

The Atlantic Monthly, Volume 11, No. 63, January, 1863 eBook

The Atlantic Monthly, Volume 11, No. 63, January, 1863

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Page 1

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THE

Atlantic monthly.

A MAGAZINE OF

Literature, art, and politics.

VOL. XI.—JANUARY, 1863.—NO. LXIII.

HAPPIEST DAYS.

Long ago, when you were a little boy or a little girl,—perhaps not so very long ago, either,—were you never interrupted in your play by being called in to have your face washed, your hair combed, and your soiled apron exchanged for a clean one, preparatory to an introduction to Mrs. Smith, or Dr. Jones, or Aunt Judkins, your mother's early friend? And after being ushered in to that august presence, and made to face a battery of questions which were either above or below your capacity, and which you consequently despised as trash or resented as insult, did you not, as you were gleefully vanishing, hear a soft sigh breathed out upon the air,—“Dear child, he is seeing his happiest days”? In the concrete, it was Mrs. Smith or Dr. Jones speaking of you. But going back to general principles, it was Commonplacedom expressing its opinion of childhood.

There never was a greater piece of absurdity in the world. I thought so when I was a child, and now I know it; and I desire here to brand it as at once a platitude and a



falsehood. How ever the idea gained currency that childhood is the happiest period of life, I cannot conceive. How ever, once started, it kept afloat is equally incomprehensible. I should have supposed that the experience of every sane person would have given the lie to it. I should have supposed that every soul, as it burst into flower, would have hurled off the vile imputation. I can only account for it by recurring to Lady Mary Wortley Montague's statistics, and concluding that the fools *are* three out of four in every person's acquaintance.

I for one lift up my voice emphatically against the assertion, and do affirm that I think childhood is the most mean and miserable portion of human life, and I am thankful to be well out of it. I look upon it as no better than a mitigated form of slavery. There is not a child in the land that can call his soul, or his body, or his jacket his own. A little soft lump of clay he comes into the world, and is moulded



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into a vessel of honor or a vessel of dishonor long before he can put in a word about the matter. He has no voice as to his education or his training, what he shall eat, what he shall drink, or wherewithal he shall be clothed. He has to wait upon the wisdom, the whims, and often the wickedness of other people. Imagine, my six-foot friend, how you would feel to be obliged to wear your woollen mittens when you desire to bloom out in straw-colored kids, or to be buttoned into your black waistcoat when your taste leads you to select your white, or to be forced under your Kossuth hat when you had set your heart on your black beaver: yet this is what children are perpetually called on to undergo. Their wills are just as strong as ours and their tastes are stronger, yet they have to bend the one and sacrifice the other; and they do it under pressure of necessity. Their reason is not convinced; they are forced to yield to superior power; and of all disagreeable things in the world, the most disagreeable is not to have your own way. When you are grown up, you wear a print frock because you cannot afford a silk, or because a silk would be out of place,—you wear India-rubber overshoes because your polished patent-leather would be ruined by the mud; and your self-denial is amply compensated by the reflection of superior fitness or economy. But a child has no such reflection to console him. He puts on his battered, gray old shoes because you make him; he hangs up his new trousers and goes back into his detestable girl's-frock because he will be punished if he does not, and it is intolerable.

It is of no use to say that this is their discipline and is all necessary to their welfare. I maintain that that is a horrible condition of life in which such degrading *surveillance* is necessary. You may affirm that an absolute despotism is the only government fit for Dahomey, and I may not disallow it; but when you go on and say that Dahomey is the happiest country in the world, why, I refer you to Dogberry. Now the parents of a child are, from the nature of the case, absolute despots. They may be wise, and gentle, and doting despots, and the chain may be satin-smooth and golden-strong; but if it be of rusty iron, parting every now and then and letting the poor prisoner violently loose, and again suddenly caught hold of, bringing him up with a jerk, galling his tender limbs and irretrievably ruining his temper,—it is all the same; there is no help for it. And really, to look around the world and see the people that are its fathers and mothers is appalling,—the narrow-minded, prejudiced, ignorant, ill-tempered, fretful, peevish, passionate, careworn, harassed men and women. Even we grown people, independent of them and capable of self-defence, have as much as we can do to keep the peace. Where is there a city, or a town, or a village, in which are no bickerings, no jealousies, no angers, no petty or swollen spites? Then fancy yourself, instead of the neighbor and occasional visitor of these poor human beings, their children, subject to their absolute control, with no power of protest against their folly, no refuge from their injustice, but living on through thick and thin right under their guns.

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“Oh!” but you say, “this is a very one-sided view. You leave out entirely the natural tenderness that comes in to temper the matter. Without that, a child’s situation would of course be intolerable; but the love that is born with him makes all things smooth.”

No, it does not make all things smooth. It does wonders, to be sure, but it does not make cross people pleasant, nor violent people calm, nor fretful people easy, nor obstinate people reasonable, nor foolish people wise,—that is, it may do so spasmodically, but it does not hold them to it and keep them at it. A great deal of beautiful moonshine is written about the sanctities of home and the sacraments of marriage and birth. I do not mean to say that there is no sanctity and no sacrament. Moonshine is not nothing. It is light,—real, honest light,—just as truly as the sunshine. It is sunshine at second-hand. It illuminates, but indistinctly. It beautifies, but it does not vivify or fructify. It comes indeed from the sun, but in too roundabout a way to do the sun’s work. So, if a woman is pretty nearly sanctified before she is married, wifedom and motherhood may finish the business; but there is not one man in ten thousand of the writers aforesaid who would marry a vixen, trusting to the sanctifying influences of marriage to tone her down to sweetness. A thoughtful, gentle, pure, and elevated woman, who has been accustomed to stand face to face with the eternities, will see in her child a soul. If the circumstances of her life leave her leisure and adequate repose, that soul will be to her a solemn trust, a sacred charge, for which she will give her own soul’s life in pledge. But, dear me! how many such women do you suppose there are in your village? Heaven forbid that I should even appear to be depreciating woman! Do I not know too well their strength, and their virtue which is their strength? But stepping out of idyls and novels, and stepping into American kitchens, is it not true that the larger part of the mothers see in their babies, or act as if they saw, only babies? And if there are three or four or half a dozen of them, as there generally are, so much the more do they see babies whose bodies monopolize the mother’s time to the disadvantage of their souls. She loves them, and she works for them day and night; but when they are ranting and ramping and quarrelling, and torturing her over-tense nerves, she forgets the infinite, and applies herself energetically to the finite, by sending Harry with a round scolding into one corner and Susy into another, with no light thrown upon the point in dispute, no principle settled as a guide in future difficulties, and little discrimination as to the relative guilt of the offenders. But there is no court of appeal before which Harry and Susy can lay their case in these charming “happiest days.”

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Then there are parents who love their children like wild beasts. It is a passionate, blind, instinctive, unreasoning love. They have no more intelligent discernment, when an outside difficulty arises with respect to their children, than a she-bear. They wax furious over the most richly deserved punishment, if inflicted by a teacher's hand; they take the part of their child against legal authority; but, observe, this does not prevent them from laying their own hands heavily on their children. The same obstinate ignorance and narrowness that are exhibited without exist within also. Folly is folly, abroad or at home. A man does not play the fool out-doors and act the sage in the house. When the poor child becomes obnoxious, the same unreasoning rage falls upon him. The object of a ferocious love is the object of an equally ferocious anger. It is only he who loves wisely that loves well.

The manner in which children's tastes are disregarded, their feelings ignored, and their instincts violated is enough to disaffect one with childhood. They are expected to kiss all flesh that asks them to do so. They are jerked up into the laps of people whom they abhor. They say, "Yes, Ma'am," under pain of bread and water for a week, when their unerring nature prompts them to hurl out, "I won't, you hideous old fright!" They are sent out of the room whenever a fascinating bit of scandal is to be rehearsed, packed off to bed just as everybody is settled down for a charming evening, bothered about their lessons when their play is but fairly under way, and hedged and hampered on every side. It is true that all this may be for their good, but, my dear dolt, what of that? So everything is for the good of grownup people; but does that make us contented? It is doubtless for our good in the long run that we lose our pocketbooks, and break our arms, and catch a fever, and have our brothers defraud a bank, and our houses burn down, and people steal our umbrellas, and borrow our books and never return them. In fact, we know that upon certain conditions all things work together for our good, but, notwithstanding, we find some things a great bore; and we may talk to our children of discipline and health by the hour together, and it will never be anything but an intolerable nuisance to them to be swooped off to bed by a dingy old nurse just as the people are beginning to come, and shining silk, and floating lace, and odorous, faint flowers are taking their ecstatic young souls back into the golden days of the good Haroun al Raschid.

