes.

Jefferson, in his “Notes on Virginia,” in 1785 had expressed his views on our maritime policy in the following terms:—

“You ask me what I think of the expediency of encouraging our States to become commercial. Were I to indulge my own theory, I wish them to practise neither commerce or navigation, but to stand with respect to Europe precisely on the footing of China.”

We have seen the commercial policy of Adams illustrated by the creation of a navy; we now see the anti-commercial theory of Jefferson illustrated by its overthrow.

He was once tempted to concede that we might apply a year’s revenue to a navy, but that year he never designated. Perhaps, if he could have foreseen the unceremonious way in which a few English frigates have of late years dealt with China, or the facility with which they have compelled her to pay millions for a drug alike pernicious to character and health, or the report of the treaty and tribute dictated from the walls of Peking,—or could he have foreseen the progress of Lord Cochrane’s frigates up the Potomac, regardless of his gunboats,—could he have foreshadowed the conflagration of the Capitol and the exit of the Cabinet,—he would perhaps have attached more importance to a navy and found less to admire in the policy of China, and doubtless his immediate successor would not have aimed a side-blow at our army and navy, as he did, in suggesting “that the fifteenth century was the unhappy epoch of military establishments in the time of peace.”

But our country, under Jefferson and Madison, for twelve years adopted the blind policy of China. The navy was suffered to decay. In 1807 but one frigate and five sloops-of-war were in commission. The Federal party, however, although in a weak minority, did not tamely submit to the unhappy policy of Southern statesmen; and individuals even of the dominant party opposed it. Among these, the late Justice Story, who in 1807 represented the County of Essex in Congress, made an effort for the revival of the navy. But

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it was objected, on the part of the Administration, that such a force would be impotent against Great Britain. Williams, subsequently Governor of South Carolina, insisted, that, if we built ships, they would all fall into the hands of the British; and the capture of the Danish fleet at Copenhagen was instanced,—the fall of Genoa, Venice, and Carthage, notwithstanding their navies, being also cited. Story, with almost a prescience of the future, urged in its favor,—“I was born among the hardy sons of the ocean, and I cannot doubt their courage or their skill; if Great Britain ever gets possession of our present little navy, it will be at the expense of the best blood of the country, and after a struggle which will call for more of her strength than she has ever found necessary for a European enemy.” To which Williams replied,—“If our rights are only so to be saved, I would abandon the ocean.” And in December, 1807, the ocean was abandoned.

No additions were made to the navy during the period of the embargo or non-intercourse, nor was a new ship sent to sea until after the peace; and at the commencement of the war, in June, 1812, the country had neither navy, fortifications, nor disciplined troops. The relics of the Federal navy then consisted of five frigates and seven sloops and brigs in commission, and three frigates under repair,—a feeble force, indeed, with which to meet the Mistress of the Seas, but which demonstrated by its achievements what fifty or a hundred sail might have accomplished.

In 1812, Quincy, in the House, and Lloyd, in the Senate, both from Massachusetts, advocated a navy, and Clay and Davies, of the West, raised their voices in its support; but their efforts were unavailing.

James Lloyd, who combined the intelligent merchant with the statesman, thus addressed the Senate:—“To make an impression on England, we must have a navy. Give us thirty swift-sailing, well-appointed frigates. In line-of-battle ships and fleet engagements, skill and experience would decide the victory. We are not ripe for them; but bolt together a British and American frigate side by side, and though we should lose sometimes, we should win as often. Give us this little fleet. Place your Navy Department under an able and spirited administration; cashier every officer who strikes his flag; and you will soon have a good account of your navy. This may be thought a hard tenure of service; but, hard or easy, I will engage in five weeks, yes, in five days, to officer this fleet from New England alone. Give us this little fleet, and in a quarter of the time in which you would operate upon her in any other way, we would bring Great Britain to terms. To terms, not to your feet. No, Sir! Great Britain is at this moment the most colossal power the world ever saw. It is true she has an enormous national debt. Her daily expenditure would in six short weeks wipe off all we owe. But will these millstones sink her? will they subject her to the power of France?

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No, Sir! let the bubble burst to-morrow,—destroy the fragile basis on which her public credit stands,—sponge out her national debt,—and, dreadful as would be the process, she would rise with renewed vigor from the fall, and present to her enemy a more imposing, irresistible front than ever. No, Sir! Great Britain cannot be subjected by France. The genius of her institutions, the genuine game-cock, bulldog spirit of her people, will lift her head above the waves. From this belief I acknowledge I derive a satisfaction. In New England our blood is unmixed. We are the direct descendants of Englishmen. We are natives of the soil. In the Legislature, now in session, of the once powerful and still respectable State of Massachusetts, composed of more than seven hundred members, to my knowledge not a single foreigner holds a seat. As Great Britain wrongs us, I would fight her. Yet I should be worse than a barbarian, did I not rejoice that the sepulchres of our forefathers, which are in that country, shall remain unsacked, and their coffins rest undisturbed, by the unhallowed rapacity of the Goths and Saracens of modern Europe. Let us have these thirty frigates. Powerful as Great Britain is, she could not blockade them; with our hazardous shores and tempestuous northwest gales, from November to March, all the navies in the world could not blockade them. Divide them into six squadrons; place those squadrons in the Northern ports, ready for sea; and at favorable moments we would pounce upon her West India Islands,—repeating the game of De Grasse and D’Estaing in ’79 and ’80. By the time she was ready to meet us there, we would be round Cape Horn, cutting up her whalers. Pursued thither, we could skim away to the Indian Seas, and would give an account of her China and India ships very different from that of the French cruisers. Now we would follow her Quebec, and now her Jamaica convoys; sometimes make our appearance in the chops of the Channel, and even sometimes wind north about into the Baltic. It would require a hundred British frigates to watch the movements of these thirty. Such are the means by which I would bring Great Britain to her senses. By harassing her commerce with this fleet, we could make the people ask the Government why they continued to violate our rights; whether it were for her interest to sever the chief tie between her and us, by compelling us to become a manufacturing people (and on this head we could make an exhibition that would astonish both friends and foes); what she was to gain by forcing us prematurely to become a naval power, destined one day or other to dispute with her the sceptre of the ocean? We could, in short, bring the people to ask the Government, For whose benefit is this war? And the moment this is brought about on both sides of the water, the business is finished; you would only have to agree on fair and equal terms of peace.”



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And Daniel Webster, just entering upon public life, made one of his earliest efforts in Congress for a navy. In his characteristic manner, he urged, in 1814,—“If war must continue, go to the ocean; let it no longer be said, not one ship of force built by your hands since the war yet floats; if you are seriously contending for maritime rights, go to the theatre where alone those rights can be defended. Thither every indication of your future calls you. There the united wishes and exertions of the nation will go with you.”

But a Southern Cabinet still clung to the Chinese policy, and the war for maritime rights was confided to a raw militia upon the land, while Hull, Bainbridge, Stewart, Porter, and Barney were performing the very feats which Lloyd had pictured to the Senate. A vote, it is true, was at length passed, to build four ships of the line, six frigates, and six sloops; but none were finished before the close of the war; and it was not until after its conclusion that the Democratic party, so long opposed to Federal measures, and triumphant from their very opposition, after a loss of at least three hundred millions, caused by their abandonment, gave the most conclusive proof of their value by funding the debt, re-establishing the navy, reviving the Military Academy at West Point, fortifying the coast, and making a tariff for revenue with incidental protection. Well might party-strife cease under the veteran Monroe; for Democracy had become Federalized.

The sketch thus given of the rise and progress of our navigation, and of the origin and decline of our navy, affords us a commanding view of the position of our nation when it adopted the Chinese policy and withdrew from the ocean.

Let us now glance for a moment at the state of Europe at the close of 1807. The great struggle of England and France was in progress. Napoleon, by his brilliant exploits, had subdued Italy and Holland, established the Empire, and by the battles of Marengo, Jena, Austerlitz, and Friedland, humbled Austria, overwhelmed Prussia, and conquered a peace with Russia. The Continent, from the Pyrenees to the Vistula, was subject to his sway, and he had closed it against the manufactures of England. This nation, alike victorious on the sea, had nearly annihilated the navy of France, captured the fleet of Denmark, swept the French and Dutch ships from the ocean, and was now seizing the possessions of France and Holland in the Indies. Regardless of neutral rights, she had declared every part of the Continent, from the Pyrenees to the Elbe, in a state of blockade.

To escape impressment, or to obtain higher wages, many of her seamen enlisted in our service. Anxious to reclaim them and to man all her ships, she followed them into American vessels, and impressed American seamen as Englishmen, without the least respect to the rights of a neutral that did not assert by arms the dignity of its flag.



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Neither of the parties in the excitement of the great conflict was disposed to respect the rights of the United States, a neutral without an army or a fleet, and too timid to arm its own merchantmen; and the purpose of both seemed to be to compel these merchantmen to contribute to the war. England, in addition to her blockade, required all neutrals bound for the Continent to pay duties in her ports; and France retaliated by declaring all neutral ships which had paid such tribute denationalized and subject to confiscation, and without a frigate on the ocean declared all the ports of England in a state of blockade. There can be no question now that the acts of both parties were a violation of the rights of every neutral.

England, in her sober moments, has tacitly relinquished her claim to impress beneath the American flag; paper blockades and the right of search are no longer recognized in the maritime code of either England or France; and there can be no doubt that our country could, at a later period, have made reclamation on England for seizures, as she has done upon France, Naples, and Denmark; but the policy of our rulers had left us destitute of means either of offence or defence, and of the power to resent any indignity. Three courses were open to us. The first was to devote the funds in the Treasury at once to the creation of a navy; to commence ten or twelve ships of the line in our dock-yards, and twenty frigates in the ship-yards of Boston, Salem, Portsmouth, New York, and Philadelphia; to build them as the Constitution and Constellation were built before; and to appeal to the merchants who built the Essex and Connecticut to build more, and to take their pay in certificates of stock. In one twelvemonth a navy might have been created; and the note of preparation sounded by a nation enriched by the peaceful commerce of a quarter of a century, and now refreshed for a new struggle, would have been most influential with the conflicting powers.

Another course was open to us. More than two-thirds of our commerce was with English ports, or ports remote from France; for England, Spain, Sweden, Norway, Russia, the Indies were open to our commerce. The premium of insurance against French capture was but five per cent, on ships bound to those ports; for scarcely a French privateer dared show itself on the ocean.

Our nation had cause of war with France, for France was at war with commerce and had invaded her rights; and our little navy, small as it was, and our merchantmen, if allowed to arm, might have bid defiance to France. England, then, would have respected our rights as allies; or, as our commerce was lucrative and paid profits that would cover an occasional seizure, we might have put our merchants on their guard, allowed them to arm their ships, and have temporized until the conflicting powers of the Old World had exhausted their strength, and we had grown strong enough to demand reparation.

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We owned at this period from eight to ten thousand vessels, and built annually nearly a thousand more. All the ships seized from 1800 to 1812 did not average one hundred and fifty yearly, of which more than one-third were released, and indemnity finally paid for half the residue: namely, there were 917 seized by England, more than half released; 558 seized by France, one-fourth released; 70 seized by Denmark; 47 seized by Naples, and more property was detained by France than England. But the sympathies of our Cabinet were with Napoleon; a moment had arrived when he had determined to reverse the laws of trade and exclude the exports of England from the Continent; and our rulers, regardless of our own commerce, determined to withhold all our produce, to cut off the raw material from England at the moment she had lost the sale of her exports, and by this combined process to bring her to submission. They forgot, for the moment, how impossible it is to reverse the great laws of trade; that we thus gratuitously resigned to her the commerce of the globe; that China, the Indies, with their inexhaustible supplies, Spain, Sweden, Norway, Russia, and Africa, were open to her ships and might fill the vacuum. The hazardous experiment was made. Let us trace the progress of events.

May 16, 1806, England passed her Orders in Council, declaring the ports and rivers from Brest to the Elbe in a state of blockade. November 21, 1806, Napoleon issued his Berlin Decree, declaring the British ports blockaded. January 6, 1807, England prohibited all coastwise trade with France, and November 11, 1807, prohibited all neutrals from trading with France or her allies, except on payment of duties to England. December 17, 1807, Napoleon issued his Milan Decree, confiscating all neutral vessels that had been searched by English cruisers, or had paid duties to England. December 16, 1807, the day preceding the date of the Milan Decree, President Jefferson submitted to Congress the Embargo. The Democratic party was then all-powerful, and the measure, after being debated for a few days and nights in the House, and a few hours in the Senate with closed doors, was adopted. This gratuitous surrender to England of the commerce of the world, this measure whose objects were veiled in mystery, conjectured, but not understood, became a law December 22, 1807.

A leader of the Democratic party, in urging its passage, said,—“The President has recommended the measure on his high responsibility. I would not consider, I would not deliberate, I would act; doubtless the President possesses such further information as would justify such a measure.” And the pliant majority acquiesced.

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After the passage of the Embargo Act, other acts were speedily passed to give it efficacy. By these, forfeitures of threefold the value of merchandise were imposed on those who violated its provisions, vessels were obliged to give heavy bonds to land their cargoes in the United States, and all shipments to frontier posts were prohibited. Under these acts the shipment of flour coastwise was forbidden, except upon permits issued at the pleasure of the President, upon the requisition of Governors of States, most of whom were members of the dominant party. And last of all came the Enforcing Act, under the provisions of which the collectors were armed with power to call out the militia at their discretion and upon suspicion of an intent to violate the law, to require vessels that had given bonds to discharge their cargoes, and to detain every suspected vessel engaged in the coasting-trade. These measures did not pass without opposition. Although the minority was weak in numbers, it was not deficient in talent.

In the House, Josiah Quincy of Massachusetts, at that period the great commercial State, was the Federal leader; and he now, after the lapse of half a century, still survives in a green old age to see his policy vindicated by the verdict of history.

Quincy, in various speeches, urged upon Congress,—

“You undertake to protect better the property of the merchant than his own sense of personal interest would induce him to protect it.

“Suppose the embargo passes; will France forego a policy designed to crush Great Britain and secure her way to universal empire, or England a policy essential to her national existence? It is all very well to talk of the patriotism and quiet submission of the people of the interior; they cannot help submitting, they will have no opportunity to break the embargo. But they whose ships lie on the edge of the ocean laden with produce, with the alternative before them of total ruin or a rich market, are in a totally different condition.”

Again said Quincy,—

“Never before did society witness a total prohibition of all intercourse like this in a commercial nation. But it has been asked in debate, ‘Will not Massachusetts, the Cradle of Liberty, submit to such privations?’ An Embargo Liberty was never cradled in Massachusetts. Our Liberty was not so much a mountain-nymph as a sea-nymph. She was free as air. She could swim, or she could run. The ocean was her cradle. Our fathers met her as she came, like the Goddess of Beauty, from the waves. They caught her as she was sporting on the beach. They courted her while she was spreading her nets upon the rocks. But an Embargo Liberty, a handcuffed Liberty, Liberty in fetters, a Liberty traversing between the four sides of a prison and beating her head against the walls, is none of our offspring. We abjure the monster! Its parentage is all inland.

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"Is embargo independence? Deceive not yourselves! it is palpable submission! France and Great Britain require you to relinquish a part of your commerce, and you relinquish it entirely! At every corner of this great city we meet some gentlemen of the majority wringing their hands and exclaiming, 'What shall we do? nothing but an embargo will save us; remove it, and what shall we do?' Sir, it is not for me, an humble and uninfluential individual, at an awful distance from the predominant influences, to suggest plans for Government. But, to my eye, the path of duty is as distinct as the Milky Way, —all studded with living sapphires, glowing with light. It is the path of active preparation, of dignified energy. It is the path of 1776. It consists not in abandoning our rights, but in supporting them as they exist and where they exist,—*on the ocean as well as on the land.*"

Troup of Georgia, one of the champions of the Democratic party, replied to the Opposition,—“Shall we sacrifice the honor and independence of the nation for a little trade in codfish and potash? Permission to arm is equivalent to a declaration of war; make the embargo effective, and it will show what all the great commercial politicians have said is true,—it will vitally affect the manufacturing and commercial interests of England.”

As one coercive measure after another was proposed, John Randolph of Roanoke, who had at first favored an embargo, came out against the measure, and “warned the Administration that they were fast following in the fatal footsteps of Lord North.”

But one of the most effective speeches against the Democratic policy was made in February, 1809, by Gardinier, who represented New York, a city the creation of commerce.