Even in this very point lies one of the miseries of childhood, that no philosophy comes to temper their sorrow. We do not know why we are troubled, but we know that there *is* some good, grand reason for it. The poor little children do not know even that. They find trouble utterly inconsequent and unreasonable. The problem of evil is to them absolutely incapable of solution. We know that beyond our horizon stretches the infinite universe.

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We grasp only one link of a chain whose beginning and end is eternity. So we readily adjust ourselves to mystery, and are content. We apply to everything inexplicable the test of partial view, and maintain our tranquillity. We fall into the ranks, and march on, acquiescent, if not jubilant. We hear the roar of cannon and the rattle of musketry. Stalwart forms fall by our side, and brawny arms are stricken. Our own hopes bite the dust, our own hearts bury their dead; but we know that law is inexorable. Effect must follow cause, and there is no happening without causation. So, knowing ourselves to be only one small brigade of the army of the Lord, we defile through the passes of this narrow world, bearing aloft on our banner, and writing ever on our hearts, the divine consolation, "What thou knowest not now thou shalt know hereafter." This is an unspeakable tranquillizer and comforter, of which, woe is me! the little ones know nothing. They have no underlying generalities on which to stand. Law and logic and eternity are nothing to them. They only know that it rains, and they will have to wait another week before they go a-fishing; and why couldn't it have rained Friday just as well as Saturday? and it always does rain or something when I want to go anywhere,—so, there! And the frantic flood of tears comes up from outraged justice as well as from disappointed hope. It is the flimsiest of all possible arguments to say that their sorrows are trifling, to talk about their little cares and trials. These little things are great to little men and women. A pine bucket full is just as full as a hogshead. The ant has to tug just as hard to carry a grain of corn as the Irishman does to carry a hod of bricks. You can see the bran running out of Fanny's doll's arm, or the cat putting her foot through Tom's new kite, without losing your equanimity; but their hearts feel the pang of hopeless sorrow, or foiled ambition, or bitter disappointment,—and the emotion is the thing in question, not the event that caused it.

It is an additional disadvantage to children in their troubles that they can never estimate the relations of things. They have no perspective. All things are at equal distances from the point of sight. Life presents to them neither foreground nor background, principal figure nor subordinates, but only a plain spread of canvas on which one thing stands out just as big and just as black as another. You classify your *desagreements*. This is a mere temporary annoyance, and receives but a passing thought. This is a life-long sorrow, but it is superficial; it will drop off from you at the grave, be folded away with your cerements, and leave no scar on your spirit. This thrusts its lancet into the secret place where your soul abideth, but you know that it tortures only to heal; it is recuperative, not destructive, and you will rise from it to newness of life. But when little ones see a ripple in the current of their joy, they do not know, they cannot tell, that



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it is only a pebble breaking softly in upon the summer flow to toss a cool spray up into the white bosom of the lilies, or to bathe the bending violets upon the green and grateful bank. It seems to them as if the whole strong tide is thrust fiercely and violently back, and hurled into a new channel, chasmed in the rough, rent granite. It is impossible to calculate the waste of grief and pathos which this incapacity causes. Fanny's doll aforesaid is left too near the fire, and waxy tears roll down her ruddy cheeks, to the utter ruin of her pretty face and her gay frock; and anon poor Fanny breaks her little heart in moans and sobs and sore lamentation. It is Rachel weeping for her children. I went on a tramp one May morning to buy a tissue-paper wreath of flowers for a little girl to wear to a May-party, where all the other little girls were expected to appear similarly crowned. After a long and weary search, I was forced to return without it. Scarcely had I pulled the bell, when I heard the quick pattering of little feet in the entry. Never in all my life shall I lose the memory of those wistful eyes that did not so much as look up to my face, but levelled themselves to my hand, and filmed with bitter disappointment to find it empty. I could see that the wreath was a very insignificant matter. I knew that every little beggar in the street had garlanded herself with sixpenny roses, and I should have preferred that my darling should be content with her own silky brown hair; but my taste availed her nothing, and the iron entered into her soul. Once a little boy, who could just stretch himself up as high as his papa's knee, climbed surreptitiously into the store-closet and upset the milk-pitcher. Terrified, he crept behind the flour-barrel, and there Nemesis found him, and he looked so charming and so guilty that two or three others were called to come and enjoy the sight. But he, unhappy midget, did not know that he looked charming; he did not know that his guilty consciousness only made him the more interesting; he did not know that he seemed an epitome of humanity, a Lilliputian miniature of the great world; and his large, blue, solemn eyes were filled with remorse. As he stood there, silent, with his grave, utterly mournful face, he had robbed a bank, he had forged a note, he had committed a murder, he was guilty of treason. All the horror of conscience, all the shame of discovery, all the unavailing regret of a detected, atrocious, but not utterly hardened pirate tore his poor little innocent heart. Yet children are seeing their happiest days!

These people—the aforesaid three-fourths of our acquaintance—lay great stress on the fact that children are free from care, as if freedom from care were one of the beatitudes of Paradise; but I should like to know if freedom from care is any blessing to beings who don't know what care is. You who are careful and troubled about many things may dwell on it with great satisfaction, but

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children don't find it delightful by any means. On the contrary, they are never so happy as when they can get a little care, or cheat themselves into the belief that they have it. You can make them proud for a day by sending them on some responsible errand. If you will not place care upon them, they will make it for themselves. You shall see a whole family of dolls stricken down simultaneously with malignant measles, or a restive horse evoked from a passive parlor-chair. They are a great deal more eager to assume care than you are to throw it off. To be sure, they may be quite as eager to be rid of it after a while; but while this does not prove that care is delightful, it certainly does prove that freedom from care is not.

Now I should like, Herr Narr, to have you look at the other side for a moment: for there is a positive and a negative pole. Children not only have their full share of misery, but they do not have their full share of happiness; at least, they miss many sources of happiness to which we have access. They have no consciousness. They have sensations, but no perceptions. We look longingly upon them, because they are so graceful, and simple, and natural, and frank, and artless; but though this may make us happy, it does not make them happy, because they don't know anything about it. It never occurs to them that they are graceful. No child is ever artless to himself. The only difference he sees between you and himself is that you are grown-up and he is little. Sometimes I think he does have a dim perception that when he is sick it is because he has eaten too much, and he must take medicine, and feed on heartless dry toast, while, when you are sick, you have the dyspepsia, and go to Europe. But the beauty and sweetness of children are entirely wasted on themselves, and their frankness is a source of infinite annoyance to each other. A man enjoys *himself*. If he is handsome, or wise, or witty, he generally knows it, and takes great satisfaction in it; but a child does not. He loses half his happiness because he does not know that he is happy. If he ever has any consciousness, it is an isolated, momentary thing, with no relation to anything antecedent or subsequent. It lays hold on nothing. Not only have they no perception of themselves, but they have no perception of anything. They never recognize an exigency. They do not salute greatness. Has not the Autocrat told us of some lady who remembered a certain momentous event in our Revolutionary War, and remembered it only by and because of the regret she experienced at leaving her doll behind, when her family was forced to fly from home? What humiliation is this! What an utter failure to appreciate the issues of life! For her there was no revolution, no upheaval of world-old theories, no struggle for freedom, no great combat of the heroisms. All the passion and pain, the mortal throes of error, the glory of sacrifice, the victory of an idea, the triumph



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of right, the dawn of a new era,—all, all were hidden from her behind a lump of wax. And what was true of her is true of all her class. Having eyes, they see not; with their ears they do not hear. The din of arms, the waving of banners, the gleam of swords, fearful sights and great signs in the heavens, or the still, small voice that thrills when wind and fire and earthquake have swept by, may proclaim the coming of the Lord, and they stumble along, munching bread-and-butter. Out in the solitudes Nature speaks with her many-toned voices, and they are deaf. They have a blind sensational enjoyment, such as a squirrel or a chicken may have, but they can in no wise interpret the Mighty Mother, nor even hear her words. The ocean moans his secret to unheeding ears. The agony of the underworld finds no speech in the mountain-peaks, bare and grand. The old oaks stretch out their arms in vain. Grove whispers to grove, and the robin stops to listen, but the child plays on. He bruises the happy buttercups, he crushes the quivering anemone, and his cruel fingers are stained with the harebell's purple blood. Rippling waterfall and rolling river, the majesty of sombre woods, the wild waste of wilderness, the fairy spirits of sunshine, the sparkling wine of June, and the golden languor of October, the child passes by, and a dipper of blackberries, or a pocketful of chestnuts, fills and satisfies his horrible little soul. And in face of all this people say—there are people who *dare* to say—that childhood's are the “happiest days.”

I may have been peculiarly unfortunate in my surroundings, but the children of poetry and novels were very infrequent in my day. The innocent cherubs never studied in my school-house, nor played puss-in-the-corner in our back-yard. Childhood, when I was young, had rosy cheeks and bright eyes, as I remember, but it was also extremely given to quarrelling. It used frequently to “get mad.” It made nothing of twitching away books and balls. It often pouted. Sometimes it would bite. If it wore a fine frock, it would strut. It told lies,—“whoppers” at that. It took the biggest half of the apple. It was not, as a general thing, magnanimous, but “aggravating.” It may have been fun to you who looked on, but it was death to us who were in the midst.

This whole way of viewing childhood, this regretful retrospect of its vanished joys, this infatuated apotheosis of doughiness and rank unfinished, this fearful looking-for of dread old age, is low, gross, material, utterly unworthy of a sublime manhood, utterly false to Christian truth. Childhood is preeminently the animal stage of existence. The baby is a beast,—a very soft, tender, caressive beast,—a beast full of promise,—a beast with the germ of an angel,—but a beast still. A week-old baby gives no more sign of intelligence, of love, or ambition, or hope, or fear, or passion, or purpose, than a week-old monkey, and is not half so frisky and funny. In fact, it is a puling, scowling, wretched, dismal, desperate-looking animal. It is only as it grows old that the beast gives way and the angel-wings bud, and all along through infancy and childhood the beast gives way and gives way and the angel-wings bud and bud; and yet we entertain our angel so

unawares that we look back regretfully to the time when the angel was in abeyance and the beast raved regnant.

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The only advantage which childhood has over manhood is the absence of foreboding, and this indeed is much. A large part of our suffering is anticipatory, much of which children are spared. The present happiness is clouded for them by no shadowy possibility; but for this small indemnity shall we offset the glory of our manly years? Because their narrowness cannot take in the contingencies that threaten peace, are they blessed above all others? Does not the same narrowness cut them off from the bright certainty that underlies all doubts and fears? If ignorance is bliss, man stands at the summit of mortal misery, and the scale of happiness is a descending one. We must go down into the ocean-depths, where, for the scintillant soul, a dim, twilight instinct lights up gelatinous lives. If childhood is indeed the happiest period, then the mysterious God-breathed breath was no boon and the Deity is cruel. Immortality were well exchanged for the blank of annihilation.

There is infinite talk of the dissipated illusions of youth, the paling of bright, young dreams. Life, it is said, turns out to be different from what was pictured. The rosy-hued morning fades away into the gray and livid evening, the black and ghastly night. In especial cases it may be so, but I do not believe it is the general experience. It surely need not be. It should not be. I have found things a great deal better than I expected. I am but one; but with all my oneness, with all that there is of me, I protest against such shallow generalities. I think they are slanderous of Him who ordained life, its processes and its vicissitudes. He never made our dreams to outstrip our realizations. Every conception, brain-born, has its execution, hand-wrought. Life is not a paltry tin cup which the child drains dry, leaving the man to go weary and hopeless, quaffing at it in vain with black, parched lips. It is a fountain ever springing. It is a great deep, which the wisest has never bounded, the grandest never fathomed.

It is not only idle, but stupid, to lament the departure of childhood's joys. It is as if something precious and valued had been forcibly torn from us, and we go sorrowing for lost treasure. But these things fall off from us naturally; we do not give them up. We are never called upon to give them up. There is no pang, no sorrow, no wrenching away of a part of our lives. The baby lies in his cradle and plays with his fingers and toes. There comes an hour when his fingers and toes no longer afford him amusement. He has attained to the dignity of a rattle, a whip, a ball. Has he suffered a loss? Has he not rather made a great gain? When he passed from his toes to his toys, did he do it mournfully? Does he look at his little feet and hands with a sigh for the joys that once loitered there, but are now forever gone? Does he not rather feel a little ashamed, when you remind him of those days? Does he not feel that it trenches somewhat



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on his dignity? Yet the regret of maturity for its past joys amounts to nothing less than this. Such regret is regret that we cannot lie in the sunshine and play with our toes,—that we are no longer but one remove, or but few removes, from the idiot. Away with such folly! Every season of life has its distinctive and appropriate enjoyments, which bud and blossom and ripen and fall off as the season glides on to its close, to be succeeded by others better and brighter. There is no consciousness of loss, for there is no loss. There is only a growing up, and out of, and beyond.

Life does turn out differently from what was anticipated. It is an infinitely higher and holier and nobler thing than our childhood fancied. The world that lay before us then was but a tinsel toy to the world which our firm feet tread. We have entered into the undiscovered land. We have explored its ways of pleasantness, its depths of dole, its mountains of difficulty, its valleys of delight, and, behold! it is very good. Storms have swept fiercely, but they swept to purify. We have heard in its thunders the Voice that woke once the echoes of the Garden. Its lightnings have riven a path for the Angel of Peace.

Manhood discovers what childhood can never divine,—that the sorrows of life are superficial, and the happinesses of life structural; and this knowledge alone is enough to give a peace which passeth understanding.

Yes, the dreams of youth were dreams, but the waking was more glorious than they. They were only dreams,—fitful, flitting, fragmentary visions of the coming day. The shallow joys, the capricious pleasures, the wavering sunshine of infancy have deepened into virtues, graces, heroisms. We have the bold outlook of calm, self-confident courage, the strong fortitude of endurance, the imperial magnificence of self-denial. Our hearts expand with benevolence, our lives broaden with beneficence. We cease our perpetual skirmishing at the outposts, and go inward to the citadel. Down into the secret places of life we descend. Down among the beautiful ones in the cool and quiet shadows, on the sunny summer levels, we walk securely, and the hidden fountains are unsealed.

For those people who do nothing, for those to whom Christianity brings no revelation, for those who see no eternity in time, no infinity in life, for those to whom opportunity is but the handmaid of selfishness, to whom smallness is informed by no greatness, for whom the lowly is never lifted up by indwelling love to the heights of divine performance,—for them, indeed, each hurrying year may well be a King of Terrors. To pass out from the flooding light of the morning, to feel all the dewiness drunk up by the thirsty, insatiate sun, to see the shadows slowly and swiftly gathering, and no starlight to break the gloom, and no home beyond the gloom for the unhoused, startled, shivering soul,—ah! this indeed is terrible. The “confusions of a wasted



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youth” strew thick confusions of a dreary age. Where youth garners up only such power as beauty or strength may bestow, where youth is but the revel of physical or frivolous delight, where youth aspires only with paltry and ignoble ambitions, where youth presses the wine of life into the cup of variety, there indeed Age comes, a thrice unwelcome guest. Put him off. Thrust him back. Weep for the early days: you have found no happiness to replace their joys. Mourn for the trifles that were innocent, since the trifles of your manhood are heavy with guilt. Fight to the last. Retreat inch by inch. With every step you lose. Every day robs you of treasure. Every hour passes you over to insignificance; and at the end stands Death. The bare and desolate decline drops suddenly into the hopeless, dreadful grave, the black and yawning grave, the foul and loathsome grave.

But why those who are Christians and not Pagans, who believe that death is not an eternal sleep, who wrest from life its uses and gather from life its beauty,—why they should dally along the road, and cling frantically to the old landmarks, and shrink fearfully from the approaching future, I cannot tell. You are getting into years. True. But you are getting out again. The bowed frame, the tottering step, the unsteady hand, the failing eye, the heavy ear, the tremulous voice, they will all be yours. The grasshopper will become a burden, and desire shall fail. The fire shall be smothered in your heart, and for passion you shall have only peace. This is not pleasant. It is never pleasant to feel the inevitable passing away of priceless possessions. If this were to be the culmination of your fate, you might indeed take up the wail for your lost youth. But this is only for a moment. The infirmities of age come gradually. Gently we are led down into the valley. Slowly, and not without a soft loveliness, the shadows lengthen. At the worst these weaknesses are but the stepping-stones in the river, passing over which you shall come to immortal vigor, immortal fire, immortal beauty. All along the western sky flames and glows the auroral light of another life. The banner of victory waves right over your dungeon of defeat. By the golden gateway of the sunseting,

“Through the dear might of Him who walked
the waves,”

you shall pass into the “cloud-land, gorgeous land,” whose splendor is unveiled only to the eyes of the Immortals. Would you loiter to your inheritance?