“The avowed object of this policy,” he said, “was to save our vessels and property from capture; the real one seemed to be to establish a total non-intercourse with the whole world. We are engaged perpetually in making additions and supplements to the embargo. Wherever we can spy a hole, although it be no bigger than a wheat-straw, at which industry and enterprise can find vent, all our powers are called in requisition to stop it. The people of the country shall sell nothing but what they can sell to each other. All our surplus produce shall rot on our hands. God knows what all this means; I cannot understand it. I see effects, but I can trace them to no cause. I fear there is an unknown hand guiding us to the most dreadful destinies, unseen, because it cannot endure the light. Darkness and mystery overshadow the House and the whole nation. We know nothing, we are permitted to know nothing. We sit here as mere automata.”

This speech nearly cost Gardinier his life, for he was in consequence of it challenged and dangerously wounded; but the embargo was permitted to continue.

The produce of the country fell sixty to seventy per cent. in value, and much of it passed at low prices into the hands of British agents. Armed ships from England appeared on

the coast of Georgia and loaded with cotton from lighters in defiance of Government, and Northern ships in the outports occasionally eluded the vigilance of collectors or escaped by their collusion; but the measure pressed with a crushing weight upon the honest merchants and ship-owners.

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When news of the Enforcing Act reached Boston, it was received with such indignation, that General Lincoln, the collector of the port, resigned, and the flags of the dismantled ships were hoisted at half-mast, processions of starving sailors and mechanics passed through the streets, and the whole community was highly excited; an excitement increased by an order from the Cabinet to the commandant of the fort to allow no vessel whatever to proceed to sea.

But the end of Jefferson's administration was approaching. He had come in as the advocate of popular rights; and now at the close of his term was enforcing measures more arbitrary than those which preceded the Revolution. Madison was nominated as his successor. All New England, save the inland State of Vermont, was revolutionized and voted against him, while Maryland and New York chose Federal Assemblies. The South, however, gave him its votes, and he was elected; but the tide of public opinion was rolling strongly against the Embargo.

The new legislature of Massachusetts was convened; Governor Gore, who had displaced Gerry, drew their attention to the arbitrary and oppressive measures of Government; and the General Court, in their reply, after denouncing those measures as illegal and unconstitutional, used the memorable words, that "*they would be true to the Union, although they had fallen under the ban of the Empire.*"

The merchants determined to test the legality of the Enforcing Act; but John Quincy Adams and Joseph Story repaired to Washington, and urged the necessity of a repeal. Their representations, and the signal defeat of the Democracy at the North, proved irresistible; and the Embargo, after a protracted struggle, fell before them.

From this glance at the history of the Embargo we can account for the asperity of feeling towards the Democratic leaders, and the distrust of their measures and men, which pervaded New England from the passage of the Embargo Act until the close of the war.

New England, and more especially Massachusetts, commercial from its infancy, did not come into the Union to surrender its commerce, navigation, or seamen to any visionary theories of the South. For nearly two centuries it had struggled for all its liberties with the parent empire. It had learned in the cruel school of oppression that the price of freedom is perpetual vigilance.

Fifteen months had now elapsed since the laying of the embargo, and it had more than realized all the presages of its opponents. Our minister, Armstrong, had written from France, that it had produced no effect in France and was forgotten in England. Pinckney, in England, did all in his power to save the Administration, by offering to end the embargo, if England would relax her policy; but Canning replied, that England had no complaints to make, that Spain and Russia had been opened to her, and the measure would serve to convince her that she was not absolutely dependent on the trade of America; with cutting irony, he added, he would make but one concession to

America: she had complained that England drew a tribute from her merchandise, when shipped to the Continent; he would, out of deference to American delicacy, substitute a total prohibition. He had the tact, also, to draw from Pinckney a letter offering to concede many of the points in dispute, and published it with an insolent commentary.

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Jefferson still clung to the embargo; but Madison and his friends, deferring to the reasons of Story and Adams, and yielding to the adverse current now setting strongly against Democracy, March 9, 1809, repealed the obnoxious act. Such was the end and signal failure of a measure alike disastrous at home and abroad, a measure which had falsified all the predictions of its author. Its avowed object was to secure our seamen from impressment, to protect our commerce, and preserve our ships; its presumed object was to coöperate with France, and starve England into submission: but none, of these objects were effected. Instead of rescuing our seamen, it imprisoned them all at home, and deprived them of the food which they found even in the prisons of the enemy. Instead of protecting our commerce, it tamely resigned it to England, and either left our exports to perish or reduced their value sixty per cent. It seized all our ships at home, and left most of them to decay, without giving the sufferer the claim to ultimate redress which consoled him in cases of foreign seizure. It aided France so little, that this "deed of magnanimity" was in a few months forgotten. Instead of impoverishing or humbling England, it poured into her lap the riches of the world, and increased the insolence of her tone; while it impoverished our own nation, broke the spirit of the commercial classes and alienated them from Government, and gave the first of a series of blows to the nation from which it did not recover for a quarter of a century.

But the pusillanimous policy which prompted the embargo survived its repeal. The Chinese theory still showed itself, not in measures for defence, but in impotent measures for restriction or prohibition, and finally in a declaration of war against England on the very eve of her triumph by the power of her navy and commerce over the greatest captain of the age: a war declared by our rulers without an army, navy, officers, coast-defence, or national credit, for the avowed purpose of securing free trade and sailors' rights by measures which the mercantile community rejected. In its progress, the want of discipline, forts, ships, munitions of war, credit abroad, and frugality at home, was most severely felt; and the principal honor derived from it arose from the exploits of the few frigates left to us by improvidence and parsimony, from the achievements of the Northern troops of Scott, Brown, and Miller, disciplined during the war, and the courage and sagacity of the veteran Jackson and his Western volunteers behind their cotton ramparts at New Orleans.

If, during the seven years of trial and suffering, from 1808 to 1815, in which nearly one-half of the wealth of New England was extinguished, her citizens became indignant at the wanton sacrifice of their means and of the best opportunity Fortune ever gave them to gain riches by commerce,—if the public sentiment found expression alike through the press, in town-meetings, in legislative halls, and even in



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the pulpit,—if the capitalists lost confidence in a government which trifled with its own resources,—if the merchant refused all countenance to those who had wrought his ruin,—let the blame fall on the originators of the evil. Lord North did but impose a few light taxes, place a few restrictions upon commerce, and make a few other inroads on freedom; but he set a nation in flames. The Cabinets of 1807 and 1812 warred against commerce itself, and placed an interdict on every harbor; and which of the measures of the British statesman was more arbitrary in its character, more repugnant to the spirit of freemen, or more questionable as to its legality, than the Enforcing Act of 1808? And if the men of New England, who had in their colonial weakness met both France and England by sea and land without a fear, saw the fruits of their industry sacrificed and the bread taken from their children's mouths by the Chinese policy of a Southern cabinet, might they not well chafe under measures so oppressive and so unnecessary that they were ingloriously abandoned? Under a dynasty whose policy had closed their ports, silenced their cannon, nearly ruined their commerce, and left their country without a navy, army, coast-defences, or national credit, could they be expected to rush with ardor into a war with the greatest naval power of the age, elated with her triumph over Napoleon,—into a war to be prosecuted on land by raw recruits against the veteran troops of England, for the avowed purpose of protecting the commerce of those who opposed it, and in which munitions of war were to be dragged at their expense across pathless forests,—into a war whose burdens were to fall either in present or prospective charges upon their surviving trade? Must they not have deeply felt that they were still under “the ban of the Empire”? and is it not proof of the extent of their patriotism and intense love of country, that under such trials and adverse policy they were still “true to the Union”?

If Canada were desired, how easily might it have been acquired by a wiser policy! A small loan to the State of New York, from surplus funds, might have opened the Erie and Champlain Canals twenty years in advance of their completion. A little aid to men of genius might have placed Fulton's steamers, then navigating the Hudson, on the Lakes.

A dozen frigates to cruise in the Gulf of St. Lawrence would have cut off supplies from England. The attractions of a new outlet for commerce, aided by a few disciplined regiments, the command of the Lakes, facilities for moving munitions of war and for intercepting supplies, would have settled the question in advance. And instead of a series of measures which embittered parties, created a jealousy between North and South, called into the field one hundred and twenty thousand raw militia, and absorbed in wasteful expenses nearly half our resources, we should have reaped a golden harvest in commerce, preserved our wealth, and have

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either avoided war, or terminated it in the same style in which the Constitution, Constellation, and United States terminated their conflicts on the deep, or as France and England terminated their recent war with Russia, arresting their foe in his march of conquest, closing his ports, destroying his fleet, seamen, and chief military station, and nearly exhausting his resources,—and drawing the means of war from commerce, have at the same time expanded our commerce, cities, and wealth to a degree unparalleled in our history.

The past, however, is gone, and the future is before us. England, conscious of her naval power, of her vast steam-marine, and of our deficiencies, has not acceded to our proposal to exempt merchantmen from seizure in future wars. Is it not now our policy to provide in advance for the contingencies of the future,—to obtain the live-oak and cedar frames, the engines, boilers, Paixhan guns for at least one hundred steam-frigates, with coats of mail for some of them,—so that, instead of spending years in their construction, launching them when the war is over, and then leaving them to decay, we may, as the crisis approaches, be able in a few months to fit out a fleet which, if not irresistible, shall at least command respect? Accomplished officers and men can be drawn from the merchant-service at short notice; but we cannot create steamers in a moment.

The appropriations by Congress of late years for steam—frigates and sloops-of-war, and for the defence of New York, New Bedford, Portland, Bath, and Bangor,—for Bath, in particular, which owns nearly two hundred thousand tons of shipping, and which builds more ships annually than any other port in the Union, Boston excepted,—are most judicious; but are there not other points which deserve the attention of Government? Should not a few thousand rifled cannon, a good supply of rifles, and a proportionate amount of powder and ball be deposited near San Francisco, to enable us, in case of war, to convert our clipper ships and steamers in the Pacific into cruisers? Should not batteries of Paixhan guns be erected at the outlet of Long Island Sound, upon Gull and Fisher's Islands and the opposite points, to convert the whole Sound above into a fortified harbor, and thus defend New York and the important seaports upon the Sound, and by these fortresses and a few coast-batteries between Stonington and Newport, like those on the coast of France, keep open during war an inland navigation for coal and flour between the Chesapeake and Delaware Bays, Pennsylvania, New York, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Massachusetts? Should not these and similar questions of national defence, in these days of extended commerce, command the attention of the nation?

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**DENMARK VESEY.**

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On Saturday afternoon, May 25th, 1822, a slave named Devany, belonging to Colonel Prioleau of Charleston, South Carolina, was sent to market by his mistress.—the Colonel being absent in the country. After doing his errands, he strolled down upon the wharves, in the enjoyment of that magnificent wealth of leisure which usually characterizes the “house-servant” of the South, when once beyond hail of the street-door. He presently noticed a small vessel lying in the stream, with a peculiar flag flying; and while looking at it, he was accosted by a slave named William, belonging to Mr. John Paul, who remarked to him,—“I have often seen a flag with the number 76, but never one with the number 96 upon it before.” After some further conversation on this trifling point, he continued with earnestness,—“Do you know that something serious is about to take place?” Devany disclaiming the knowledge of any graver impending crisis than the family dinner, the other went on to inform him that many of the slaves were “determined to right themselves.” “We are determined,” he added, “to shake off our bondage, and for that purpose we stand on a good foundation; many have joined, and if you will go with me, I will show you the man who has the list of names, and who will take yours down.”

This startling disclosure was quite too much for Devany; he was made of the wrong material for so daring a project; his genius was culinary, not revolutionary. Giving some excuse for breaking off the conversation, he went forthwith to consult a free colored man, named Pensil or Pencell, who advised him to warn his master instantly. So he lost no time in telling the secret to his mistress and her young son; and on the return of Colonel Prioleau from the country, five days afterward, it was at once revealed to him. Within an hour or two he stated the facts to Mr. Hamilton, the Intendant, or, as we should say, Mayor; Mr. Hamilton at once summoned the Corporation, and by five o'clock Devany and William were under examination.

This was the first warning of a plot which ultimately filled Charleston with terror. And yet so thorough and so secret was the organization of the negroes, that a fortnight passed without yielding the slightest information beyond the very little which was obtained from these two. William Paul was, indeed, put in confinement and soon gave evidence inculcating two slaves as his employers,—Mingo Harth and Peter Poyas. But these men, when arrested, behaved with such perfect coolness and treated the charge with such entire levity, their trunks and premises, when searched, were so innocent of all alarming contents, that they were soon discharged by the Wardens. William Paul at length became alarmed for his own safety, and began to let out further facts piecemeal, and to inculcate other men. But some of those very men came voluntarily to the Intendant, on hearing that they were suspected, and indignantly offered themselves for examination. Puzzled and bewildered, the municipal government kept the thing as secret as possible, placed the city guard in an efficient condition, provided sixteen hundred rounds of ball cartridges, and ordered the sentinels and patrols to be armed with loaded muskets. “Such had been our fancied security, that the guard had previously gone on duty without muskets and with only sheathed bayonets and bludgeons.”

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It has since been asserted, though perhaps on questionable authority, that the Secretary of War was informed of the plot, even including some details of the plan and the leader's name, before it was known in Charleston. If so, he utterly disregarded it; and, indeed, so well did the negroes play their part, that the whole report was eventually disbelieved, while (as was afterwards proved) they went on to complete their secret organization, and hastened by a fortnight the appointed day of attack. Unfortunately for their plans, however, another betrayal took place at the very last moment, from a different direction. A class-leader in a Methodist church had been persuaded or bribed by his master to procure further disclosures. He at length came and stated, that, about three months before, a man named Rolla, slave of Governor Bennett, had communicated to a friend of his the fact of an intended insurrection, and had said that the time fixed for the outbreak was the following Sunday night, June 16th. As this conversation took place on Friday, it gave but a very short time for the city authorities to act, especially as they wished neither to endanger the city nor to alarm it.

Yet so cautiously was the game played on both sides, that the whole thing was still kept hushed up from the Charleston public; and some members of the city government did not fully appreciate their danger till they had passed it. "The whole was concealed," wrote the Governor afterwards, "until the time came; but secret preparations were made. Saturday night and Sunday morning passed without demonstrations; doubts were excited, and counter orders issued for diminishing the guard." It afterwards proved that these preparations showed to the slaves that their plot was betrayed, and so saved the city without public alarm. Newspaper correspondence soon was full of the story,—each informant of course hinting plainly that he had been behind the scenes all along, and had withheld it only to gratify the authorities in their policy of silence. It was "now no longer a secret," they wrote,—adding, that for five or six weeks but little attention had been paid by the community to these rumors, the city council having kept it carefully to themselves, until a number of suspicious slaves had been arrested. This refers to ten prisoners who were seized on June 18th,—an arrest which killed the plot, and left only the terrors of what might have been. The investigation, thus publicly commenced, soon revealed a free colored man named Denmark Vesey as the leader of the enterprise,—among his chief coadjutors being that innocent Peter and that unsuspecting Mingo who had been examined and discharged nearly three weeks before.

It is matter of demonstration, that, but for the military preparations on the appointed Sunday night, the attempt would have been made. The ringleaders had actually met for their final arrangements, when, by comparing notes, they found themselves foiled; and within another week they were prisoners on trial. Nevertheless, the plot which they had laid was the most elaborate insurrectionary project ever formed by American slaves, and came the nearest to a terrible success. In boldness of conception and thoroughness of organization there has been nothing to compare with it, and it is worth while to dwell somewhat upon its details, first introducing the *Dramatis Personae*.

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Denmark Vesey had come very near figuring as a revolutionist in Hayti, instead of South Carolina. Captain Vesey, an old resident of Charleston, commanded a ship that traded between St. Thomas and Cape Francais, during our Revolutionary War, in the slave-transportation line. In the year 1781 he took on board a cargo of three hundred and ninety slaves, and sailed for the Cape. On the passage, he and his officers were much attracted by the beauty and intelligence of a boy of fourteen, whom they unanimously adopted into the cabin as a pet. They gave him new clothes and a new name, Telemaque, which was afterwards gradually corrupted into Telmak and Denmark. They amused themselves with him until their arrival at Cape Francais, and then, "having no use for the boy," sold their pet as if he had been a macaw or a monkey. Captain Vesey sailed for St. Thomas, and presently making another trip to Cape Francais, was surprised to hear from his consignee that Telemaque would be returned on his hands as being "unsound,"—not in theology nor in morals, but in body,—subject to epileptic fits, in fact. According to the custom of that place, the boy was examined by the city physician, who required Captain Vesey to take him back; and Denmark served him faithfully, with no trouble from epilepsy, for twenty years, travelling all over the world with him, and learning to speak various languages. In 1800, he drew a prize of fifteen hundred dollars in the East Bay Street Lottery, with which he bought his freedom from his master for six hundred dollars,—much less than his market value. From that time, the official report says, he worked as a carpenter in Charleston, distinguished for physical strength and energy. "Among those of his color he was looked up to with awe and respect. His temper was impetuous and domineering in the extreme, qualifying him for the despotic rule of which he was ambitious. All his passions were ungovernable and savage; and to his numerous wives and children he displayed the haughty and capricious cruelty of an Eastern bashaw."