You are “getting into years.” Yes, but the years are getting into you,—the ripe, rich years, the genial, mellow years, the lusty, luscious years. One by one the crudities of your youth are falling off from you,—the vanity, the egotism, the isolation, the bewilderment, the uncertainty. Nearer and nearer you are approaching yourself. You are consolidating your forces. You are becoming master of the situation. Every wrong road into which you have wandered has brought

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you, by the knowledge of that mistake, so much closer to the truth. You no longer draw your bow at a venture, but shoot straight at the mark. Your possibilities concentrate, and your path is cleared. On the ruins of shattered plans you find your vantage-ground. Your broken hopes, your thwarted purposes, your defeated aspirations become a staff of strength with which you mount to sublimer heights. With self-possession and self-command return the possession and the command of all things. The title-deed of creation, forfeited, is reclaimed. The king has come to his own again. Earth and sea and sky pour out their largess of love. All the past crowds down to lay its treasures at your feet. Patriotism stands once more in the breach at Thermopylae,—bears down the serried hosts of Bannockburn,—lays its calm hand in the fire, still, as if it felt the pressure of a mother's lips,—gathers to its heart the points of opposing spears, to make a way for the avenging feet behind. All that the ages have of greatness and glory your hand may pluck, and every year adds to the purple vintage. Every year comes laden with the riches of the lives that were lavished on it. Every year brings to you softness and sweetness and strength. Every year evokes order from confusion, till all things find scope and adjustment. Every year sweeps a broader circle for your horizon, grooves a deeper channel for your experience. Through sun and shade and shower you ripen to a large and liberal life.

Yours is the deep joy, the unspoken fervor, the sacred fury of the fight. Yours is the power to redress wrong, to defend the weak, to succor the needy, to relieve the suffering, to confound the oppressor. While vigor leaps in great tidal pulses along your veins, you stand in the thickest of the fray, and broadsword and battle-axe come crashing down through helmet and visor. When force has spent itself, you withdraw from the field, your weapons pass into younger hands, you rest under your laurels, and your works do follow you. Your badges are the scars of your honorable wounds. Your life finds its vindication in the deeds which you have wrought.

The possible to-morrow has become the secure yesterday. Above the tumult and the turbulence, above the struggle and the doubt, you sit in the serene evening, awaiting your promotion.

Come, then, O dreaded years! Your brows are awful, but not with frowns. I hear your resonant tramp far off, but it is sweet as the May-maidens' song. In your grave prophetic eyes I read a golden promise. I know that you bear in your bosom the fulness of my life. Veiled monarchs of the future, shining dim and beautiful, you shall become my vassals, swift-footed to bear my messages, swift-handed to work my will. Nourished by the nectar which you will pour in passing from your crystal cups, Death shall have no dominion over me, but I shall go on from strength to strength and from glory to glory.

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THE PROMISE OF THE DAWN.

A Christmas story.

A winter's evening. Do you know how that comes here among the edges of the mountains that fence in the great Mississippi valley? The sea-breath in the New-England States thins the air and bleaches the sky, sucks the vitality out of Nature, I fancy, to put it into the brains of the people: but here, the earth every day in the year pulses out through hill or prairie or creek a full, untamed animal life,—shakes off the snow too early in spring, in order to put forth untimed and useless blossoms, wasteful of her infinite strength. So when this winter's evening came to a lazy town bedded in the hills that skirt Western Virginia close by the Ohio, it found that the December air, fiercely as it blew the snow-clouds about the hill-tops, was instinct with a vigorous, frosty life, and that the sky above the clouds was not wan and washed-out, as farther North, but massive, holding yet a sensuous yellow languor, the glow of unforgotten autumn days.

The very sun, quite certain of where he would soonest meet with gratitude, gave his kindest good-night smile to the great valley of the West, asleep under the snow: very kind to-night, just as calm and loving, though he knew the most plentiful harvest which the States had yielded that year was one of murdered dead, as he gave to the young, untainted world, that morning, long ago, when God blessed it, and saw that it was good. Because, you see, this was the eve of a more helpful, God-sent day than that, in spite of all the dead: Christmas eve. To-morrow Christ was coming,—whatever he may be to you,—Christ. The sun knew that, and glowed as cheerily, steadily, on blood as water. Why, God had the world! Let them fret, and cut each other's throats, if they would. God had them: and Christ was coming. But one fancied that the earth, not quite so secure in the infinite Love that held her, had learned to doubt, in her six thousand years of hunger, and heard the tidings with a thrill of relief. Was the Helper coming? Was it the true Helper? The very hope, even, gave meaning to the tender rose-blush on the peaks of snow, to the childish sparkle on the grim rivers. They heard and understood. The whole world answered.

One man, at least, fancied so: Adam Craig, hobbling down the frozen streets of this old-fashioned town. He thought, rubbing his bony hands together, that even the wind knew that Christmas was coming, the day that Christ was born: it went shouting boisterously through the great mountain-gorges, its very uncouth soul shaken with gladness. The city itself, he fancied, had caught a new and curious beauty: this winter its mills were stopped, and it had time to clothe the steep streets in spotless snow and icicles; its windows glittered red and cheery out into the early night: it looked just as if the old burgh had done its work, and sat down, like one of its own



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mill-men, to enjoy the evening, with not the cleanest face in the world, to be sure, but with an honest, jolly old heart under all, beating rough and glad and full. That was Adam Craig's fancy: but his head was full of queer fancies under the rusty old brown wig: queer, maybe, yet as pure and childlike as the prophet John's: coming, you know, from the same kinship. Adam had kept his fancies to himself these forty years. A lame old chap, cobbling shoes day by day, fighting the wolf desperately from the door for the sake of orphan brothers and sisters, has not much time to put the meanings God and Nature have for his ignorant soul into words, has he? But the fancies had found utterance for themselves, somehow: in his hatchet-shaped face, even, with its scraggy gray whiskers; in the quick, shrewd smile; in the eyes, keen eyes, but childlike, too. In the very shop out there on the creek-bank you could trace them. Adam had cobbled there these twenty years, chewing tobacco and taking snuff, (his mother's habit, that,) but the little shop was pure: people with brains behind their eyes would know that a clean and delicate soul lived there; they might have known it in other ways too, if they chose: in his gruff, sharp talk, even, full of slang and oaths; for Adam, invoke the Devil often as he might, never took the name of Christ or a woman in vain. So his foolish fancies, as he called them, cropped out. It must be so, you know: put on what creed you may, call yourself chevalier or Sambo, the speech your soul has held with God and the Devil will tell itself in every turn of your head, and jangle of your laugh: you cannot help that.

But it was Christmas eve. Adam took that in with keener enjoyment, in every frosty breath he drew. Different from any Christmas eve before: pulling off his scuffed cap to feel the full strength of the "nor'rer." Whew! how it blew! straight from the ice-fields of the Pole, he thought. So few people there were up there to be glad Christ was coming! But those filthy little dwarfs up there needed Him all the same: every man of them had a fiend tugging at his soul, like us, was lonely, wanted a God to help him, and—a wife to love him. Adam stopped short here a minute, something choking in his throat. "Jinny!" he said, under his breath, turning to some new hope in his heart, with as tender, awe-struck a touch as one lays upon a new-born infant. "Jinny!" praying silently with blurred eyes. I think Christ that moment came very near to the woman who was so greatly loved, and took her in His arms, and blessed her. Adam jogged on, trying to begin a whistle, but it ended in a miserable grunt: his heart was throbbing under his smoke-dried skin, silly as a woman's, so light it was, and full.

"Get along, Old Dot, and carry one!" shouted the boys, sledding down the icy sidewalk.

"Yip! you young devils, you!" stopping to give them a helping shove and a cheer; loving little children always, but never as to-day.



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Surely there never was such a Christmas eve before! The frozen air glistened grayly up into heaven itself, he thought; the snow-covered streets were alive, noisy,—glad into their very cellars and shanties; the sun was sorry to go away. No wonder. His heartiest ruby-gleam lingered about the white Virginia heights behind the town, and across the river quite glorified the pale stretch of the Ohio hills. Free and slave. (Adam was an Abolitionist.) Well, let that be. God's hand of power, like His sunlight, held the master and the slave in loving company. To-morrow was the sign.

The cobbler stopped on the little swinging foot-bridge that crosses the creek in the centre of the city. The faint saffron sunset swept from the west over the distant wooded hills, the river, the stone bridge below him, whose broad gray piers painted perpetual arches on the sluggish, sea-colored water. The smoke from one or two far-off foundries hung just above it, motionless in the gray, in tattered drifts, dyed by the sun, clear drab and violet. A still picture. A bit of Venice, poor Adam thought, who never had been fifty miles out of Wheeling. The quaint American town was his world: he brought the world into it. There were relics of old Indian forts and mounds, the old times and the new. The people, too, though the cobbler only dimly saw that, were as much the deposit and accretion of all dead ages as was the coal that lay bedded in the fencing hills. Irish, Dutch, whites, blacks, Moors, old John Bull himself: you can find the dregs of every day of the world in any mill-town of the States. Adam had a dull perception of this. Christmas eve came to all the world, coming here.

Leaning on the iron wires, while the unsteady little bridge shook under him, he watched the stunned beams of the sun urging themselves through the smoke-clouds. He thought they were like "the voice of one crying in the wilderness, 'Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight.'" It wakened something in the man's hackneyed heart deeper even than the thought of the woman he had prayed for. A sudden vision that a great Peace held the world as did that glow of upper light: he rested in its calm. Up the street a few steps rose the walls of the old theatre, used as a prison now for captured Confederates: it was full now; he could see them looking out from behind the bars, grimy and tattered. Far to the north, on Mount Woods, the white grave-stones stood out clear in the darkening evening. His enemies, the busy streets, the very war itself, the bones and souls of the dead yonder,—the great Peace held them all. We might call them evil, but they were sent from God, and went back to God. All things were in Him.

I tell you, that when this one complete Truth got into this poor cobbler's brain,—in among its vulgar facts of North and South, and patched shoes, and to-morrow's turkey,—a great poet-insight looked out of his eyes for the minute. Saint John looked thus as he wrote that primitive natal word, "God is love." Cobblers, as well as Saint John, or the dying Herder, need great thoughts, and water from God to refresh them, believe me.



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Trotting on, hardly needing his hickory stick, Adam could see the little brown shop yonder on the creek-bank. All dark: but did you ever see anything brighter than the way the light shone in the sitting-room, behind the Turkey-red curtains? Such a taste that little woman had! Two years ago the cobbler finished his life-work, he thought: he had been mother and father both to the orphans left with him, faithful to them, choking down the hungry gnawing within for something nearer than brother or sister. Two years ago they had left him, struck out into the world for themselves.

“Then, you see,” Adam used to say, “I was settlin’ down into an old man; dryin’ up, d’ ye see? thinkin’ the Lord had forgotten me, when He said to other men, ‘Come, it’s *your* turn now for home and lovin’.’ Them young ones was dear enough, but a man has a cravin’ for somethin’ that’s his own. But it was too late, I thought. Bitter; despisin’ the Lord’s eyesight; thinkin’ He didn’t see or care what would keep me from hell. I believed in God, like most poor men do, thinkin’ Him cold-blooded, not hearin’ when we cry out for work, or a wife, or child. *I* didn’t cry. *I* never prayed. But look there. Do you see—*her*? Jinny?” It was to the young Baptist preacher Adam said this, when he came to make a pastoral visit to Adam’s wife. “That’s what He did. I’m not ashamed to pray now. I ask Him every hour to give me a tight grip on her so that I kin follow her up, and to larn me some more of His ways. That’s my religious ‘xperience, Sir.”

The young man coughed weakly, and began questioning old Craig as to his faith in immersion. The cobbler stumped about the kitchen a minute before answering, holding himself down. His face was blood-red when he did speak, quite savage, the young speaker said afterward.

“I don’t go to church, Sir. My wife does. I don’t say *now*, ‘Damn the churches!’ or that you, an’ the likes of you, an’ yer Master, are all shams an’ humbugs. I know Him now. He’s ‘live to me. So now, when I see you belie Him, an’ keep men from Him with yer hundreds o’ wranglin’ creeds, an’ that there’s as much honest love of truth outside the Church as in it, I don’t put yer bigotry an’ foulness on Him. I on’y think there’s an awful mistake: just this: that the Church thinks it is Christ’s body an’ us uns is outsiders, an’ we think so too, an’ despise Him through you with yer stingy souls an’ fights an’ squabblins; not seein’ that the Church is jes’ an hospital, where some of the sickest of God’s patients is tryin’ to get cured.”

The preacher never went back; spoke in a church-meeting soon after of the prevalence of Tom Paine’s opinions among the lower classes. Half of our sham preachers take the vague name of “Paine” to cover all of Christ’s opponents,—not ranking themselves there, of course.



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Adam thought he had won a victory. "Ef you'd heard me flabbergast the parson!" he used to say, with a jealous anxiety to keep Christ out of the visible Church, to shut his eyes to the true purity in it, to the fact that the Physician was in His hospital. To-night some more infinite gospel had touched him. "Good evenin', Mr. Pitts," he said, meeting the Baptist preacher. "Happy Christmas, Sir!" catching a glance of his broken boots. "Danged ef I don't send that feller a pair of shoes unbeknownst, to-morrow! He's workin' hard, an' it's not for money."

The great Peace held even its erring Church, as Adam dully saw. The streets were darkening, but full even yet of children crowding in and out of the shops. Not a child among them was more busy or important, or keener for a laugh than Adam, with his basket on his arm and his hand in his pocket clutching the money he had to lay out. The way he had worked for that! Over-jobs, you know, done at night when Jinny and the baby were asleep. It was carrying him through splendidly, though: the basket was quite piled up with bundles: as for the turkey, hadn't he been keeping that in the backyard for weeks, stuffing it until it hardly could walk? That turkey, do you know, was the first thing Baby ever took any notice of, except the candle? Jinny was quite opposed to killing it, for that reason, and proposed they should have ducks instead; but as old Jim Farley and Granny Simpson were invited for dinner, and had been told about the turkey, matters must stay as they were.

"Poor souls, they'll not taste turkey agin this many a day, I'm thinkin', Janet. When we give an entertainment, it's allus them-like we'll ask. That's the Master's biddin', ye know."

But the pudding was yet to buy. He had a dirty scrap of paper on which Jinny had written down the amount. "The hand that woman writes!" He inspected it anxiously at every street-lamp. Did you ever see anything finer than that tongue, full of its rich brown juices and golden fat? or the white, crumbly suet? Jinny said veal: such a saving little body she was! but we know what a pudding ought to be. Now for the pippins for it, yellow they are, holding summer yet; and a few drops of that brandy in the window, every drop shining and warm: that'll put a soul into it, and—He stopped before the confectioner's: just a moment, to collect himself; for this was the crowning point, this. There they were, in the great, gleaming window below: the rich Malaga raisins, bedded in their cases, cold to the lips, but within all glowing sweetness and passion; and the cool, tart little currants. If Jinny could see that window! and Baby. To be sure, Baby mightn't appreciate it, but—White frosted cakes, built up like fairy palaces, and mountains of golden oranges, and the light trembling through delicate candies, purple and rose-color. "Let's have a look, boys!"—and Adam crowded into the swarm outside.

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Over the shops there was a high brick building, a concert-hall. You could hear the soft, dreamy air floating down from it, made vocal into a wordless love and pathos. Adam forgot the splendors of the window, listening; his heart throbbed full under his thin coat; it ached with an infinite tenderness. The poor old cobbler's eyes filled with tears: he could have taken Jesus and the great world all into his arms then. How loving and pure it was, the world! Christ's footsteps were heard. The eternal stars waited above; there was not a face in the crowd about him that was not clear and joyous. These delicate, pure women flitting past him up into the lighted hall,—it made his nerves thrill into pleasure to look at them. Jesus' world! His creatures.

He put his hand into the basket, and shyly took out a bunch of flowers he had bought, —real flowers, tender, sweet-smelling little things. Wouldn't Jinny wonder to find them on her bureau in the morning? Their fragrance, so loving and innocent, filled the frosty air, like a breath of the purity of this Day coming. Just as he was going to put them back carefully, a hand out of the crowd caught hold of them, a dirty hand, with sores on it, and a woman thrust her face from under her blowzy bonnet into his: a young face, deadly pale, on which some awful passion had cut the lines; lips dyed scarlet with rank blood, lips, you would think, that in hell itself would utter a coarse jest.