"For several years before he disclosed his intentions to any one, he appears to have been constantly and assiduously engaged in endeavoring to embitter the minds of the colored population against the white. He rendered himself perfectly familiar with all those parts of the Scriptures which he thought he could pervert to his purpose; and would readily quote them, to prove that slavery was contrary to the laws of God,—that slaves were bound to attempt their emancipation, however shocking and bloody might be the consequences,—and that such efforts would not only be pleasing to the Almighty, but were absolutely enjoined and their success predicted in the Scriptures. His favorite texts, when he addressed those of his own color, were Zechariah, xiv. 1-3, and Joshua, vi. 21; and in all his conversations he identified their situation with that of the Israelites. The number of inflammatory pamphlets on slavery brought

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into Charleston from some of our sister States within the last four years, (and once from Sierra Leone,) and distributed amongst the colored population of the city, for which, there was a great facility, in consequence of the unrestricted intercourse allowed to persons of color between the different States in the Union, and the speeches in Congress of those opposed to the admission of Missouri into the Union, perhaps garbled and misrepresented, furnished him with ample means for inflaming the minds of the colored population of this State; and by distorting certain parts of those speeches, or selecting from them particular passages, he persuaded but too many that Congress had actually declared them free, and that they were held in bondage contrary to the laws of the land. Even whilst walking through the streets in company with another, he was not idle; for if his companion bowed to a white person, he would rebuke him, and observe that all men were born equal, and that he was surprised that any one would degrade himself by such conduct,—that he would never cringe to the whites, nor ought any one who had the feelings of a man. When answered, 'We are slaves,' he would sarcastically and indignantly reply, 'You deserve to remain slaves'; and if he were further asked, 'What can we do?' he would remark, 'Go and buy a spelling-book and read the fable of Hercules and the Wagoner,' which he would then repeat, and apply it to their situation. He also sought every opportunity of entering into conversation with white persons, when they could be overheard by negroes near by, especially in grogshops,—during which conversation he would artfully introduce some bold remark on slavery; and sometimes, when, from the character he was conversing with, he found he might be still bolder, he would go so far, that, had not his declarations in such situations been clearly proved, they would scarcely have been credited. He continued this course until some time after the commencement of the last winter; by which time he had not only obtained incredible influence amongst persons of color, but many feared him more than their owners, and, one of them declared, even more than his God."

It was proved against him that his house had been the principal place of meeting for the conspirators, that all the others habitually referred to him as the leader, and that he had shown great address in dealing with different temperaments and overcoming a variety of scruples. One witness testified that Vesey had read to him from the Bible about the deliverance of the Children of Israel; another, that he had read to him a speech which had been delivered "in Congress by a Mr. King" on the subject of slavery, and Vesey had said that "this Mr. King was the black man's friend,—that he, Mr. King, had declared he would continue to speak, write, and publish pamphlets against slavery the longest day he lived, until the Southern States consented to emancipate their slaves, for that slavery was a



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great disgrace to the country.” But among all the reports there are only two sentences which really reveal the secret soul of Denmark Vesey, and show his impulses and motives. “He said he did not go with Creighton to Africa, because he had not a will; *he wanted to stay and see what he could do for his fellow-creatures.*” The other takes us still nearer home. Monday Gell stated in his confession, that Vesey, on first broaching the plan to him, said “he was satisfied with his own condition, being free, *but, as all his children were slaves, he wished to see what could be done for them.*”

It is strange to turn from this simple statement of a perhaps intelligent preference, on the part of a parent, for seeing his offspring in a condition of freedom, to the *naive* astonishment of his judges. “It is difficult to imagine,” says the sentence finally passed on Denmark Vesey, “what *infatuation* could have prompted you to attempt an enterprise so wild and visionary. You were a free man, comparatively wealthy, and enjoyed every comfort compatible with your situation. You had, therefore, much to risk and little to gain.” Is slavery, then, a thing so intrinsically detestable, that a man thus favored will engage in a plan thus desperate merely to rescue his children from it? “Vesey said the negroes were living such an abominable life, they ought to rise. I said, I was living well; he said, though I was, others were not, and that ’t was such fools as I that were in the way and would not help them, and that after all things were well he would mark me.” “His general conversation,” said another witness, a white boy, “was about religion, which he would apply to slavery; as, for instance, he would speak of the creation of the world, in which he would say all men had equal rights, blacks as well as whites, *etc.*; all his religious remarks were mingled with slavery.” And the firmness of this purpose did not leave him, even after the betrayal of his cherished plans. “After the plot was discovered,” said Monday Gell, in his confession, “Vesey said it was all over, unless an attempt were made to rescue those who might be condemned, by rushing on the people and saving the prisoners, or all dying together.”

The only person to divide with Vesey the claim of leadership was Peter Poyas. Vesey was the missionary of the cause, but Peter was the organizing mind. He kept the register of “candidates,” and decided who should or should not be enrolled. “We can’t live so,” he often reminded his confederates; “we must break the yoke.” “God has a hand in it; we have been meeting for four years and are not yet betrayed.” Peter was a ship-carpenter, and a slave of great value. He was to be the military leader. His plans showed some natural generalship; he arranged the night-attack; he planned the enrolment of a mounted troop to scour the streets; and he had a list of all the shops where arms and ammunition were kept for sale. He voluntarily

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undertook the management of the most difficult part of the enterprise,—the capture of the main guard-house,—and had pledged himself to advance alone and surprise the sentinel. He was said to have a magnetism in his eye, of which his confederates stood in great awe; if he once got his eye upon a man, there was no resisting it. A white witness has since narrated, that, after his arrest, he was chained to the floor in a cell, with another of the conspirators. Men in authority came and sought by promises, threats, and even tortures, to ascertain the names of other accomplices. His companion, wearied out with pain and suffering, and stimulated by the hope of saving his own life, at last began to yield. Peter raised himself, leaned upon his elbow, looked at the poor fellow, saying quietly, “Die like a man,” and instantly lay down again. It was enough; not another word was extorted.

One of the most notable individuals in the plot was a certain Jack Purcell, commonly called Gullah Jack,—Gullah signifying Angola, the place of his origin. A conjurer by profession and by lineal heritage in his own country, he had resumed the practice of his vocation on this side the Atlantic. For fifteen years he had wielded in secret an immense influence among a sable constituency in Charleston; and as he had the reputation of being invulnerable, and of teaching invulnerability as an art, he was very good at beating up recruits for insurrection. Over those of Angolese descent, especially, he was a perfect king, and made them join in the revolt as one man. They met him monthly at a place called Bulkley’s Farm, selected because the black overseer on that plantation was one of the initiated, and because the farm was accessible by water, thus enabling them to elude the patrol. There they prepared cartridges and pikes, and had primitive banquets, which assumed a melodramatic character under the inspiring guidance of Jack. If a fowl was privately roasted, that mystic individual muttered incantations over it, and then they all grasped at it, exclaiming, “Thus we pull Buckra to pieces!” He gave them parched corn and ground-nuts to be eaten as internal safeguards on the day before the outbreak, and a consecrated *cullah*, or crab’s claw, to be carried in the mouth by each, as an amulet. These rather questionable means secured him a power which was very unquestionable; the witnesses examined in his presence all showed dread of his conjurations, and referred to him indirectly, with a kind of awe, as “the little man who can’t be shot.”

When Gullah Jack was otherwise engaged, there seems to have been a sort of deputy seer employed in the enterprise, a blind man named Philip. He was a preacher, was said to have been born with a caul on his head, and so claimed the gift of second-sight. Timid adherents were brought to his house for ghostly counsel. “Why do you look so timorous?” he said to William Garner, and then quoted Scripture, “Let not your hearts be troubled.” That a blind man should know how he *looked* was beyond the philosophy of the visitor, and this piece of rather cheap ingenuity carried the day.



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Other leaders were appointed also. Monday Gell was the scribe of the enterprise; he was a native African, who had learned to read and write. He was by trade a harness-maker, working chiefly on his own account. He confessed that he had written a letter to President Boyer of the new black republic; "the letter was about the sufferings of the blacks, and to know if the people of St. Domingo would help them, if they made an effort to free themselves." This epistle was sent by the black cook of a Northern schooner, and the envelope was addressed to a relative of the bearer.

Tom Russell was the armorer, and made pikes "on a very improved model," the official report admits. Polydore Faber fitted the weapons with handles. Bacchus Hammett had charge of the firearms and ammunition, not as yet a laborious duty. William Garner and Mingo Harth were to lead the horse-company. Lot Forrester was the courier, and had done, no one ever knew how much, in the way of enlisting country negroes, of whom Ned Bennett was to take command when enlisted. Being the Governor's servant, Ned was probably credited with some official experience. These were the officers: now for the plan of attack.

It was the custom then, as now, for the country negroes to flock largely into Charleston on Sunday. More than a thousand came, on ordinary occasions, and a far larger number might at any time make their appearance without exciting any suspicion. They gathered in, especially by water, from the opposite sides of Ashley and Cooper Rivers, and from the neighboring islands; and they came in a great number of canoes of various sizes,—many of which could carry a hundred men,—which were ordinarily employed in bringing agricultural products to the Charleston market. To get an approximate knowledge of the number, the city government once ordered the persons thus arriving to be counted,—and that during the progress of the trials, at a time when the negroes were rather fearful of coming into town,—and it was found, that, even then, there were more than five hundred visitors on a single Sunday. This fact, then, was the essential point in the plan of insurrection. Whole plantations were found to have been enlisted among the "candidates," as they were termed; and it was proved that the city negroes who lived nearest the place of meeting had agreed to conceal these confederates in their houses to a large extent, on the night of the proposed outbreak.

The details of the plan, however, were not rashly committed to the mass of the confederates; they were known only to a few, and were finally to have been announced after the evening prayer-meetings on the appointed Sunday. But each leader had his own company enlisted, and his own work marked out. When the clock struck twelve, all were to move. Peter Poyas was to lead a party ordered to assemble at South Bay, and to be joined by a force from James' Island; he was then to march up and seize the arsenal

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and guard-house opposite St. Michael's Church, and detach a sufficient number to cut off all white citizens who should appear at the alarm-posts. A second body of negroes, from the country and the Neck, headed by Ned Bennett, was to assemble on the Neck and seize the arsenal there. A third was to meet at Governor Bennett's Mills, under command of Rolla, and, after putting the Governor and Intendant to death, to march through the city, or be posted at Cannon's Bridge, thus preventing the inhabitants of Cannonsborough from entering the city. A fourth, partly from the country and partly from the neighboring localities in the city, was to rendezvous on Gadsden's Wharf and attack the upper guard-house. A fifth, composed of country and Neck negroes, was to assemble at Bulkley's Farm, two miles and a half from the city, seize the upper powder-magazine and then march down; and a sixth was to assemble at Denmark Vesey's and obey his orders. A seventh detachment, under Gullah Jack, was to assemble in Boundary Street, at the head of King Street, to capture the arms of the Neck company of militia, and to take an additional supply from Mr. Duquercron's shop. The naval stores on Mey's Wharf were also to be attacked. Meanwhile a horse-company, consisting of many draymen, hostlers, and butcher-boys, was to meet at Lightwood's Alley and then scour the streets to prevent the whites from assembling. Every white man coming out of his own door was to be killed, and, if necessary, the city was to be fired in several places,—slow-match for this purpose having been purloined from the public arsenal and placed in an accessible position.

Beyond this, the plan of action was either unformed or undiscovered; some slight reliance seems to have been placed on English aid,—more on assistance from St. Domingo; at any rate, all the ships in the harbor were to be seized, and in these, if the worst came to the worst, those most deeply inculpated could set sail, bearing with them, perhaps, the spoils of shops and of banks. It seems to be admitted by the official narrative, that, they might have been able, at that season of the year, and with the aid of the fortifications on the Neck and around the harbor, to retain possession of the city for some time.

So unsuspecting were the authorities, so unprepared the citizens, so open to attack lay the city, that nothing seemed necessary to the success of the insurgents except organization and arms. Indeed, the plan of organization easily covered a supply of arms. By their own contributions they had secured enough to strike the first blow,—a few hundred pikes and daggers, together with swords and guns for the leaders. But they had carefully marked every place in the city where weapons were to be obtained. On King-Street Road, beyond the municipal limits, in a common wooden shop, were left unguarded the arms of the Neck company of militia, to the number of several hundred stand; and these were to be secured by Bacchus

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Hammett, whose master kept the establishment. In Mr. Duquercron's shop there were deposited for sale as many more weapons; and they had noted Mr. Schirer's shop in Queen Street, and other gunsmiths' establishments. Finally, the State arsenal in Meeting Street, a building with no defences except ordinary wooden doors, was to be seized early in the outbreak. Provided, therefore, that the first moves proved successful, all the rest appeared sure.

Very little seems to have been said among the conspirators in regard to any plans of riot or debauchery, subsequent to the capture of the city. Either their imaginations did not dwell on them, or the witnesses did not dare to give testimony, or the authorities to print it. Death was to be dealt out, comprehensive and terrible; but nothing more is mentioned. One prisoner, Rolla, is reported in the evidence to have dropped hints in regard to the destiny of the women; and there was a rumor in the newspapers of the time, that he, or some other of Governor Bennett's slaves, was to have taken the Governor's daughter, a young girl of sixteen, for his wife, in the event of success; but this is all. On the other hand, Denmark Vesey was known to be for a war of immediate and total extermination; and when some of the company opposed killing "the ministers and the women and children," Vesey read from the Scriptures that all should be cut off, and said that "it was for their safety not to leave one white skin alive, for this was the plan they pursued at St. Domingo." And all this was not a mere dream of one lonely enthusiast, but a measure which had been maturing for four full years among several confederates, and had been under discussion for five months among multitudes of initiated "candidates."

As usual with slave-insurrections, the best men and those most trusted were deepest in the plot. Rolla was the only prominent conspirator who was not an active Church-member. "Most of the ringleaders," says a Charleston letter-writer of that day, "were the rulers or class-leaders in what is called the African Society, and were considered faithful, honest fellows. Indeed, many of the owners could not be convinced, till the fellows confessed themselves, that they were concerned, and that the first object of all was to kill their masters." And the first official report declares that it would not be difficult to assign a motive for the insurrectionists, "if it had not been distinctly proved, that, with scarcely an exception, they had no individual hardship to complain of, and were among the most humanely treated negroes in the city. The facilities for combining and confederating in such a scheme were amply afforded by the extreme indulgence and kindness which characterizes the domestic treatment of our slaves. Many slave-owners among us, not satisfied with ministering to the wants of their domestics by all the comforts of abundant food and excellent clothing, with a misguided benevolence have not only permitted their instruction, but lent to such efforts their approbation and applause."

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"I sympathize most sincerely," says the anonymous author of a pamphlet of the period, "with the very respectable and pious clergyman whose heart must still bleed at the recollection that his confidential class-leader, but a week or two before his just conviction, had received the communion of the Lord's Supper from his hand. This wretch had been brought up in his pastor's family, and was treated with the same Christian attention as was shown to their own children." "To us who are accustomed to the base and proverbial ingratitude of these people this ill return of kindness and confidence is not surprising; but they who are ignorant of their real character will read and wonder."

One demonstration of this "Christian attention" had lately been the closing of the African Church,—of which, as has been stated, most of the leading revolutionists were members,—on the ground that it tended to spread the dangerous infection of the alphabet. On January 15th, 1821, the City Marshal, John J. Lafar, had notified "ministers of the gospel and others who keep night- and Sunday-schools for slaves, that the education of such persons is forbidden by law, and that the city government feel imperiously bound to enforce the penalty." So that there were some special, as well as general grounds for disaffection among these ungrateful favorites of Fortune, the slaves. Then there were fancied dangers. An absurd report had somehow arisen—since you cannot keep men ignorant without making them unreasonable also—that on the ensuing Fourth of July the whites were to create a false alarm, and that every black man coming out was to be killed, "in order to thin them"; this being done to prevent their joining an imaginary army supposed to be on its way from Hayti. Others were led to suppose that Congress had ended the Missouri Compromise discussion by making them all free, and that the law would protect their liberty, if they could only secure it. Others again were threatened with the vengeance of the conspirators, unless they also joined; on the night of attack, it was said, the initiated would have a countersign, and all who did not know it would share the fate of the whites. Add to this the reading of Congressional speeches, and of the copious magazine of revolution to be found in the Bible,—and it was no wonder, if they for the first time were roused, under the energetic leadership of Vesey, to a full consciousness of their own condition.

"Not only were the leaders of good character and very much indulged by their owners, but this was very generally the case with all who were convicted,—many of them possessing the highest confidence of their owners, and not one of bad character." In one case it was proved that Vesey had forbidden his followers to trust a certain man, because he had once been seen intoxicated. In another case it was shown that a slave named George had made every effort to obtain their confidence, but was constantly excluded

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from their meetings as a talkative fellow who could not be trusted,—a policy which his levity of manner, when examined in court, fully justified. They took no women into counsel,—not from any distrust apparently, but in order that their children might not be left uncared-for, in case of defeat and destruction. House-servants were rarely trusted, or only when they had been carefully sounded by the chief leaders. Peter Poyas, in commissioning an agent to enlist men, gave him excellent cautions: “Don’t mention it to those waiting-men who receive presents of old coats, *etc.*, from their masters, or they’ll betray us; *I will speak to them.*” When he did speak, if he did not convince them, he at least frightened them; but the chief reliance was on the slaves hired out and therefore more uncontrolled,—and also upon the country negroes.

The same far-sighted policy directed the conspirators to disarm suspicion by peculiarly obedient and orderly conduct. And it shows the precaution with which the thing was carried on, that, although Peter Poyas was proved to have had a list of some six hundred persons, yet not one of his particular company was ever brought to trial. As each leader kept to himself the names of his proselytes, and as Monday Gell was the only one of these who turned traitor, any opinion as to the numbers actually engaged must appear altogether conjectural. One witness said nine thousand; another, six thousand six hundred. These statements were probably extravagant, though not more so than Governor Bennett’s assertion, on the other side, that “all who were actually concerned had been brought to justice,”—unless by this phrase he designates only the ringleaders. The avowed aim of the Governor’s letter, indeed, is to smooth the thing over, for the credit and safety of the city; and its evasive tone contrasts strongly with the more frank and thorough statements of the Judges, made after the thing could no longer be hushed up. These best authorities explicitly acknowledge that they had failed to detect more than a small minority of those concerned in the project, and seem to admit, that, if it had once been brought to a head, the slaves generally would have joined in.

“We cannot venture to say,” says the Intendant’s pamphlet, “to how many the knowledge of the intended effort was communicated, who, without signifying their assent, or attending any of the meetings, were yet prepared to profit by events. That there are many who would not have permitted the enterprise to have failed at a critical moment, for the want of their cooeperation, we have the best reason for believing.” So believed the community at large; and the panic was in proportion, when the whole danger was finally made public. “The scenes I witnessed,” says one who has since narrated the circumstances, “and the declaration of the impending danger that met us at all times and on all occasions, forced the conviction that never were an

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entire people more thoroughly alarmed than were the people of Charleston at that time.... During the excitement and the trial of the supposed conspirators, rumor proclaimed all, and doubtless more than all, the horrors of the plot. The city was to be fired in every quarter, the arsenal in the immediate vicinity was to be broken open and the arms distributed to the insurgents, and an universal massacre of the white inhabitants to take place. Nor did there seem to be any doubt in the mind of the people that such would actually have been the result, had not the plot fortunately been detected before the time appointed for the outbreak. It was believed, as a matter of course, that every black in the city would join in the insurrection, and that, if the original design had been attempted, and the city taken by surprise, the negroes would have achieved a complete and easy victory. Nor does it seem at all impossible that such might have been or yet may be the case, if any well-arranged and resolute rising should take place."

Indeed, this universal admission, that all the slaves were ready to take part in any desperate enterprise, was one of the most startling aspects of the affair. The authorities say that the two principal State's evidence declared that "they never spoke to any person of color on the subject, or knew of any one who had been spoken to by the other leaders, who had withheld his assent." And the conspirators seem to have been perfectly satisfied that all the remaining slaves would enter their ranks upon the slightest success. "Let us assemble a sufficient number to commence the work with spirit, and we'll not want men; they'll fall in behind us fast enough." And as an illustration of this readiness, the official report mentions a slave who had belonged to one master for sixteen years, sustaining a high character for fidelity and affection, who had twice travelled with him through the Northern States, resisting every solicitation to escape, and who yet was very deeply concerned in the insurrection, though knowing it to involve the probable destruction of the whole family with whom he lived.

One singular circumstance followed the first rumors of the plot. Several white men, said to be of low and unprincipled character, at once began to make interest with the supposed leaders among the slaves, either from genuine sympathy, or with the intention of betraying them for money, or of profiting by the insurrection, should it succeed. Four of these were brought to trial; but the official report expresses the opinion that many more might have been discovered but for the inadmissibility of slave-testimony against whites. Indeed, the evidence against even these four was insufficient for a capital conviction, although one was overheard, through stratagem, by the Intendant himself, and arrested on the spot. This man was a Scotchman, another a Spaniard, a third a German, and the fourth a Carolinian. The last had for thirty years kept a shop in the neighborhood of Charleston;



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he was proved to have asserted that “the negroes had as much right to fight for their liberty as the white people,” had offered to head them in the enterprise, and had said that in three weeks he would have two thousand men. But in no case, it appears, did these men obtain the confidence of the slaves, and the whole plot was conceived and organized, so far as appears, without the slightest coeoperation from any white man.

The trial of the conspirators began on Wednesday, June 19th. At the request of the Intendant, Justices Kennedy and Parker summoned five freeholders (Messrs. Drayton, Heyward, Pringle, Legare, and Turnbull) to constitute a court, under the provisions of the act “for the better ordering and governing negroes and other slaves.” The Intendant laid the case before them, with a list of prisoners and witnesses. By a vote of the Court, all spectators were excluded, except the owners and counsel of the slaves concerned. No other colored person was allowed to enter the jail, and a strong guard of soldiers was kept always on duty around the building. Under these general arrangements the trials proceeded with elaborate formality, though with some variations from ordinary usage,—as was, indeed, required by the statute.

For instance, the law provided that the testimony of any Indian or slave could be received, *without oath*, against a slave or free colored person, although it was not valid, even under oath, against a white. But it is best to quote the official language in respect to the rules adopted. “As the Court had been organized under a statute of a peculiar and local character, and intended for the government of a distinct class of persons in the community, they were bound to conform their proceedings to its provisions, which depart in many essential features from the principles of the Common Law and some of the settled rules of evidence. The Court, however, determined to adopt those rules, whenever they were not repugnant to nor expressly excepted by that statute, nor inconsistent with the local situation and policy of the State; and laid down for their own government the following regulations: First, that no slave should be tried except in the presence of his owner or his counsel, and that notice should be given in every case at least one day before the trial; second, that the testimony of one witness, unsupported by additional evidence or by circumstances, should lead to no conviction of a *capital* nature; third, that the witnesses should be confronted with the accused and with each other in every case, except where testimony was given under a solemn pledge that the names of the witnesses should not be divulged,—as they declared, in some instances, that they apprehended being murdered by the blacks, if it was known that they had volunteered their evidence; fourth, that the prisoners might be represented by counsel, whenever this was requested by the owners of the slaves, or by the prisoners themselves, if free; fifth, that the statements or defences of the accused should be heard in every case, and they be permitted themselves to examine any witness they thought proper.”

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It is singular to observe how entirely these rules seem to concede that a slave's life has no sort of value to himself, but only to his master. His master, not he himself, must choose whether it be worth while to employ counsel. His master, not his mother or his wife, must be present at the trial. So far is this carried, that the provision to exclude "persons who had no particular interest in the slaves accused" seems to have excluded every acknowledged relative they had in the world, and admitted only those who had invested in them so many dollars. And yet the very first section of that part of the statute under which they were tried lays down an explicit recognition of their humanity. "And whereas natural justice forbids that any *person*, of what condition soever, should be condemned unheard." So thoroughly, in the whole report, are the ideas of person and chattel intermingled, that, when Governor Bennett petitions for mitigation of sentence in the case of his slave Batteau, and closes, "I ask this, gentlemen, as an individual incurring a severe and distressing loss," it is really impossible to decide whether the predominant emotion be affectional or financial.

It is a matter of painful necessity to acknowledge that the proceedings of all slave-tribunals justify the honest admission of Governor Adams of South Carolina, in his legislative message of 1855:—"The administration of our laws, in relation to our colored population, by our courts of magistrates and freeholders, as these courts are at present constituted, calls loudly for reform. Their decisions are rarely in conformity with justice or humanity." This trial, as reported by the justices themselves, seems to have been no worse than the average,—perhaps better. In all, thirty-five were sentenced to death, thirty-four to transportation, twenty-seven acquitted by the Court, and twenty-five discharged without trial, by the Committee of Vigilance, making in all one hundred and twenty-one.

The sentences pronounced by Judge Kennedy upon the leading rebels, while paying a high tribute to their previous character, of course bring all law and all Scripture to prove the magnitude of their crime. "It is a melancholy fact," he says, "that those servants in whom we reposed the most unlimited confidence have been the principal actors in this wicked scheme." Then he rises into earnest appeals. "Are you incapable of the heavenly influence of that gospel all whose paths are peace? It was to reconcile us to our destiny on earth, and to enable us to discharge with fidelity all our duties, whether as master or servant, that those inspired precepts were imparted by Heaven to fallen man." And so on.



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To these reasonings the prisoners had, of course, nothing to say; but the official reports bear the strongest testimony to their fortitude. "Rolla, when arraigned, affected not to understand the charge against him, and when it was at his request further explained to him, assumed, with wonderful adroitness, astonishment and surprise. He was remarkable, throughout his trial, for great presence and composure of mind. When he was informed he was convicted, and was advised to prepare for death, though he had previously (but after his trial) confessed his guilt, he appeared perfectly confounded, but exhibited no signs of fear. In Ned's behavior there was nothing remarkable; but his countenance was stern and immovable, even whilst he was receiving the sentence of death: from his looks it was impossible to discover or conjecture what were his feelings. Not so with Peter; for in his countenance were strongly marked disappointed ambition, revenge, indignation, and an anxiety to know how far the discoveries had extended; and the same emotions were exhibited in his conduct. He did not appear to fear personal consequences, for his whole behavior indicated the reverse; but exhibited an evident anxiety for the success of their plan, in which his whole soul was embarked. His countenance and behavior were the same when he received his sentence, and his only words were, on retiring, 'I suppose you'll let me see my wife and family before I die?' and that not in a supplicating tone. When he was asked, a day or two after, if it was possible he could wish to see his master and family murdered, who had treated him so kindly, he only replied to the question by a smile. Monday's behavior was not peculiar. When he was before the Court, his arms were folded; he heard the testimony given against him, and received his sentence with the utmost firmness and composure. But no description can accurately convey to others the impression which the trial, defence, and appearance of Gullah Jack made on those who witnessed the workings of his cunning and rude address. When arrested and brought before the Court, in company with another African named Jack, the property of the estate of Pritchard, he assumed so much ignorance, and looked and acted the fool so well, that some of the Court could not believe that this was the necromancer who was sought after. This conduct he continued when on his trial, until he saw the witnesses and heard the testimony as it progressed against him, when, in an instant, his countenance was lighted up as if by lightning, and his wildness and vehemence of gesture, and the malignant glance with which he eyed the witnesses who appeared against him, all indicated the savage, who, indeed, had been caught, but not tamed. His courage, however, soon forsook him. When he received sentence of death, he earnestly implored that a fortnight longer might be allowed him, and then a week longer, which he continued earnestly to solicit until he was taken from the court-room to his cell; and when he was carried to execution, he gave up his spirit without firmness or composure."

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Not so with Denmark Vesey. The plans of years were frustrated; his own life and liberty were thrown away; many others were sacrificed through his leadership; and one more added to the list of unsuccessful insurrections. All these disastrous certainties he faced calmly, and gave his whole mind composedly to the conducting of his defence. With his arms tightly folded and his eyes fixed on the floor, he attentively followed every item of the testimony. He heard the witnesses examined by the Court, and cross-examined by his own counsel, and it is evident from the narrative of the presiding judge that he showed no small skill and policy in the searching cross-examination which he then applied. The fears, the feelings, the consciences of those who had betrayed him, all were in turn appealed to; but the facts were too overpowering, and it was too late to aid his comrades or himself. Then turning to the Court, he skilfully availed himself of the point which had so much impressed the community, the intrinsic improbability that a man in his position of freedom and prosperity should sacrifice everything to free other people. If they thought it so incredible, why not give him the benefit of the incredibility? The act being, as they stated, one of infatuation, why convict him of it on the bare word of men who, by their own showing, had not only shared the infatuation, but proved traitors to it? An ingenious defence,—indeed, the only one which could by any possibility be suggested, anterior to the days of Choate and somnambulism; but in vain. He was sentenced, and it was not, apparently, till the judge reproached him for the destruction he had brought on his followers that he showed any sign of emotion. Then the tears came into his eyes. But he said not another word.

The executions took place on five different days, and, bad as they were, they might have been worse. After the imaginary Negro Plot of New York, in 1741, thirteen negroes had been judicially burned alive; two had suffered the same sentence at Charleston in 1808; and it was undoubtedly some mark of progress that in this case the gallows took the place of the flames. Six were hanged on July 2d, upon Blake's lands, near Charleston,—Denmark Vesey, Peter Poyas, Jess, Ned, Rolla, and Batteau,—the last three being slaves of the Governor himself. Gullah Jack and John were executed "on the Lines," near Charleston, on July 12th, and twenty-two more on July 26th. Four others suffered their fate on July 30th; and one more, William Garner, effected a temporary escape, was captured and tried by a different court, and was finally executed on August 9th.

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The self-control of these men did not desert them at their execution. When the six leaders suffered death, the report says, Peter Poyas repeated his charge of secrecy. "Do not open your lips; die silent, as you shall see me do"; and all obeyed. And though afterwards, as the particulars of the plot became better known, there was less inducement to conceal, yet every one of the thirty-five seems to have met his fate bravely, except the conjurer. Governor Bennett, in his letter, expresses much dissatisfaction at the small amount learned from the participators. "to the last hour of the existence of several who appeared to be conspicuous actors in the drama, they were pressing importuned to make farther confessions,"—this "importuning" being more clearly defined in a letter of Mr. Ferguson, owner of two of the slaves, as "having them severely corrected." Yet so little was obtained, that the Governor was compelled to admit at last that the really essential features of the plot were not known to any of the informers.

It is to be remembered that the plot failed because a man unauthorized and incompetent, William Paul, undertook to make enlistments on his own account. He blundered on one of precisely that class of men—favored house-servants—whom his leaders had expressly reserved for more skilful manipulations. He being thus detected, one would have supposed that the discovery of many accomplices would at once have followed.

The number enlisted was counted by thousands; yet for twenty-nine days after the first treachery, and during twenty days of official examination, only fifteen of the conspirators were ferreted out. Meanwhile the informers' names had to be concealed with the utmost secrecy,—they were in peril of their lives from the slaves,—William Paul scarcely dared to go beyond the door-step,—and the names of important witnesses examined in June were still suppressed in the official report published in October. That a conspiracy on so large a scale should have existed in embryo during four years, and in an active form for several months, and yet have been so well managed, that, after actual betrayal, the authorities were again thrown off their guard and the plot nearly brought to a head again,—this certainly shows extraordinary ability in the leaders, and a talent for concerted action on the part of slaves generally with which they have hardly been credited.

And it is also to be noted, that the range of the conspiracy extended far beyond Charleston. It was proved that Frank, slave of Mr. Ferguson, living nearly forty miles from the city, had boasted of having enlisted four plantations in his immediate neighborhood. It was in evidence that the insurgents "were trying all round the country, from Georgetown and Santee round about to Combahee, to get people"; and after the trials, it was satisfactorily established that Vesey "had been in the country as far north as South Santee, and southwardly as far as the Euhaws, which is between seventy and eighty miles from the city." Mr. Ferguson himself testified that the good order of any gang was no evidence of their ignorance of the plot, since the behavior of his own initiated slaves had been unexceptionable, in accordance with Vesey's directions.

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With such an organization and such materials, there was nothing in the plan which could be pronounced incredible or impracticable. There is no reason why they should not have taken the city. After all the Governor's entreaties as to moderate language, the authorities were obliged to admit that South Carolina had been saved from a "horrible catastrophe." "For although success could not possibly have attended the conspirators, yet, before their suppression, Charleston would probably have been wrapped in flames, many valuable lives would have been sacrificed, and an immense loss of property sustained by the citizens, even though no other distressing occurrences were experienced by them, while the plantations in the lower country would have been disorganized, and the agricultural interests have sustained an enormous loss." The Northern journals had already expressed still greater anxieties. "It appears," said the "New York Commercial Advertiser," "that, but for the timely disclosure, the whole of that State would in a few days have witnessed the horrid spectacle once witnessed in St. Domingo."