"Give 'em to me, old cub!" she said, pulling at them. "I want 'em for a better nor you."

"Go it, Lot!" shouted the boys.

He struck her. A woman? Yes; if it had been a slimy eel standing upright, it would have been less foul a thing than this.

"Damn you!" she muttered, chafing the hurt arm. Whatever words this girl spoke came from her teeth out,—seemed to have no meaning to her.

"Let's see, Lot."

She held out her arm, and the boy, a black one, plastered it with grime from the gutter. The others yelled with delight. Adam hurried off. A pure air? God help us! He threw the flowers into the gutter with a bitter loathing. *Her* fingers would be polluted, if they touched them now. He would not tell her of this: he would cut off his hand rather than talk to her of this,—let her know such things were in the world. So pure and saintly she was, his little wife! a homely little body, but with the cleanest, most loving heart, doing her Master's will humbly. The cobbler's own veins were full of Scotch blood, as pure indignant as any knight's of the Holy Greal. He wiped his hand, as though a leper had tainted it.



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Passing down Church Street, the old bell rang out the hour. All day he had fancied its tone had gathered a lighter, more delicate sweetness with every chime. The Christ-child was coming; the world held up its hands adoring; all that was needed of men was to love Him, and rejoice. Its tone was different now: there was a brutal cry of pain in the ponderous voice that shook the air,—a voice saying something to God, unintelligible to him. He thrust out the thought of that woman with a curse: he had so wanted to have a good day, to feel how great and glad the world was, and to come up close to Christ with Jinny and the baby! He did soon forget the vileness there behind, going down the streets; they were so cozy and friendly-hearted, the parlor-windows opening out red and cheerfully, as is the custom in Southern and Western towns; they said “Happy Christmas” to every passer-by. The owners, going into the houses, had a hearty word for Adam. “Well, Craig, how goes it?” or, “Fine, frosty weather, Sir.” It quite heartened the cobbler. He made shoes for most of these people, and whether men are free and equal or not, any cobbler will have a reverence for the man he has shod.

So Adam trotted on, his face a little redder, and his stooped chest, especially next the basket, in quite a glow. There she was, clear out in the snow, waiting for him by the curb-stone. How she took hold of the basket, and Adam made believe she was carrying the whole weight of it! How the fire-light struck out furiously through the Turkey-red curtains, so as to show her to him quicker!—to show him the snug coffee-colored dress, and the bits of cherry ribbon at her throat,—to show him how the fair curly hair was tucked back to leave the rosy ears bare he thought so dainty,—to show him how young she was, how faded and worn and tired-out she was, how hard the years had been,—to show him how his great love for her was thickening the thin blood with life, making a child out of the thwarted woman,—to show him—this more than all, this that his soul watched for, breathless, day and night—that she loved him, that she knew nothing better than the ignorant, loving heart, the horny hands that had taken her hungry fate to hold, and made of it a color and a fragrance. “Christmas is coming, little woman!” Of course it was. If it had not taken the whole world into its embrace yet, there it was compacted into a very glow of love and warmth and coziness in that snugnest of rooms, and in that very Jinny and Baby,—Christmas itself,—especially when he kissed her, and she blushed and laughed, the tears in her eyes, and went fussing for that queer roll of white flannel.

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Adam took off his coat: he always went at the job of nursing the baby in his shirt-sleeves. The anxious sweat used to break on his forehead before he was through. He got its feet to the fire. "I'm dead sure that much is right," he used to say. Jinny put away the bundles, wishing to herself Mrs. Perkins would happen in to see them: one didn't like to be telling what they had for dinner, but if it was known accidentally—You poets, whose brains have quite snubbed and sent to Coventry your stomachs, never could perceive how the pudding was a poem to the cobbler and his wife,—how a very actual sense of the live goodness of Jesus was in it,—how its spicy steam contained all the cordial cheer and jollity they had missed in meaningless days of the year. Then she brought her sewing-chair, and sat down, quite idle.

"No work for to-night! I'll teach you how to keep Christmas, Janet, woman!"

It was her first, one might say. Orphan girls that go about from house to house sewing, as Jinny had done, don't learn Christmas by heart year by year. It was a new experience: she was taking it in, one would think, to look at her, with all her might, with the earnest blue eyes, the shut-up brain behind the narrow forehead, the loving heart: a contracted tenement, that heart, by-the-by, adapted for single lodgers. She wasn't quite sure that Christmas was not, after all, a relic of Papistry,—for Jinny was a thorough Protestant: a Christian, as far as she understood Him, with a keen interest in the Indian missions. "Let us begin in our own country," she said, and always prayed for the Sioux just after Adam and Baby. In fact, if we are all parts of God's temple, Jinny was a very essential, cohesive bit of mortar. Adam had a wider door for his charity: it took all the world in, he thought,—though the preachers did enter with a shove, as we know. However, this was Christmas: the word took up all common things, the fierce wind without, the clean hearth, the modest color on her cheek, the very baby, and made of them one grand, sweet poem, that sang to the man the same story the angels told eighteen centuries ago: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will toward men."

Sitting there in the evenings, Adam was the talker: such a fund of anecdote he had! Jinny never could hear the same story too often. To-night there was a bit of a sigh in them: his heart was tender: about the Christmases at home, when he and Nelly were little chubs together, and hung up their stockings regularly every Christmas eve.

"Twins, Nelly an' me was, oldest of all. When I was bound to old Lowe, it went hard, ef I couldn't scratch together enough for a bit of ribbon-bow or a ring for Nell, come Christmas. She used to sell the old flour-barrels an' rags, an' have her gift all ready by my plate that mornin': never missed. I never hed a sweetheart then."

Jinny laid her hand on his knee.



“Ye ‘r’ glad o’ that, little woman? Well, well! I didn’t care for women, only Ellen. She was the only livin’ thing as come near me. I gripped on to her like death, havin’ only her. But she—hed more nor me.”



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Jinny knew the story well.

“She went away with him?” softly.

“Yes, she did. I don’t blame her. She was young, unlearned. No man cared for our souls. So, when she loved him well, she thort God spoke to her. So she was tuk from me. She went away.”

He patted the baby, his skinny hand all shaking. Jinny took it in hers, and, leaning over, stroked his hair.

“You’ve hed hard trouble, to turn it gray like this.”

“No trouble like that, woman, when he left her.”

“Left her! An’ then she was tired of God, an’ of livin’, or dyin’. So as she loved him! You know, my husband. As I love you. An’ he left her! What wonder *what* she did? All alone! So as she loved him still! God shut His eyes to what she did.”

The yellow, shaggy face was suddenly turned from her. The voice choked.

“Did He, little woman? *You* know.”

“So, when she was a-tryin’ to forget, the only way she knew, God sent an angel to bring her up, an’ have her soul washed clean.”

Adam laughed bitterly.

“That’s not the way men told the story, child. I got there six months after: to New York, you know. I found in an old paper jes’ these words: ‘The woman, Ellen Myers, found dead yesterday on one of the docks, was identified. Died of starvation and whiskey.’ That was Nelly, as used to hang up her stockin’ with me. Christian people read that. But nobody cried but me.”

“They’re tryin’ to help them now at the Five Points there.”

“God help them as helps others this Christmas night! But it’s not for such as you to talk of the Five Points, Janet,” rousing himself. “What frabbit me to talk of Nelly the night? Someways she’s been beside me all day, as if she was grippin’ me by the sleeve, beggin’, dumb-like.”

The moody frown deepened.

“The baby! See, Adam, it’ll waken! Quick, man!”



And Adam, with a start, began hushing it after the fashion of a chimpanzee. The old bell rang out another hour: how genial and loving it was!

“Nine o’clock! Let me up, boys!”—and Lot Tyndal hustled them aside from the steps of the concert-hall. They made way for her: her thin, white arms could deal furious blows, they knew from experience. Besides, they had seen her, when provoked, fall in some cellar-door in a livid dead spasm. They were afraid of her. Her filthy, wet skirt flapped against her feet, as she went up; she pulled her flaunting bonnet closer over her head. There was a small room at the top of the stairs, a sort of greenroom for the performers. Lot shoved the door open and went in. Madame —— was there, the prima-donna, if you chose to call her so: the rankest bloom of fifty summers, in white satin and pearls: a faded dahlia. Women hinted that the fragrance of the dahlia had not been healthful in the world; but they crowded to hear her: such a wonderful contralto! The manager, a thin old man, with a hook-nose, and kindly, uncertain smile, stood by the stove, with a group of gentlemen about him. The wretch from the street went up to him, unsteadily.



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“Lot’s drunk,” one door-keeper whispered to another.

“No; the Devil’s in her, though, like a tiger, to-night.”

Yet there was a certain grace and beauty in her face, as she looked at the manager, and spoke low and sudden.

“I’m not a beggar. I want money,—honest money. It’s Christmas eve. They say you want a voice for the chorus, in the carols. Put me where I’ll be hid, and I’ll sing for you.”

The manager’s hand fell from his watch-chain. Storrs, a young lawyer of the place, touched his shoulder.

“Don’t look so aghast, Pumphrey. Let her sing a ballad to show you. Her voice is a real curiosity.”

Madame —— looked dubiously across the room: her black maid had whispered to her. Lot belonged to an order she had never met face to face before: one that lives in the suburbs of hell.

“Let her sing, Pumphrey.”

“If”——looking anxiously to the lady.

“Certainly,” drawled that type of purity. “If it is so curious, her voice.”

“Sing, then,” nodding to the girl.

There was a strange fierceness under her dead, gray eye.

“Do you mean to employ me to-night?”

Her tones were low, soft, from her teeth out, as I told you. Her soul was chained, below: a young girl’s soul, hardly older than your little daughter’s there, who sings Sunday-school hymns for you in the evenings. Yet one fancied, if this girl’s soul were let loose, it would utter a madder cry than any fiend in hell.

“Do you mean to employ me?” biting her finger-ends until they bled.

“Don’t be foolish, Charlotte,” whispered Storrs. “You may be thankful you’re not sent to jail instead. But sing for him. He’ll give you something, may-be.”

She did not damn him, as he expected, stood quiet a moment, her eyelids fallen, relaxed with an inexpressible weariness. A black porter came to throw coals into the stove: he knew “dat debbil, Lot,” well: had helped drag her drunk to the lock-up a day



or two before. Now, before the white folks, he drew his coat aside, loathing to touch her. She followed him with a glazed look.

“Do you see what I am?” she said to the manager.

Nothing pitiful in her voice. It was too late for that.

“He wouldn’t touch me: I’m not fit. I want help. Give me some honest work.”

She stopped and put her hand on his coat-sleeve. The child she might have been, and never was, looked from her face that moment.

“God made me, I think,” she said, humbly.

The manager’s thin face reddened.

“God bless my soul! what shall I do, Mr. Storrs?”

The young man’s thick lip and thicker eyelid drooped. He laughed, and whispered a word or two.

“Yes,” gruffly, being reassured. “There’s a policeman outside. Joe, take her out, give her in charge to him.”

The negro motioned her before him with a billet of wood he held. She laughed. Her laugh had gained her the name of “Devil Lot.”



Page 23

“Why,”—fires that God never lighted blazing in her eyes,—“I thought you wanted me to sing! I’ll sing. We’ll have a hymn. It’s Christmas, you know.”

She staggered. Liquor, or some subtler poison, was in her veins. Then, catching by the lintel, she broke into that most deep of all adoring cries,—

“I know that my Redeemer liveth.”

A strange voice. The men about her were musical critics: they listened intently. Low, uncultured, yet full, with childish grace and sparkle; but now and then a wailing breath of an unutterable pathos.

“Git out wid you,” muttered the negro, who had his own religious notions, “pollutin’ de name ob de Lord in yer lips!”

Lot laughed.

“Just for a joke, Joe. *My Redeemer!*”

He drove her down the stairs.

“Do you want to go to jail, Lot?” he said, more kindly. “It’s orful cold out to-night.”

“No. Let me go.”

She went through the crowd out into the vacant street, down to the wharf, humming some street-song,—from habit, it seemed; sat down on a pile of lumber, picking the clay out of the holes in her shoes. It was dark: she did not see that a man had followed her, until his white-gloved hand touched her. The manager, his uncertain face growing red.

“Young woman”—

Lot got up, pushed off her bonnet. He looked at her.

“My God! No older than Susy,” he said.

By a gas-lamp she saw his face, the trouble in it.

“Well?” biting her finger-ends again.

“I’m sorry for you, I”—

“Why?” sharply. “There’s more like me. Fifteen thousand in the city of New York. I came from there.”

“Not like you, child.”



“Yes, like me,” with a gulping noise in her throat. “I’m no better than the rest.”

She sat down and began digging in the snow, holding the sullen look desperately on her face. The kind word had reached the tortured soul beneath, and it struggled madly to be free.

“Can I help you?”

No answer.

“There’s something in your face makes me heart-sick. I’ve a little girl of your age.”

She looked up quickly.

“Who are you, girl?”

She stood up again, her child’s face white, the dark river rolling close by her feet.

“I’m Lot. I always was what you see. My mother drank herself to death in the Bowery dens. I learned my trade there, slow and sure.”

She stretched out her hands into the night, with a wild cry,—

“My God! I had to live!”

What was to be done? Whose place was it to help her? he thought. He loathed to touch her. But her soul might be as pure and groping as little Susy’s.

“I wish I could help you, girl,” he said. “But I’m a moral man. I have to be careful of my reputation. Besides, I couldn’t bring you under the same roof with my child.”



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She was quiet now.

“I know. There’s not one of those Christian women up in the town yonder ’ud take Lot into their kitchens to give her a chance to save herself from hell. Do you think I care? It’s not for myself I’m sorry. It’s too late.”

Yet as this child, hardly a woman, gave her soul over forever, she could not keep her lips from turning white.

“There’s thousands more of us. Who cares? Do preachers and them as sits in the grand churches come into our dens to teach us better?”

Pumphrey grew uneasy.

“Who taught you to sing?” he said.

The girl started. She did not answer for a minute.

“What did you say?” she said.

“Who taught you?”

Her face flushed warm and dewy; her eyes wandered away, moistened and dreamy; she curled her hair-softly on her finger.

“I’d—I’d rather not speak of that,” she said, low. “He’s dead now. *He* called me—Lottie,” looking up with a sudden, childish smile. “I was only fifteen then.”

“How old are you now?”

“Four years more. But I tell you I’ve seen the world in that time.”

It was Devil Lot looked over at the dark river now.

He turned away to go up the wharf. No help for so foul a thing as this. He dared not give it, if there were. She had sunk down with her old, sullen glare, but she rose and crept after him. Why, this was her only chance of help from all the creatures God had made!

“Let me tell you,” she said, holding by a fire-plug. “It’s not for myself I care. It’s for Benny. That’s my little brother. I’ve raised him. He loves me; *he don’t know*. I’ve kept him alone allays. I don’t pray, you know; but when Ben puts his white little arms about me ’t nights and kisses me, somethin’ says to me, ‘God loves you, Lot.’ So help me God, that boy shall never know what his sister was! He’s gettin’ older now. I want work, before he can know. Now, will you help me?”



“How can I?”

The whole world of society spoke in the poor manager.

“I’ll give you money.”

Her face hardened.

“Lot, I’ll be honest. There’s no place for such as you. Those that have made you what you are hold good stations among us; but when a woman’s once down, there’s no raising her up.”

“*Never?*”

“Never.”

She stood, her fair hair pushed back from her face, her eye deadening every moment, quite quiet.

“Good bye, Lot.”

The figure touched him somehow, standing alone in the night there.

“It wasn’t my fault at the first,” she wandered. “Nobody taught me better.”

“I’m not a church-member, thank God!” said Pumphrey to himself, and so washed his hands in innocence.

“Well, good bye, girl,” kindly. “Try and lead a better life. I wish I could have given you work.”

“It was only for Benny that I cared, Sir.”



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“You’re sick? Or”—

“It’ll not last long, now. I only keep myself alive eating opium now and then. D’ ye know? I fell by your hall to-day; had a fit, they said. It wasn’t a fit; it was death, Sir.”

He smiled.

“Why didn’t you die, then?”

“I wouldn’t. Benny would have known then, I said,—‘I will not. I must take care o’ him first.’ Good bye. You’d best not be seen here.”

And so she left him.

One moment she stood uncertain, being alone, looking down into the seething black water covered with ice.

“There’s one chance yet,” she muttered. “It’s hard; but I’ll try,”—with a shivering sigh; and went dragging herself along the wharf, muttering still something about Benny.