My friend David Lee Child has kindly communicated to me a few memoranda of a conversation held long since with a free colored man who had worked in Vesey's shop during the time of the insurrection, and these generally confirm the official narratives. "I was a young man then," he said, "and, owing to the policy of preventing communication between free colored people and slaves, I had little opportunity of ascertaining how the slaves felt about it. I know that several of them were abused in the street, and some put in prison, for appearing in sack-cloth. There was an ordinance of the city, that any slave who wore a badge of mourning should be imprisoned and flogged. They generally got the law, which is thirty-nine lashes, but sometimes it was according to the decision of the Court." "I heard, at the time, of arms being buried in coffins at Sullivan's Island." "In the time of the insurrection, the slaves were tried in a small room, in the jail where they were confined. No colored person was allowed to go within two squares of the prison. Those two squares were filled with troops, five thousand of whom were on duty, day and night. I was told, Vesey said to those that tried him, that the work of insurrection would go on; but as none but white persons were permitted to be present, I cannot tell whether he said it."

During all this time there was a guarded silence in the Charleston journals, which strongly contrasts with the extreme publicity at last given to the testimony. Even the "National Intelligencer," at Washington, passed lightly over the affair, and deprecated the publication of particulars. The Northern editors, on the other hand, eager for items, were constantly complaining of this reserve, and calling for further intelligence. "The Charleston papers," said the "Hartford Courant" of July 16th, "have been silent on the subject

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of the insurrection, but letters from this city state that it has created much alarm, and that two brigades of troops were under arms for some time to suppress any risings that might have taken place." "You will doubtless hear," wrote a Charleston correspondent of the same paper, just before, "many reports, and some exaggerated ones." "There was certainly a disposition to revolt, and some preparations made, principally by the plantation negroes, to take the city." "We hoped they would progress so far as to enable us to ascertain and punish the ringleaders." "Assure my friends that we feel in perfect security, although the number of nightly guards and other demonstrations may induce a belief among strangers to the contrary."

The strangers would have been very blind strangers, if they had not been more influenced by the actions of the Charlestonians than by their words. The original information was given on May 25th. The time passed, and the plot failed on June 16th. A plan for its revival on July 2d proved abortive. Yet a letter from Charleston in the "Hartford Courant" of August 6th, represented the panic as unabated: "Great preparations are making, and all the military are put in preparation to guard against any attempt of the same kind again; but we have no apprehension of its being repeated." On August 10th, Governor Bennett wrote the letter already mentioned, which was printed and distributed as a circular, its object being to deprecate undue alarm. "Every individual in the State is interested, whether in regard to his own property or the reputation of the State, in giving no more importance to the transaction than it justly merits." Yet five days after this,—two months after the first danger had passed,—a reinforcement of United States troops arrived at Port Moultrie. And during the same month, several different attempts were made by small parties of armed negroes to capture the mails between Charleston and Savannah, and a reward of two hundred dollars was offered for their detection.

The first official report of the trials was prepared by the Intendant, by request of the city council. It passed through four editions in a few months,—the first and fourth being published in Charleston, and the second and third in Boston. Being, however, but a brief pamphlet, it did not satisfy the public curiosity, and in October of the same year, (1822,) a larger volume appeared at Charleston, edited by the magistrates who presided at the trials, Lionel H. Kennedy and Thomas Parker. It contains the evidence in full, and a separate narrative of the whole affair, more candid and lucid than any other which I have found in the newspapers or pamphlets of the day. It exhibits that rarest of all qualities in a slave-community, a willingness to look facts in the face. This narrative has been faithfully followed, with the aid of such cross-lights as could be secured from many other quarters, in preparing the present history.

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The editor of the first official report racked his brains to discover the special causes of the revolt, and never trusted himself to allude to the general one. The negroes rebelled because they were deluded by Congressional eloquence, or because they were excited by a Church squabble, or because they had been spoilt by mistaken indulgences, such as being allowed to learn to read, "a misguided benevolence," as he pronounces it. So the Baptist Convention seems to have thought it was because they were not Baptists, and an Episcopal pamphleteer because they were not Episcopalians. It never seems to occur to any of these spectators that these people rebelled simply because they were slaves and wished to be free.

No doubt, there were enough special torches with which a man so skilful as Denmark Vesey could kindle up these dusky powder-magazines; but, after all, the permanent peril lay in the powder. So long as that existed, everything was incendiary. Any torn scrap in the street might contain a Missouri-Compromise speech, or a report of the last battle in St. Domingo, or one of those able letters of Boyer's which were winning the praise of all, or one of John Randolph's stirring speeches in England against the slave-trade. The very newspapers which reported the happy extinction of the insurrection by the hanging of the last conspirator, William Garner, reported also, with enthusiastic indignation, the massacre of the Greeks at Constantinople and at Scio; and then the Northern editors, breaking from their usual reticence, pointed out the inconsistency of Southern journals in printing, side by side, denunciations of Mohammedan slave-sales and advertisements of Christian ones.

Of course, the insurrection threw the whole slavery question open to the public. "We are sorry to see," said the "National Intelligencer" of August 31st, "that a discussion of the hateful Missouri question is likely to be revived, in consequence of the allusions to its supposed effect in producing the late servile insurrection in South Carolina." A member of the Board of Public Works of South Carolina published in the Baltimore "American Farmer" an essay urging the encouragement of white laborers, and hinting at the ultimate abolition of slavery, "if it should ever be thought desirable." More boldly still, a pamphlet appeared in Charleston under the signature of "Achates," arguing with remarkable sagacity and force against the whole system of slave-labor *in towns*, and proposing that all slaves in Charleston should be sold or transferred to the plantations, and their places supplied by white labor. It is interesting to find many of the facts and arguments of Helper's "Impending Crisis" anticipated in this courageous tract, written under the pressure of a crisis which had just been so narrowly evaded. The author is described in the preface as "a soldier and patriot of the Revolution, whose name, did we feel ourselves at liberty to use it, would stamp a peculiar weight and value on his opinions." It was commonly attributed to General Thomas Pinckney.



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Another pamphlet of the period, also published in Charleston, recommended as a practical cure for insurrection the copious administration of Episcopal Church services, and the prohibition of negroes from attending Fourth-of-July celebrations. On this last point it is more consistent than most pro-slavery arguments. "The celebration of the Fourth of July belongs *exclusively* to the white population of the United States. The American Revolution was a *family-quarrel among equals*. In this the negroes had no concern; their condition remained, and must remain, unchanged. They have no more to do with the celebration of that day than with the landing of the Pilgrims on the rock at Plymouth. It therefore seems to me improper to allow these people to be present on these occasions. In our speeches and orations, much, and sometimes more than is politically necessary, is said about personal liberty, which negro auditors know not how to apply, except by running the parallel with their own condition. They therefore imbibe false notions of their own personal rights, and give reality in their minds to what has no real existence. The peculiar state of our community must be steadily kept in view. This, I am gratified to learn, will in some measure be promoted by the institution of the South Carolina Association."

On the other hand, more stringent laws became obviously necessary to keep down the advancing intelligence of the Charleston slaves. Dangerous knowledge must be excluded from without and from within. For the first end, the South Carolina legislature passed, in December, 1822, the act for the imprisonment of Northern colored seamen, which has since produced so much excitement. For the second object, the Grand Jury, about the same time, presented as a grievance "the number of schools which are kept within the city by persons of color," and proposed their prohibition. This was the encouragement given to the intellectual progress of the slaves; while, as a reward for betraying them, Pensil, the free colored man who advised with Devany, received a present of one thousand dollars, and Devany himself had what was rightly judged to be the higher gift of freedom, and was established in business, with liberal means, as a drayman. He is still living in Charleston, has thriven greatly in his vocation, and, according to the newspapers, enjoys the privilege of being the only man of property in the State whom a special statute exempts from taxation. It is something of a privilege, especially with secession impending. But those whom he betrayed to death have been exempt from taxation longer than he has.

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More than a third of a century has passed since the incidents of this true story closed. It has not vanished from the memories of South Carolinians, though the printed pages which once told it have been gradually withdrawn from sight. The intense avidity which at first grasped at every incident of the great insurrectionary plot was succeeded by a distaste for the memory of the tale; and the official reports which told what slaves had once planned and dared have now come to be among the rarest of American historical documents. In 1841, a friend of the writer, then visiting South Carolina, heard from her hostess for the first time the events which are recounted here. On asking to see the reports of the trials, she was cautiously told that the only copy in the house, after being carefully kept for years under lock and key, had been burnt at last, lest it should reach the dangerous eyes of the slaves. The same thing had happened, it was added, in many other families. This partially accounts for the great difficulty now to be found in obtaining a single copy of either publication; and this is why, to the readers of American history, Denmark Vesey and Peter Poyas have been heretofore but the shadows of names.

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### **NEW YORK SEVENTH REGIMENT.**

OUR MARCH TO WASHINGTON.

### **THROUGH THE CITY.**

At three o'clock in the afternoon of Friday, April 19th, we took our peacemaker, a neat twelve-pound brass howitzer, down from the Seventh Regiment Armory, and stationed it in the rear of the building. The twin peacemaker is somewhere near us, but entirely hidden by this enormous crowd.

An enormous crowd! of both sexes, of every age and condition. The men offer all kinds of truculent and patriotic hopes; the women shed tears, and say, "God bless you, boys!"

This is a part of the town where baddish cigars prevail. But good or bad, I am ordered to keep all away from the gun. So the throng stands back, peers curiously over the heads of its junior members, and seems to be taking the measure of my coffin.

After a patient hour of this, the word is given, we fall in, our two guns find their places at the right of the line of march, we move on through the thickening crowd.

At a great house on the left, as we pass the Astor Library, I see a handkerchief waving for me. Yes! it is she who made the sandwiches in my knapsack. They were a trifle too thick, as I afterwards discovered, but otherwise perfection. Be these my thanks and the thanks of hungry comrades who had bites of them!



At the corner of Great Jones Street we halted for half an hour,—then, everything ready, we marched down Broadway.

It was worth a life, that march. Only one who passed, as we did, through that tempest of cheers, two miles long, can know the terrible enthusiasm of the occasion. I could hardly hear the rattle of our own gun-carriages, and only once or twice the music of our band came to me muffled and quelled by the uproar. We knew now, if we had not before divined it, that our great city was with us as one man, utterly united in the great cause we were marching to sustain.

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This grand fact I learned by two senses. If hundreds of thousands roared it into my ears, thousands slapped it into my back. My fellow-citizens smote me on the knapsack, as I went by at the gun-rope, and encouraged me each in his own dialect. "Bully for you!" alternated with benedictions, in the proportion of two "bullies" to one blessing.

I was not so fortunate as to receive more substantial tokens of sympathy. But there were parting gifts showered on the regiment, enough to establish a variety-shop. Handkerchiefs, of course, came floating down upon us from the windows, like a snow. Pretty little gloves pelted us with love-taps. The sterner sex forced upon us pocket-knives new and jagged, combs, soap, slippers, boxes of matches, cigars by the dozen and the hundred, pipes to smoke shag and pipes to smoke Latakia, fruit, eggs, and sandwiches. One fellow got a new purse with ten bright quarter-eagles.

At the corner of Grand Street, or thereabouts, a "bhoy" in red flannel shirt and black dress pantaloons, leaning back against the crowd with Herculean shoulders, called me,—"Saaey, bully! take my dorg! he's one of the kind that holds till he draps." This gentleman, with his animal, was instantly shoved back by the police, and the Seventh lost the "dorg."

These were the comic incidents of the march, but underlying all was the tragic sentiment that we might have tragic work presently to do. The news of the rascal attack in Baltimore on the Massachusetts Sixth had just come in. Ours might be the same chance. If there were any of us not in earnest before, the story of the day would steady us. So we said goodbye to Broadway, moved down Cortlandt Street under a bower of flags, and at half-past six shoved off in the ferry-boat.

Everybody has heard how Jersey City turned out and filled up the Railroad Station, like an opera-house, to give Godspeed to us as a representative body, a guaranty of the unquestioning loyalty of the "conservative" class in New York. Everybody has heard how the State of New Jersey, along the railroad line, stood through the evening and the night to shout their quota of good wishes. At every station the Jerseymen were there, uproarious as Jerseymen, to shake our hands and wish us a happy despatch. I think I did not see a rod of ground without its man, from dusk till dawn, from the Hudson to the Delaware.

Upon the train we made a jolly night of it. All knew that the more a man sings, the better he is likely to fight. So we sang more than we slept, and, in fact, that has been our history ever since.

## PHILADELPHIA.

At sunrise we were at the station in Philadelphia, and dismissed for an hour. Some hundreds of us made up Broad Street for the Lapierre House to breakfast. When I



arrived, I found every place at table filled and every waiter ten deep with orders. So, being an old campaigner, I followed up the stream of provender to the fountain-head, the kitchen. Half a dozen other old campaigners were already there, most hospitably entertained by the cooks. They served us, hot and hot, with the best of their best, straight from the gridiron and the pan. I hope, if I live to breakfast again in the Lapierre House, that I may be allowed to help myself and choose for myself below-stairs.

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When we rendezvoused at the train, we found that the orders were for every man to provide himself three days' rations in the neighborhood, and be ready for a start at a moment's notice.

A mountain of bread was already piled up in the station. I stuck my bayonet through a stout loaf, and, with a dozen comrades armed in the same way, went foraging about for other *vivers*.

It is a poor part of Philadelphia; but whatever they had in the shops or the houses seemed to be at our disposition.

I stopped at a corner shop to ask for pork, and was amicably assailed by an earnest dame,—Irish, I am pleased to say. She thrust her last loaf upon me, and sighed that it was not baked that morning for my “honor's service.”

A little farther on, two kindly Quaker ladies compelled me to step in. “What could they do?” they asked eagerly. “They had no meat in the house; but could we eat eggs? They had in the house a dozen and a half, new-laid.” So the pot to the fire, and the eggs boiled, and bagged by myself and that tall Saxon, my friend E., of the Sixth Company. While the eggs simmered, the two ladies thee-ed us prayerfully and tearfully, hoping that God would save our country from blood, unless blood must be shed to preserve Law and Liberty.

Nothing definite from Baltimore when we returned to the station. We stood by, waiting orders. About noon the Eighth Massachusetts Regiment took the train southward. Our regiment was ready to a man to try its strength with the Plug Uglies. If there had been any voting on the subject, the plan to follow the straight road to Washington would have been accepted by acclamation. But the higher powers deemed that “the longest way round was the shortest way home,” and no doubt their decision was wise. The event proved it.

At two o'clock came the word to “fall in.” We handled our howitzers again, and marched down Jefferson Avenue to the steamer “Boston” to embark.

To embark for what port? For Washington, of course, finally; but by what route? That was to remain in doubt to us privates for a day or two.

The Boston is a steamer of the outside line from Philadelphia to New York. She just held our legion. We tramped on board, and were allotted about the craft from the top to the bottom story. We took tents, traps, and grub on board, and steamed away down the Delaware in the sweet afternoon of April. If ever the heavens smiled fair weather on any campaign, they have done so on ours.

## THE “BOSTON.”

Soldiers on shipboard are proverbially fish out of water. We could not be called by the good old nickname of “lobsters” by the crew. Our gray jackets saved the *sobriquet*. But we floundered about the crowded vessel like boiling victims in a pot. At last we found our places, and laid ourselves about the decks to tan or bronze or burn scarlet, according to complexion. There were plenty of cheeks of lobster-hue before next evening on the Boston.

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A thousand young fellows turned loose on shipboard were sure to make themselves merry. Let the reader imagine that! We were like any other excursionists, except that the stacks of bright guns were always present to remind us of our errand, and regular guard-mounting and drill went on all the time. The young citizens growled or laughed at the minor hardships of the hasty outfit, and toughened rapidly to business.

Sunday, the 21st, was a long and somewhat anxious day. While we were bowling along in the sweet sunshine and sweeter moonlight of the halcyon time, Uncle Sam might be dethroned by somebody in buckram, or Baltimore burnt by the boys from Lynn and Marblehead, revenging the massacre of their fellows. Every one begins to comprehend the fiery eagerness of men who live in historic times. "I wish I had control of chain-lightning for a few minutes," says O., the droll fellow of our company. "I'd make it come thick and heavy and knock spots out of Secession."

At early dawn of Monday the 22d, after feeling along slowly all night, we see the harbor of Annapolis. A frigate with sails unbent lies at anchor. She flies the stars and stripes. Hurrah!

A large steamboat is aground farther in. As soon as we can see anything, we catch the glitter of bayonets on board.

By-and-by boats come off, and we get news that the steamer is the "Maryland," a ferry-boat of the Philadelphia and Baltimore Railroad. The Massachusetts Eighth Regiment had been just in time to seize her on the north side of the Chesapeake. They learned that she was to be carried off by the crew and leave them blockaded. So they shot their Zouaves ahead as skirmishers. The fine fellows rattled on board, and before the steamboat had time to take a turn or open a valve, she was held by Massachusetts in trust for Uncle Sam. Hurrah for the most important prize thus far in the war! It probably saved the "Constitution," "Old Ironsides," from capture by the traitors. It probably saved Annapolis, and kept Maryland open without bloodshed.

As soon as the Massachusetts Regiment had made prize of the ferry-boat, a call was made for engineers to run her. Some twenty men at once stepped to the front. We of the New York Seventh afterwards concluded that whatever was needed in the way of skill or handicraft could be found among those brother Yankees. They were the men to make armies of. They could tailor for themselves, shoe themselves, do their own blacksmithing, gunsmithing, and all other work that calls for sturdy arms and nimble fingers. In fact, I have such profound confidence in the universal accomplishment of the Massachusetts Eighth, that I have no doubt, if the order were, "Poets to the front!" "Painters present arms!" "Sculptors charge bagonets!" a baker's dozen out of every company would respond.

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Well, to go on with their story,—when they had taken their prize, they drove her straight down-stream to Annapolis, the nearest point to Washington. There they found the Naval Academy in danger of attack, and Old Ironsides—serving as a practice-ship for the future midshipmen—also exposed. The call was now for seamen to man the old craft and save her from a worse enemy than her prototype met in the “Guerriere.” Seamen? Of course! They were Marblehead men, Gloucester men, Beverly men, seamen all, *par excellence*! They clapped on the frigate to aid the middies, and by-and-by started her out into the stream. In doing this their own pilot took the chance to run them purposely on a shoal in the intricate channel. A great error of judgment on his part! as he perceived, when he found himself in irons and in confinement. “The days of trifling with traitors are over!” think the Eighth Regiment of Massachusetts.

But there they were, hard and fast on the shoal, when we came up. Nothing to nibble on but knobs of anthracite. Nothing to sleep on softer or cleaner than coal-dust. Nothing to drink but the brackish water under their keel. “Rather rough!” as they afterward patiently told us.

Meantime the Constitution had got hold of a tug, and was making her way to an anchorage where her guns commanded everything and everybody. Good and true men chuckled greatly over this. The stars and stripes also were still up at the fort at the Naval Academy.

Our dread, that, while we were off at sea, some great and perhaps fatal harm had been suffered, was greatly lightened by these good omens. If Annapolis was safe, why not Washington safe also? If treachery had got head at the capital, would not treachery have reached out its hand and snatched this doorway? These were our speculations as we began to discern objects, before we heard news.

But news came presently. Boats pulled off to us. Our officers were put into communication with the shore. The scanty facts of our position became known from man to man. We privates have greatly the advantage in battling with the doubt of such a time. We know that we have nothing to do with rumors. Orders are what we go by. And orders are Facts.

We lay a long, lingering day, off Annapolis. The air was full of doubt, and we were eager to be let loose. All this while the Maryland stuck fast on the bar. We could see them, half a mile off, making every effort to lighten her. The soldiers tramped forward and aft, danced on her decks, shot overboard a heavy baggage-truck. We saw them start the truck for the stern with a cheer. It crashed down. One end stuck in the mud. The other fell back and rested on the boat. They went at it with axes, and presently it was clear.

As the tide rose, we gave our grounded friends a lift with a hawser. No go! The Boston tugged in vain. We got near enough to see the whites of the Massachusetts eyes, and their unlucky faces and uniforms all grimy with their lodgings in the coal-dust. They

could not have been blacker, if they had been breathing battle-smoke and dust all day. That experience was clear gain to them.



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By-and-by, greatly to the delight of the impatient Seventh, the Boston was headed for shore. Never speak ill of the beast you bestraddle! Therefore *requiescat* Boston! may her ribs lie light on soft sand when she goes to pieces! may her engines be cut up into bracelets for the arms of the patriotic fair! good-bye to her, dear old, close, dirty, slow coach! She served her country well in a moment of trial. Who knows but she saved it? It was a race to see who should first get to Washington,—and we and the Virginia mob, in alliance with the District mob, were perhaps nip and tuck for the goal.

### ANNAPOLIS.

So the Seventh Regiment landed and took Annapolis. We were the first troops ashore.

The middies of the Naval Academy no doubt believe that they had their quarters secure. The Massachusetts boys are satisfied that they first took the town in charge. And so they did.

But the Seventh took it a little more. Not, of course, from its loyal men, but *for* its loyal men,—for loyal Maryland, and for the Union.

Has anybody seen Annapolis? It is a picturesque old place, sleepy enough, and astonished to find itself wide-awaked by a war and obliged to take responsibility and share for good and ill in the movement of its time. The buildings of the Naval Academy stand parallel with the river Severn, with a green plateau toward the water and a lovely green lawn toward the town. All the scene was fresh and fair with April, and I fancied, as the Boston touched the wharf, that I discerned the sweet fragrance of apple-blossoms coming with the spring-time airs.

I hope that the companies of the Seventh, should the day arrive, will charge upon horrid batteries or serried ranks with as much alacrity as they marched ashore on the greensward of the Naval Academy. We disembarked, and were halted in line between the buildings and the river.

Presently, while we stood at ease, people began to arrive,—some with smallish fruit to sell, some with smaller news to give. Nobody knew whether Washington was taken. Nobody knew whether Jeff. Davis was now spitting in the Presidential spittoon, and scribbling his distiches with the nib of the Presidential goose-quill. We were absolutely in doubt whether a seemingly inoffensive knot of rustics, on a mound without the inclosure, might not, at tap of drum, unmask a battery of giant columbiads, and belch blazes at us, raking our line.

Nothing so entertaining happened. It was a parade, not a battle. At sunset our band played strains sweet enough to pacify all Secession, if Secession had music in its soul.

Coffee, hot from the coppers of the Naval School, and biscuit were served out to us; and while we supped, we talked with our visitors, such as were allowed to approach.

First the boys of the School—fine little blue-jackets—had their story to tell.

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“Do you see that white farm-house, across the river?” says a brave pigmy of a chap in navy uniform. “That is head-quarters for Secession. They were going to take the School from us, Sir, and the frigate; but we’ve got ahead of ’em, now you and the Massachusetts boys have come down,”—and he twinkled all over with delight. “We can’t study any more. We are on guard all the time. We’ve got howitzers, too, and we’d like you to see, to-morrow, on drill, how we can handle ’em. One of their boats came by our sentry last night,” (a sentry probably five feet high,) “and he blazed away, Sir. So they thought they wouldn’t try us that time.”

It was plain that these young souls had been well tried by the treachery about them. They, too, had felt the pang of the disloyalty of comrades. Nearly a hundred of the boys had been spoilt by the base example of their elders in the repudiating States, and had resigned.

After the middies, came anxious citizens from the town. Scared, all of them. Now that we were come and assured them that persons and property were to be protected, they ventured to speak of the disgusting tyranny to which they, American citizens, had been subjected. We came into contact here with utter social anarchy. No man, unless he was ready to risk assault, loss of property, exile, dared to act or talk like a freeman. “This great wrong must be righted,” think the Seventh Regiment, as one man. So we tried to reassure the Annapolitans that we meant to do our duty as the nation’s armed police, and mob-law was to be put down, so far as we could do it.

Here, too, voices of war met us. The country was stirred up. If the rural population did not give us a bastard imitation of Lexington and Concord, as we tried to gain Washington, all Pluguglydom would treat us *a la Plugugly* somewhere near the junction of the Annapolis and Baltimore and Washington Railroad. The Seventh must be ready to shoot.

At dusk we were marched up to the Academy and quartered about in the buildings,—some in the fort, some in the recitation-halls. We lay down on our blankets and knapsacks. Up to this time our sleep and diet had been severely scanty.

We stayed all next day at Annapolis. The Boston brought the Massachusetts Eighth ashore that night. Poor fellows! what a figure they cut, when we found them bivouacked on the Academy grounds next morning! To begin: They had come off in hot patriotic haste, half-uniformed and half-outfitted. Finding that Baltimore had been taken by its own loafers and traitors, and that the Chesapeake ferry was impracticable, had obliged them to change line of march. They were out of grub. They were parched dry for want of water on the ferry-boat. Nobody could decipher Caucasian, much less Bunker-Hill Yankee, in their grimy visages.

But, hungry, thirsty, grimy, these fellows were GRIT.

Massachusetts ought to be proud of such hardy, cheerful, faithful sons.

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We of the Seventh are proud, for our part, that it was our privilege to share our rations with them, and to begin a fraternization which grows closer every day and will be *historical*.

But I must make a shorter story. We drilled and were reviewed that morning on the Academy parade. In the afternoon the Naval School paraded their last before they gave up their barracks to the coming soldiery. So ended the 23d of April.

Midnight, 24th. We were rattled up by an alarm,—perhaps a sham one, to keep us awake and lively. In a moment, the whole regiment was in order of battle in the moonlight on the parade. It was a most brilliant spectacle, as company after company rushed forward, with rifles glittering, to take their places in the array.

After this pretty spirt, we were rationed with pork, beef, and bread for three days, and ordered to be ready to march on the instant.

### **WHAT THE MASSACHUSETTS EIGHTH HAD BEEN DOING.**

Meantime General Butler's command, the Massachusetts Eighth, had been busy knocking disorder in the head.

Presently after their landing, and before they were refreshed, they pushed companies out to occupy the railroad-track beyond the town.

They found it torn up. No doubt the scamps who did the shabby job fancied that there would be no more travel that way until strawberry-time. They fancied the Yankees would sit down on the fences and begin to whittle white-oak toothpicks, darning the rebels, through their noses, meanwhile.

I know these men of the Eighth can whittle, and I presume they can say "Darn it," if occasion requires; but just now track-laying was the business on hand.

"Wanted, experienced track-layers!" was the word along the files.

All at once the line of the road became densely populated with experienced track-layers, fresh from Massachusetts.

Presto change! the rails were relaid, spiked, and the roadway levelled and better ballasted than any road I ever saw south of Mason and Dixon's line. "We must leave a good job for these folks to model after," say the Massachusetts Eighth.

A track without a train is as useless as a gun without a man. Train and engine must be had. "Uncle Sam's mails and troops cannot be stopped another minute," our energetic friends conclude. So—the railroad company's people being either frightened or false—in marches Massachusetts to the station. "We, the People of the United States, want rolling-stock for the use of the Union," they said, or words to that effect.

The engine—a frowzy machine at the best—had been purposely disabled.

Here appeared the *deus ex machina*, Charles Homans, Beverly Light Guard, Company E, Eighth Massachusetts Regiment.

That is the man, name and titles in full, and he deserves well of his country.

He took a quiet squint at the engine,—it was as helpless as a boned turkey,—and he found "Charles Homans, his mark," written all over it.

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The old rattletrap was an old friend. Charles Homans had had a share in building it. The machine and the man said, "How d'y' do?" at once. Homans called for a gang of engine-builders. Of course they swarmed out of the ranks. They passed their hands over the locomotive a few times, and presently it was ready to whistle and wheeze and rumble and gallop, as if no traitor had ever tried to steal the go and the music out of it.

This had all been done during the afternoon of the 23d. During the night, the renovated engine was kept cruising up and down the track to see all clear. Guards of the Eighth were also posted to protect passage.

Our commander had, I presume, been cooperating with General Butler in this business. The Naval Academy authorities had given us every despatch and assistance, and the middies, frank, personal hospitality. The day was halcyon, the grass was green and soft, the apple-trees were just in blossom: it was a day to be remembered.

Many of us will remember it, and show the marks of it for months, as the day we had our heads cropped. By evening there was hardly one poll in the Seventh tenable by anybody's grip. Most sat in the shade and were shorn by a barber. A few were honored with a clip by the artist hand of the *petit caporal* of our Engineer Company.

While I rattle off these trifling details, let me not fail to call attention to the grave service done by our regiment, by its arrival, at the nick of time, at Annapolis. No clearer special Providence could have happened. The country-people of the traitor sort were aroused. Baltimore and its mob were but two hours away. The Constitution had been hauled out of reach of a rush by the Massachusetts men,—first on the ground,—but was half-manned and not fully secure. And there lay the Maryland, helpless on the shoal, with six or seven hundred souls on board, so near the shore that the late Captain Rynders's gun could have sunk her from some ambush.

Yes! the Seventh Regiment at Annapolis was the Right Man in the Right Place!

## OUR MORNING MARCH.

Reveille. As nobody pronounces this word *a la francaise*, as everybody calls it "Revelee," why not drop it, as an affectation, and translate it the "Stir your Stumps," the "Peel your Eyes," the "Tumble Up," or literally the "Wake"?

Our snorers had kept up this call so lustily since midnight, that, when the drums sounded it, we were all ready.

The Sixth and Second Companies, under Captain Nevers, are detached to lead the van. I see my brother Billy march off with the Sixth, into the dusk, half-moonlight, half-dawn, and hope that no beggar of a Secessionist will get a pat shot at him, by the roadside, without his getting a chance to let fly in return. Such little possibilities intensify

the earnest detestation we feel for the treasons we come to resist and to punish. There will be some bitter work done, if we ever get to blows in this war,—this needless, reckless, brutal assault upon the mildest of all governments.



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Before the main body of the regiment marches, we learn that the “Baltic” and other transports came in last night with troops from New York and New England, enough to hold Annapolis against a square league of Plug Uglies. We do not go on without having our rear protected and our communications open. It is strange to be compelled to think of these things in peaceful America. But we really knew little more of the country before us than Cortes knew of Mexico. I have since learned from a high official, that thirteen different messengers were despatched from Washington in the interval of anxiety while the Seventh was not forthcoming, and only one got through.

At half-past seven we take up our line of march, pass out of the charming grounds of the Academy, and move through the quiet, rusty, picturesque old town. It has a romantic dulness—Annapolis—which deserves a parting compliment.

Although we deem ourselves a fine-looking set, although our belts are blanched with pipe-clay and our rifles shine sharp in the sun, yet the townspeople stare at us in a dismal silence. They have already the air of men quelled by a despotism. None can trust his neighbor. If he dares to be loyal, he must take his life into his hands. Most would be loyal, if they dared. But the system of society which has ended in this present chaos has gradually eliminated the bravest and best men. They have gone in search of Freedom and Prosperity; and now the bullies cow the weaker brothers. “There must be an end of this mean tyranny,” think the Seventh, as they march through old Annapolis and see how sick the town is with doubt and alarm.

Outside the town, we strike the railroad and move along, the howitzers in front, bouncing over the sleepers. When our line is fully disengaged from the town, we halt.

Here the scene is beautiful. The van rests upon a high embankment, with a pool surrounded by pine-trees on the right, green fields on the left. Cattle are feeding quietly about. The air sings with birds. The chestnut-leaves sparkle. Frogs whistle in the warm spring morning. The regiment groups itself along the bank and the cutting. Several Marylanders of the half-price age—under twelve—come gaping up to see us harmless invaders. Each of these young gentry is armed with a dead spring frog, perhaps by way of tribute. And here—hollo! here comes Horace Greeley *in propria persona*! He marches through our groups with the Greeley walk, the Greeley hat on the back of his head, the Greeley white coat on his shoulders, his trousers much too short, and an absorbed, abstracted demeanor. Can it be Horace, reporting for himself? No; this is a Maryland production, and a little disposed to be sulky.

After a few minutes’ halt, we hear the whistle of the engine. This machine is also an historic character in the war.

Remember it! “J.H. Nicholson” is its name. Charles Homans drives, and on either side stands a sentry with fixed bayonet. New spectacles for America! But it is grand to know that the bayonets are to protect, not to assail, Liberty and Law.

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The train leads off. We follow, by the track. Presently the train returns. We pass it and trudge on in light marching order, carrying arms, blankets, haversacks, and canteens. Our knapsacks are upon the train.

Fortunate for our backs that they do not have to bear any more burden! For the day grows sultry. It is one of those breezeless baking days which brew thunder-gusts. We march on for some four miles, when, coming upon the guards of the Massachusetts Eighth, our howitzer is ordered to fall out and wait for the train. With a comrade of the Artillery, I am placed on guard over it.

### ON GUARD WITH HOWITZER NO. TWO.

Henry Bonnell is my fellow-sentry. He, like myself, is an old campaigner in such campaigns as our generation has known. So we talk California, Oregon, Indian life, the Plains, keeping our eyes peeled meanwhile, and ranging the country. Men that will tear up track are quite capable of picking off a sentry. A giant chestnut gives us little dots of shade from its pigmy leaves. The country about us is open and newly ploughed. Some of the worm-fences are new, and ten rails high; but the farming is careless, and the soil thin.

Two of the Massachusetts men come back to the gun while we are standing there. One is my friend Stephen Morris, of Marblehead, Sutton Light Infantry. I had shared my breakfast yesterday with Stephe. So we refraternize.

His business is,—“I make shoes in winter and fishin’ in summer.” He gives me a few facts,—suspicious persons seen about the track, men on horseback in the distance. One of the Massachusetts guard last night challenged his captain. Captain replied, “Officer of the night” Whereupon, says Stephe, “The recruit let squizzle and jest missed his ear.” He then related to me the incident of the railroad station. “The first thing they know’d,” says he, “we bit right into the depot and took charge.” “I don’t mind,” Stephe remarked,—“I don’t mind life, nor yit death; but whenever I see a Massachusetts boy, I stick by him, and if them Secessionists attackt us to-night, or any other time, they’ll git in debt.”

Whistle, again! and the train appears. We are ordered to ship our howitzer on a platform car. The engine pushes us on. This train brings our light baggage and the rear guard.

A hundred yards farther on is a delicious fresh spring below the bank. While the train halts, Stephe Morris rushes down to fill my canteen. “This a’n’t like Marblehead,” says Stephe, panting up; “but a man that can shin up *them* rocks can git right over *this* sand.”

The train goes slowly on, as a rickety train should. At intervals we see the fresh spots of track just laid by our Yankee friends. Near the sixth mile, we began to overtake hot and uncomfortable squads of our fellows. The unseasonable heat of this most breathless day was too much for many of the younger men, unaccustomed to rough work, and weakened by want of sleep and irregular food in our hurried movements thus far.

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Charles Homans's private carriage was, however, ready to pick up tired men, hot men, thirsty men, men with corns, or men with blisters. They tumbled into the train in considerable numbers.

An enemy that dared could have made a moderate bag of stragglers at this time. But they would not have been allowed to straggle, if any enemy had been about. By this time we were convinced that no attack was to be expected in this part of the way.

The main body of the regiment, under Major Shaler, a tall, soldierly fellow, with a moustache of the fighting-color, tramped on their own pins to the watering-place, eight miles or so from Annapolis. There troops and train came to a halt, with the news that a bridge over a country road was broken a mile farther on.

It had been distinctly insisted upon, in the usual Southern style, that we were not to be allowed to pass through Maryland, and that we were to be "welcomed to hospitable graves." The broken bridge was a capital spot for a skirmish. Why not look for it here?

We looked; but got nothing. The rascals could skulk about by night, tear up rails, and hide them where they might be found by a man with half an eye, or half-destroy a bridge; but there was no shoot in them. They have not faith enough in their cause to risk their lives for it, even behind a tree or from one of these thickets, choice spots for ambush.

So we had no battle there, but a battle of the elements. The volcanic heat of the morning was followed by a furious storm of wind and a smart shower. The regiment wrapped themselves in their blankets and took their wetting with more or less satisfaction. They were receiving samples of all the different little miseries of a campaign.

And here let me say a word to my fellow-volunteers, actual and prospective, in all the armies of all the States:—

A soldier needs, besides his soldierly drill,

I. Good FEET.

II. A good Stomach.

III. And after these, come the good Head and the good Heart.

But Good Feet are distinctly the first thing. Without them you cannot get to your duty. If a comrade, or a horse, or a locomotive, takes you on its back to the field, you are

useless there. And when the field is lost, you cannot retire, run away, and save your bacon.

Good shoes and plenty of walking make good feet. A man who pretends to belong to an infantry company ought always to keep himself in training, so that any moment he can march twenty or thirty miles without feeling a pang or raising a blister. Was this the case with even a decimation of the army who rushed to defend Washington? Were you so trained, my comrades of the Seventh?

A captain of a company, who will let his men march with such shoes as I have seen on the feet of some poor fellows in this war, ought to be garroted with shoestrings, or at least compelled to play Pope and wash the feet of the whole army of the Apostles of Liberty.

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If you find a foot-soldier lying beat out by the roadside, desperate as a sea-sick man, five to one his heels are too high, or his soles too narrow or too thin, or his shoe is not made straight on the inside, so that the great toe can spread into its place as he treads.

I am an old walker over Alps across the water, and over Cordilleras, Sierras, Deserts, and Prairies at home; I have done my near sixty miles a day without discomfort,—and speaking from large experience, and with painful recollections of the suffering and death I have known for want of good feet on the march, I say to every volunteer:—

Trust in God; BUT KEEP YOUR SHOES EASY!

### THE BRIDGE.

When the frenzy of the brief tempest was over, it began to be a question, “What to do about the broken bridge?” The gap—was narrow; but even Charles Homans could not promise to leap the “J.H. Nicholson” over it. Who was to be our Julius Caesar in bridge-building? Who but Sergeant Scott, Armorer of the Regiment, with my fellow-sentry of the morning, Bonnell, as First Assistant?

Scott called for a working party. There were plenty of handy fellows among our Engineers and in the Line. Tools were plenty in the Engineers’ chest. We pushed the platform car upon which howitzer No. 1 was mounted down to the gap, and began operations.

“I wish,” says the *petit caporal* of the Engineer Company, patting his howitzer gently on the back, “that I could get this Putty Blower pointed at the enemy, while you fellows are bridge-building.”

The inefficient destructives of Maryland had only half spoilt the bridge. Some of the old timbers could be used,—and for new ones, there was the forest.

Scott and his party made a good and a quick job of it. Our friends of the Massachusetts Eighth had now come up. They lent a ready hand, as usual. The sun set brilliantly. By twilight there was a practicable bridge. The engine was despatched back to keep the road open. The two platform cars, freighted with our howitzers, were rigged with the gun-ropes for dragging along the rail. We passed through the files of the Massachusetts men, resting by the way, and eating by the fires of the evening the suppers we had in great part provided them; and so begins our night-march.

### THE NIGHT-MARCH.

O Gottschalk! what a poetic *Marche de Nuit* we then began to play, with our heels and toes, on the railroad track!



It was full-moonlight and the night inexpressibly sweet and serene. The air was cool and vivified by the gust and shower of the afternoon. Fresh spring was in every breath. Our fellows had forgotten that this morning they were hot and disgusted. Every one hugged his rifle as if it were the arm of the Girl of his Heart, and stepped out gayly for the promenade. Tired or foot-sore men, or even lazy ones, could mount upon the two freight-cars we were using for artillery-wagons. There were stout arms enough to tow the whole.

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The scouts went ahead under First Lieutenant Farnham of the Second Company. We were at school together,—I am afraid to say how many years ago. He is just the same cool, dry, shrewd fellow he was as a boy, and a most efficient officer.

It was an original kind of march—I suppose a battery of howitzers never before found itself mounted upon cars, ready to open fire at once and bang away into the offing with shrapnel or into the bushes with canister. Our line extended a half-mile along the track. It was beautiful to stand on the bank above a cutting and watch the files strike from the shadow of a wood into a broad flame of moonlight, every rifle sparkling up alert as it came forward. A beautiful sight to see the barrels writing themselves upon the dimness, each a silver flash.

By-and-by, “Halt!” came, repeated along from the front, company after company. “Halt! a rail gone.”

It was found without difficulty. The imbeciles who took it up probably supposed we would not wish to wet our feet by searching for it in the dewy grass of the next field. With incredible dollishness they had also left the chairs and spikes beside the track. Bonnell took hold, and in a few minutes had the rail in place and firm enough to pass the engine. Remember, we were not only hurrying on to succor Washington, but opening the only convenient and practicable route between it and the loyal States.

A little farther on, we came to a village,—a rare sight in this scantily peopled region. Here Sergeant Keeler, of our company, the tallest man in the regiment, and one of the handiest, suggested that we should tear up the rails at a turnout by the station, and so be prepared for chances. So “Out crowbars!” was the word. We tore up and bagged half a dozen rails, with chairs and spikes complete. Here, too, some of the engineers found a keg of spikes. This was also bagged and loaded on our cars. We fought the chaps with their own weapons, since they would not meet us with ours.

These things made delay, and by-and-by there was a long halt, while the Colonel communicated, by orders sounded along the line, with the engine. Homans’s drag was hard after us, bringing our knapsacks and traps.

After I had admired for some time the beauty of our moonlit line, and listened to the orders as they grew or died along the distance, I began to want excitement. Bonnell suggested that he and I should scout up the road and see if any rails were wanting. We travelled along into the quiet night.

A mile ahead of the line we suddenly caught the gleam of a rifle-barrel. “Who goes there?” one of our own scouts challenged smartly.

We had arrived at the nick of time. Three rails were up. Two of them were easily found. The third was discovered by beating the bush thoroughly. Bonnell and I ran



back for tools, and returned at full trot with crowbar and sledge on our shoulders. There were plenty of willing hands to help,—too many, indeed,—and with the aid of a huge Massachusetts man we soon had the rail in place.

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From this time on we were constantly interrupted. Not a half-mile passed without a rail up. Bonnell was always at the front laying track, and I am proud to say that he accepted me as aide-de-camp. Other fellows, unknown to me in the dark, gave hearty help. The Seventh showed that it could do something else than drill.

At one spot, on a high embankment over standing water, the rail was gone, sunk probably. Here we tried our rails brought from the turn-out. They were too short. We supplemented with a length of plank from our stores. We rolled our cars carefully over. They passed safe. But Homans shook his head. He could not venture a locomotive on that frail stuff. So we lost the society of the "J.H. Nicholson." Next day the Massachusetts commander called for some one to dive in the pool for the lost rail. Plump into the water went a little wiry chap and grappled the rail. "When I come up," says the brave fellow afterwards to me, "our officer out with a twenty-dollar gold piece and wanted me to take it. 'That a'n't what I come for,' says I. 'Take it,' says he, 'and share with the others.' 'That a'n't what they come for,' says I. But I took a big cold," the diver continued, "and I'm condemned hoarse yit,"—which was the fact.

Farther on we found a whole length of track torn up, on both sides, sleepers and all, and the same thing repeated with alternations of breaks of single rails. Our howitzer-ropes came into play to hoist and haul. We were not going to be stopped.

But it was becoming a *Noche Triste* to some of our comrades. We had now marched some sixteen miles. The distance was trifling. But the men had been on their legs pretty much all day and night. Hardly any one had had any full or substantial sleep or meal since we started from New York. They napped off, standing, leaning on their guns, dropping down in their tracks on the wet ground, at every halt. They were sleepy, but plucky. As we passed through deep cuttings, places, as it were, built for defence, there was a general desire that the tedium of the night should be relieved by a shindy.

During the whole night I saw our officers moving about the line, doing their duty vigorously, despite exhaustion, hunger, and sleeplessness.

About midnight our friends of the Eighth had joined us, and our whole little army struggled on together. I find that I have been rather understating the troubles of the march. It seems impossible that such difficulty could be encountered within twenty miles of the capital of our nation. But we were making a rush to put ourselves in that capital, and we could not proceed in the slow, systematic way of an advancing army. We must take the risk and stand the suffering, whatever it was. So the Seventh Regiment went through its bloodless *Noche Triste*.

## MORNING.

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At last we issued from the damp woods, two miles below the railroad junction. Here was an extensive farm. Our vanguard had halted and borrowed a few rails to make fires. These were, of course, carefully paid for at their proprietor's own price. The fires were bright in the gray dawn. About them the whole regiment was now halted. The men tumbled down to catch forty winks. Some, who were hungrier for food than sleep, went off foraging among the farm-houses. They returned with appetizing legends of hot breakfasts in hospitable abodes, or scanty fare given grudgingly in hostile ones. All meals, however, were paid for.

Here, as at other halts below, the country-people came up to talk to us. The traitors could easily be distinguished by their insolence disguised as obsequiousness. The loyal men were still timid, but more hopeful at last. All were very lavish with the monosyllable, Sir. It was an odd coincidence, that the vanguard, halting off at a farm in the morning, found it deserted for the moment by its tenants, and protected only by an engraved portrait of our (former) Colonel Duryea, serenely smiling over the mantel-piece.

From this point, the railroad was pretty much all gone. But we were warmed and refreshed by a nap and a bite, and besides had daylight and open country.

We put our guns on their own wheels, all dropped into ranks as if on parade, and marched the last two miles to the station. We still had no certain information. Until we actually saw the train awaiting us, and the Washington companies, who had come down to escort us, drawn up, we did not know whether our Uncle Sam was still a resident of the capital.

We packed into the train, and rolled away to Washington.

## WASHINGTON.

We marched up to the White House, showed ourselves to the President, made our bow to him as our host, and then marched up to the Capitol, our grand lodgings.

There we are now, quartered in the Representatives Chamber.

And here I must hastily end this first sketch of the Great Defence. May it continue to be as firm and faithful as it is this day!

I have scribbled my story with a thousand men stirring about me. If any of my sentences miss their aim, accuse my comrades and the bewilderment of this martial crowd. For here are four or five thousand others on the same business as ourselves, and drums are beating, guns are clanking, companies are tramping, all the while. Our friends of the Eighth, Massachusetts are quartered under the dome, and cheer us whenever we pass.

Desks marked John Covode, John Cochran, and Anson Burlingame, have allowed me to use them as I wrote.

## **ARMY-HYMN.**

“Old Hundred.”

O Lord of Hosts! Almighty King!  
Behold the sacrifice we bring!  
To every arm Thy strength impart,  
Thy spirit shed through every heart!

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Wake in our breasts the living fires,  
The holy faith that warmed our sires;  
Thy hand hath made our Nation free;  
To die for her is serving Thee.

Be Thou a pillared flame to show  
The midnight snare, the silent foe;  
And when the battle thunders loud,  
Still guide us in its moving cloud.

God of all Nations! Sovereign Lord!  
In Thy dread name we draw the sword,  
We lift the starry flag on high  
That fills with light our stormy sky.

From treason's rent, from murder's stain  
Guard Thou its folds till Peace shall reign,—  
Till fort and field, till shore and sea  
Join our loud anthem, PRAISE TO THEE!

\* \* \* \* \*

### THE PICKENS-AND-STEALIN'S REBELLION.

Had any one ventured to prophesy on the Fourth of March that the immediate prospect of Civil War would be hailed by the people of the Free States with a unanimous shout of enthusiasm, he would have been thought a madman. Yet the prophecy would have been verified by what we now see and hear in every city, town, and hamlet from Maine to Kansas. With the advantage of three months' active connivance in the cabinet of Mr. Buchanan, with an empty treasury at Washington, and that reluctance to assume responsibility and to inaugurate a decided policy, the common vice of our politicians, who endeavor to divine and to follow popular sentiment rather than to lead it, it seemed as if Disunion were inevitable, and the only open question were the line of separation. So assured seemed the event, that English journalists moralized gravely on the inherent weakness of Democracy. While the leaders of the Southern Rebellion did not dare to expose their treason to the risk of a popular vote in any one of the seceding States, the "Saturday Review," one of the ablest of British journals, solemnly warned its countrymen to learn by our example the dangers of an extended suffrage.

Meanwhile the conduct of the people of the Free States, during all these trying and perilous months, had proved, if it proved anything, the essential conservatism of a population in which every grown man has a direct interest in the stability of the national government. So abstinent are they by habit and principle from any abnormal intervention with the machine of administration, so almost superstitious in adherence to

constitutional forms, as to be for a moment staggered by the claim to a *right* of secession set up by all the Cotton States, admitted by the Border Slave-States, which had the effrontery to deliberate between their plain allegiance and their supposed interest, and but feebly denied by the Administration then in power. The usual panacea of palaver was tried; Congress did its best to add to the general confusion of thought; and, as if that were not enough, a Convention of Notables called simultaneously to thresh the straw of debate anew, and to convince thoughtful persons that men

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do not grow wiser as they grow older. So in the two Congresses the notables talked,—in the one, those who ought to be shelved, in the other, those who were shelved already,—while those who were too thoroughly shelved for a seat in either addressed Great Union Meetings at home. Not a man of them but had a compromise in his pocket, adhesive as Spalding's glue, warranted to stick the shattered Confederacy together so firmly, that, if it over broke again, it must be in a new place, which was a great consolation. If these gentlemen gave nothing very valuable to the people of the Free States, they were giving the Secessionists what was of inestimable value to them,—Time. The latter went on seizing forts, navy-yards, and deposits of Federal money, erecting batteries, and raising and arming men at their leisure; above all, they acquired a prestige, and accustomed men's minds to the thought of disunion, not only as possible, but actual. They began to grow insolent, and, while compelling absolute submission to their rebellious usurpation at home, decried any exercise of legitimate authority on the part of the General Government as *Coercion*,—a new term, by which it was sought to be established as a principle of constitutional law, that it is always the Northern bull that has gored the Southern ox.

During all this time, the Border Slave-States, and especially Virginia, were playing a part at once cowardly and selfish. They assumed the right to stand neutral between the Government and rebellion, to contract a kind of morganatic marriage with Treason, by which they could enjoy the pleasant sin without the tedious responsibility, and to be traitors in everything but the vulgar contingency of hemp. Doubtless the aim of the political managers in these States was to keep the North amused with schemes of arbitration, reconstruction, and whatever other fine words would serve the purpose of hiding the real issue, till the new government of Secessia should have so far consolidated itself as to be able to demand with some show of reason a recognition from foreign powers, and to render it politic for the United States to consent to peaceable secession. They counted on the self-interest of England and the supineness of the North. As to the former, they were not wholly without justification,—for nearly all the English discussions of the “American Crisis” which we have seen have shown far more of the shop-keeping spirit than of interest in the maintenance of free institutions; but in regard to the latter they made the fatal mistake of believing our Buchanans, Cushings, and Touceys to be representative men. They were not aware how utterly the Democratic Party had divorced itself from the moral sense of the Free States, nor had they any conception of the tremendous recoil of which the long-repressed convictions, traditions, and instincts of a people are capable.

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Never was a nation so in want of a leader; never was it more plain, that, without a head, the people “bluster abroad as beasts,” with plenty of the iron of purpose, but purpose without coherence, and with no cunning smith of circumstance to edge it with plan and helve it with direction. What the country was waiting for showed itself in the universal thrill of satisfaction when Major Anderson took the extraordinary responsibility of doing his duty. But such was the general uncertainty, so doubtful seemed the loyalty of the Democratic Party as represented by its spokesmen at the North, so irresolute was the tone of many Republican leaders and journals, that a powerful and wealthy community of twenty millions of people gave a sigh of relief when they had been permitted to install the Chief Magistrate of their choice in their own National Capital. Even after the inauguration of Mr. Lincoln, it was confidently announced that Jefferson Davis, the Burr of the Southern conspiracy, would be in Washington before the month was out; and so great was the Northern despondency, that the chances of such an event were seriously discussed. While the nation was falling to pieces, there were newspapers and “distinguished statesmen” of the party so lately and so long in power base enough to be willing to make political capital out of the common danger, and to lose their country, if they could only find their profit. There was even one man found in Massachusetts, who, measuring the moral standard of his party by his own, had the unhappy audacity to declare publicly that there were friends enough of the South in his native State to prevent the march of any troops thence to sustain that Constitution to which he had sworn fealty in Heaven knows how many offices, the rewards of almost as many turnings of his political coat. There was one journal in New York which had the insolence to speak of *President* Davis and *Mister* Lincoln in the same paragraph. No wonder the “dirt-eaters” of the Carolinas could be taught to despise a race among whom creatures might be found to do that by choice which they themselves were driven to do by misery.

Thus far the Secessionists had the game all their own way, for their dice were loaded with Northern lead. They framed their sham constitution, appointed themselves to their sham offices, issued their sham commissions, endeavored to bribe England with a sham offer of low duties and Virginia with a sham prohibition of the slave-trade, advertised their proposals for a sham loan which was to be taken up under intimidation, and levied real taxes on the people in the name of the people whom they had never allowed to vote directly on their enormous swindle. With money stolen from the Government, they raised troops whom they equipped with stolen arms, and beleaguered national fortresses with cannon stolen from national arsenals. They sent out secret agents to Europe, they had their secret allies in the Free States, their conventions



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transacted all important business in secret session;—there was but one exception to the shrinking delicacy becoming a maiden government, and that was the openness of the stealing. We had always thought a high sense of personal honor an essential element of chivalry; but among the *Romanic* races, by which, as the wonderful ethnologist of “De Bow’s Review” tells us, the Southern States were settled, and from which they derive a close entail of chivalric characteristics, to the exclusion of the vulgar Saxons of the North, such is by no means the case. For the first time in history the deliberate treachery of a general is deemed worthy of a civic ovation, and Virginia has the honor of being the first State claiming to be civilized that has decreed the honors of a triumph to a cabinet officer who had contrived to gild a treason that did not endanger his life with a speculation that could not further damage his reputation. Rebellion, even in a bad cause, may have its romantic side; treason, which had not been such but for being on the losing side, may challenge admiration; but nothing can sweeten larceny or disinfect perjury. A rebellion inaugurated with theft, and which has effected its entry into national fortresses, not over broken walls, but by breaches of trust, should take Jonathan Wild for its patron saint, with the run of Mr. Buchanan’s cabinet for a choice of sponsors,—godfathers we should not dare to call them.

Mr. Lincoln’s Inaugural Speech was of the kind usually called “firm, but conciliatory,”—a policy doubtful in troublous times, since it commonly argues weakness, and more than doubtful in a crisis like ours, since it left the course which the Administration meant to take ambiguous, and, while it weakened the Government by exciting the distrust of all who wished for vigorous measures, really strengthened the enemy by encouraging the conspirators in the Border States. There might be a question as to whether this or that attitude were expedient for the Republican Party; there could be none as to the only safe and dignified one for the Government of the Nation. Treason was as much treason in the beginning of March as in the middle of April; and it seems certain now, as it seemed probable to many then, that the country would have sooner rallied to the support of the Government, if the Government had shown an earlier confidence in the loyalty of the people. Though the President talked of “repossessing” the stolen forts, arsenals, and custom-houses, yet close upon this declaration followed the disheartening intelligence that the Cabinet were discussing the propriety of evacuating not only Fort Sumter, which was of no strategic importance, but Fort Pickens, which was the key to the Gulf of Mexico, and to abandon which was almost to acknowledge the independence of the Rebel States. Thus far the Free States had waited with commendable patience for some symptom of vitality in the new Administration, something that should distinguish it from the piteous

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helplessness of its predecessor. But now their pride was too deeply outraged for endurance, indignant remonstrances were heard from all quarters, and the Government seemed for the first time fairly to comprehend that it had twenty millions of freemen at its back, and that forts might be taken and held by honest men as well as by knaves and traitors. The nettle had been stroked long enough; it was time to try a firm grip. Still the Administration seemed inclined to temporize, so thoroughly was it possessed by the notion of conciliating the Border States. In point of fact, the side which those States might take in the struggle between Law and Anarchy was of vastly more import to them than to us. They could bring no considerable reinforcement of money, credit, or arms to the rebels; they could at best but add so many mouths to an army whose commissariat was already dangerously embarrassed. They could not even, except temporarily, keep the war away from the territory of the seceding States, every one of which had a sea-door open to the invasion of an enemy who controlled the entire navy and shipping of the country.

The position assumed by Eastern Virginia and Maryland was of consequence only so far as it might facilitate a sudden raid on Washington, and the policy of both these States was to amuse the Government by imaginary negotiations till the plans of the conspirators were ripe. In both States men were actively recruited and enrolled to assist in attacking the capital. With them, as with the more openly rebellious States, the new theory of "Coercion" was ingeniously arranged like a valve, yielding at the slightest impulse to the passage of forces for the subversion of legitimate authority, closing imperviously so that no drop of power could ooze through in the opposite direction. Lord de Roos, long suspected of cheating at cards, would never have been convicted but for the resolution of an adversary, who, pinning his hand to the table with a fork, said to him blandly, "My Lord, if the ace of spades is not under your Lordship's hand, why, then, I beg your pardon!" It seems to us that a timely treatment of Governor Letcher in the same energetic way would have saved the disasters of Harper's Ferry and Norfolk, —for disasters they were, though six months of temporizing had so lowered the public sense of what was due to the national dignity, that people were glad to see the Government active at length, even if only in setting fire to its own house.

We are by no means inclined to criticize the Administration, even if this were the proper time for it; but we cannot help thinking that there was great wisdom in Napoleon's recipe for saving life in dealing with a mob,—"First fire grape-shot *into* them; after that, over their heads as much as you like." The position of Mr. Lincoln was already embarrassed when he entered upon office, by what we believe to have been a political blunder in the leaders of the Republican Party.

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Instead of keeping closely to the real point, and the only point, at issue, namely, the claim of a minority to a right of rebellion when displeased with the result of an election, the bare question of Secession, pure and simple, they allowed their party to become divided, and to waste themselves in discussing terms of compromise and guaranties of slavery which had nothing to do with the business in hand. Unless they were ready to admit that popular government was at an end, those were matters already settled by the Constitution and the last election. Compromise was out of the question with men who had gone through the motions, at least, of establishing a government and electing an anti-president. The way to insure the loyalty of the Border States, as the event has shown, was to convince them that disloyalty was dangerous. That revolutions never go backward is one of those compact generalizations which the world is so ready to accept because they save the trouble of thinking; but, however it may be with revolutions, it is certain that rebellions most commonly go backward with disastrous rapidity, and it was of the gravest moment, as respected its moral influence, that Secession should not have time allowed it to assume the proportions and the dignity of revolution, in other words, of a rebellion too powerful to be crushed. The secret friends of the Secession treason in the Free States have done their best to bewilder the public mind and to give factitious prestige to a conspiracy against free government and civilization by talking about the *right* of revolution, as if it were some acknowledged principle of the Law of Nations. There is a right, and sometimes a duty, of rebellion, as there is also a right and sometimes a duty of hanging men for it; but rebellion continues to be rebellion until it has accomplished its object and secured the acknowledgment of it from the other party to the quarrel, and from the world at large. The Republican Party in the November elections had really effected a peaceful revolution, had emancipated the country from the tyranny of an oligarchy which had abused the functions of the Government almost from the time of its establishment, to the advancement of their own selfish aims and interests; and it was this legitimate change of rulers and of national policy by constitutional means which the Secessionists intended to prevent. To put the matter in plain English, they resolved to treat the people of the United States, in the exercise of their undoubted and lawful authority, as rebels, and resorted to their usual policy of intimidation in order to subdue them. Either this magnificent empire should be their plantation, or it should perish. This was the view even of what were called the moderate slave-holders of the Border States; and all the so-called compromises and plans of reconstruction that were thrown into the caldron where the hell-broth of anarchy was brewing had this extent,—no more,—What terms of *submission* would the people make to their natural masters? Whatever other result may have come of the long debates in Congress and elsewhere, they have at least convinced the people of the Free States that there can be no such thing as a moderate slave-holder,—that moderation and slavery can no more coexist than Floyd and honesty, or Anderson and treason.

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We believe, then, that conciliation was from the first impossible,—that to attempt it was unwise, because it put the party of law and loyalty in the wrong,—and that, if it was done as a mere matter of policy in order to gain time, it was a still greater mistake, because it was the rebels only who could profit by it in consolidating their organization, while the seeming gain of a few days or weeks was a loss to the Government, whose great advantage was in an administrative system thoroughly established, and, above all, in the vast power of the national idea, a power weakened by every day's delay. This is so true, that already men began to talk of the rival governments at Montgomery and Washington, and Canadian journals recommend a strict neutrality, as if the independence and legitimacy of the mushroom despotism of New Ashantee were an acknowledged fact, and the name of the United States of America had no more authority than that of Jefferson Davis and Company, dealers in all kinds of repudiation and anarchy. For more than a month after the inauguration of President Lincoln there seemed to be a kind of interregnum, during which the confusion of ideas in the Border States as to their rights and duties as members of the “old” Union, as it began to be called, became positively chaotic. Virginia, still professing neutrality, prepared to seize the arsenal at Harper's Ferry and the navy-yard at Norfolk; she would prevent the passage of the United States' forces “with a serried phalanx of her gallant sons,” two regiments of whom stood, looking on while a file of marines took seven wounded men in an engine-house for them; she would do everything but her duty,—the gallant Ancient Pistol of a commonwealth. She “resumed her sovereignty,” whatever that meant; her Convention passed an ordinance of secession, concluded a league offensive and defensive with the rebel Confederacy, appointed Jefferson Davis commander-in-chief of her land-forces and somebody else of the fleet she meant to steal at Norfolk, and then coolly referred the whole matter back to the people to vote three weeks afterwards whether they *would* secede three weeks before. Wherever the doctrine of Secession has penetrated, it seems to have obliterated every notion of law and precedent.

The country had come to the conclusion that Mr. Lincoln and his cabinet were mainly employed in packing their trunks to leave Washington, when the “venerable Edward Ruffin of Virginia” fired that first gun at Fort Sumter which brought all the Free States to their feet as one man. That shot is destined to be the most memorable one ever fired on this continent since the Concord fowling-pieces said, “That bridge is ours, and we mean to go across it,” eighty-seven Aprils ago. As these began a conflict which gave us independence, so that began another which is to give us nationality. It was certainly a great piece of good-luck for the Government that they had a fort which it was so profitable to lose.

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The people were weary of a masterly inactivity which seemed to consist mainly in submitting to be kicked. We know very well the difficulties that surrounded the new Administration; we appreciate their reluctance to begin a war the responsibility of which was as great as its consequences seemed doubtful; but we cannot understand how it was hoped to evade war, except by concessions vastly more disastrous than war itself. War has no evil comparable in its effect on national character to that of a craven submission to manifest wrong, the postponement of moral to material interests. There is no prosperity so great as courage. We do not believe that any amount of forbearance would have conciliated the South so long as they thought us pusillanimous. The only way to retain the Border States was by showing that we had the will and the power to do without them. The little Bopeep policy of

“Let them alone, and they’ll all come home  
Wagging their tails behind them”

was certainly tried long enough with conspirators who had shown unmistakably that they desired nothing so much as the continuance of peace, especially when it was all on one side, and who would never have given the Government the great advantage of being attacked in Fort Sumter, had they not supposed they were dealing with men who could not be cuffed into resistance. The lesson we have to teach, them now is, that we are thoroughly and terribly in earnest. Mr. Stephens’s theories are to be put to a speedier and sterner test than he expected, and we are to prove which is stronger,—an oligarchy built *on* men, or a commonwealth built *of* them. Our structure is alive in every part with defensive and recuperative energies; woe to theirs, if that vaunted cornerstone which they believe patient and enduring as marble should begin to writhe with intelligent life!

We have no doubt of the issue. We believe that the strongest battalions are always on the side of God. The Southern army will be fighting for Jefferson Davis, or at most for the liberty of self-misgovernment, while we go forth for the defence of principles which alone make government august and civil society possible. It is the very life of the nation that is at stake. There is no question here of dynasties, races, religions,—but simply whether we will consent to include in our Bill of Rights—not merely as of equal validity with all other rights, whether natural or acquired, but by its very nature transcending and abrogating them all—the Right of Anarchy. We must convince men that treason against the ballot-box is as dangerous as treason against a throne, and that, if they play so desperate a game, they must stake their lives on the hazard. The one lesson that remained for us to teach the political theorists of the Old World was, that we are as strong to suppress intestine disorder as foreign aggression, and we must teach it decisively and thoroughly. The economy of war is to be tested by the value of the object to be gained by it. A ten years’ war would be cheap that gave us a country to be proud

of and a flag that should command the respect of the world because it was the symbol of the enthusiastic unity of a great nation.

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The Government, however slow it may have been to accept the war which Mr. Buchanan's supineness left them, is acting now with all energy and determination. What they have a right to claim is the confidence of the people, and that depends in good measure on the discretion of the press. Only let us have no more weakness under the plausible name of Conciliation. We need not discuss the probabilities of an acknowledgment of the Confederate States by England and France; we have only to say, "Acknowledge them at your peril." But there is no chance of the recognition of the Confederacy by any foreign governments, so long as it is without the confidence of the brokers. There is no question on which side the strength lies. The whole tone of the Southern journals, so far as we are able to judge, shows the inherent folly and weakness of the Secession movement. Men who feel strong in the justice of their cause, or confident in their powers, do not waste breath in childish boasts of their own superiority and querulous depreciation of their antagonists. They are weak, and they know it. And not only are they weak in comparison with the Free States, but we believe they are without the moral support of whatever deserves the name of public opinion at home. If not, why does their Congress, as they call it, hold council always with closed doors, like a knot of conspirators? The first tap of the Northern drum dispelled many illusions, and we need no better proof of which ship is sinking than that Mr. Caleb Gushing should have made such haste to come over to the old Constitution with the stars and stripes at her mast-head.

We cannot think that the war we are entering on can end without some radical change in the system of African slavery. Whether it be doomed to a sudden extinction, or to a gradual abolition through economical causes, this war will not leave it where it was before. As a power in the State, its reign is already over. The fiery tongues of the batteries in Charleston harbor accomplished in one day a conversion which the constancy of Garrison and the eloquence of Phillips had failed to bring about in thirty years. And whatever other result this war is destined to produce, it has already won for us a blessing worth everything to us as a nation in emancipating the public opinion of the North.

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