As she went through the lighted streets, her step grew lighter. She lifted her head. Why, she was only a child yet, in some ways, you know; and this was Christmas-time; and it wasn’t easy to believe, that, with the whole world strong and glad, and the True Love coming into it, there was no chance for her. Was it? She hurried on, keeping in the shadow of the houses to escape notice, until she came to the more open streets,—the old “commons.” She stopped at the entrance of an alley, going to a pump, washing her face and hands, then combing her fair, silky hair.

“I’ll try it,” she said again.

Some sudden hope had brought a pink flush to her cheek and a moist brilliance to her eye. You could not help thinking, had society not made her what she was, how fresh and fair and debonair a little maiden she would have been.

“He’s my mother’s brother. He’d a kind face, though he struck me. I’ll kill him, if he strikes me agin,” the dark trade-mark coming into her eyes. “But mebbe,” patting her hair, “he’ll not. Just call me Charley, as Ben does: help me to be like his wife: I’ll hev a chance for heaven at last.”

She turned to a big brick building and ran lightly up the stairs on the outside. It had been a cotton-factory, but was rented in tenement-rooms now. On the highest porch was one of Lot’s rooms: she had two. The muslin curtain was undrawn, a red fire-light shone out. She looked in through the window, smiling. A clean, pure room: the walls she had whitewashed herself; a white cot-bed in one corner; a glowing fire, before which a little child sat on a low cricket, building a house out of blocks. A brave, honest-



faced little fellow, with clear, reserved eyes, and curling golden hair. The girl, Lot, might have looked like that at his age.

“Benny!” she called, tapping on the pane.

“Yes, Charley!” instantly, coming quickly to the door.

She caught him up in her arms.

“Is my baby tired waiting for sister? I’m finding Christmas for him, you know.”

He put his arms about her neck, kissing her again and again, and laying his head down on her shoulder.

“I’m so glad you’ve come, Charley! so glad! so glad!”



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“Has my boy his stocking up? Such a big boy to have his stocking up!”

He put his chubby hands over her eyes quickly, laughing.

“Don’t look, Charley! don’t! Benny’s played you a trick now, I tell you!” pulling her towards the fire. “Now look! Not Benny’s stocking: Charley’s, *I* guess.”

The girl sat down on the cricket, holding him on her lap, playing with the blocks, as much of a child as he.

“Why, Bud! Such an awful lot of candies that stocking’ll hold!” laughing with him. “It’ll take all Kriss Kringle’s sack.”

“*Kriss Kringle!* Oh, Charley! I’m too big; I’m five years now. You can’t cheat me.”

The girl’s very lips went white. She got up at his childish words, and put him down.

“No, I’ll not cheat you, Benny,—never, any more.”

“Where are you going, Charley?”

“Just out a bit,” wrapping a plain shawl about her. “To find Christmas, you know. For you—and me.”

He pattered after her to the door.

“You’ll come put me to bed, Charley dear? I’m so lonesome!”

“Yes, Bud. Kiss me. One,—two,—three times,—for God’s good-luck.”

He kissed her. And Lot went out into the wide, dark world,—into Christmas night, to find a friend.

She came a few minutes later to a low frame-building, painted brown: Adam Craig’s house and shop. The little sitting-room had a light in it: his wife would be there with the baby. Lot knew them well, though they never had seen her. She had watched them through the window for hours in winter nights. Some damned soul might have thus looked wistfully into heaven: pitying herself, feeling more like God than the blessed within, because she knew the pain in her heart, the struggle to do right, and pitied it. She had a reason for the hungry pain in her blood when the kind-faced old cobbler passed her. She was Nelly’s child. She had come West to find him.

“Never, that he should know *me!* never that! but for Benny’s sake.”



If Benny could have brought her to him, saying, “See, this is Charley, my Charley!” But Adam knew her by another name,—Devil Lot.

While she stood there, looking in at the window, the snow drifting on her head in the night, two passers-by halted an instant.

“Oh, father, look!” It was a young girl spoke. “Let me speak to that woman.”

“What does thee mean, Maria?”

She tried to draw her hand from his arm.

“Let me go,—she’s dying, I think. Such a young, fair face! She thinks God has forgotten her. Look!”

The old Quaker hesitated.

“Not thee, Maria. Thy mother shall find her to-morrow. Thee must never speak to her. Accursed! ’Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.’”

They passed on. Lot heard it all. God had offered the pure young girl a chance to save a soul from death; but she threw it aside. Lot did not laugh: looked after them with tearless eyes, until they were out of sight. She went to the door then. “It’s for Benny,” she whispered, swallowing down the choking that made her dumb. She knocked and went in.



Page 27

Jinny was alone: sitting by the fire, rocking the baby to sleep, singing some child's hymn: a simple little thing, beginning,—

“Come, let us sing of Jesus,
Who wept our path along:
Come, let us sing of Jesus,
The tempted, and the strong.”

Such a warm, happy flush lightened in Charley's heart at that! She did not know why; but her fear was gone. The baby, too, a white, pure little thing, was lying in the cradle, cooing softly to itself. The mother—instinct is nearest the surface in a loving woman; the girl went up quickly to it, and touched its cheek, with a smile: she could not help it.

“It's so pretty!” she said.

Jinny's eyes glowed.

“I think so,” she said, simply. “It's my baby. Did you want me?”

Lot remembered then. She drew back, her face livid and grave.

“Yes. Do you know me? I'm Lot Tyndal. Don't jerk your baby back! Don't! I'll not touch it. I want to get some honest work. I've a little brother.”

There was a dead silence. Jinny's brain, I told you, was narrow, her natural heart not generous or large in its impulse; the kind of religion she learned did not provide for anomalies of work like this. (So near at hand, you know. Lot was neither a Sioux nor a Rebel.)

“I'm Lot,”—desperately. “You know what I am. I want you to take us in, stop the boys from hooting at me on the streets, make a decent Christian woman out of me. There's plain words. Will you do it? I'll work for you. I'll nurse the baby, the dear little baby.”

Jinny held her child tighter to her breast, looking at the vile clothes of the wretch, the black marks which years of crime had left on her face. Don't blame Jinny. Her baby was God's gift to her: she thought of that, you know. She did not know those plain, coarse words were the last cry for help from a drowning soul, going down into depths whereof no voice has come back to tell the tale. Only Jesus. Do you know what message He carried to those “spirits in prison”?

“I daren't do it. What would they say of me?” she faltered.

Lot did not speak. After a while she motioned to the shop. Adam was there. His wife went for him, taking the baby with her. Charley saw that, though everything looked dim to her; when Adam came in, she knew, too, that his face was angry and dark.



"It's Christmas eve," she said.

She tried to say more, but could not.

"You must go from here!" speaking sharp, hissing. "I've no faith in the whinin' cant of such as you. Go out, Janet. This is no place for you or the child."

He opened the street-door for Lot to go out. He had no faith in her. No shrewd, common-sense man would have had. Besides, this was his Christmas night: the beginning of his new life, when he was coming near to Christ in his happy home and great love. Was this foul worm of the gutter to crawl in and tarnish it all?



Page 28

She stopped one instant on the threshold. Within was a home, a chance for heaven; out yonder in the night—what?

“You will put me out?” she said.

“I know your like. There’s no help for such as you”; and he closed the door.

She sat down on the curb-stone. It was snowing hard. For about an hour she was there, perfectly quiet. The snow lay in warm, fleecy drifts about her: when it fell on her arm, she shook it off: it was so pure and clean, and *she*—She could have torn her flesh from the bones, it seemed so foul to her that night. Poor Charley! If she had only known how God loved something within her, purer than the snow, which no foulness of flesh or circumstance could defile! Would you have told her, if you had been there? She only muttered, “Never,” to herself now and then, “Never.”

A little boy came along presently, carrying a loaf of bread under his arm,—a manly, gentle little fellow. She let Benny play with him sometimes.

“Why, Lot!” he said. “I’ll walk part of the way home with you. I’m afraid.”

She got up and took him by the hand. She could hardly speak. Tired, worn-out in body and soul; her feet had been passing for years through water colder than the river of death: but it was nearly over now.

“It’s better for Benny it should end this way,” she said.

She knew how it would end.

“Rob,” she said, when the boy turned to go to his own home, “you know Adam Craig? I want you to bring him to my room early to-morrow morning,—by dawn. Tell him he’ll find his sister Nelly’s child there: and never to tell that child that his ‘Charley’ was Lot Tyndal. You’ll remember, Rob?”

“I will. Happy Christmas, Charley!”

She waited a minute, her foot on the steps leading to her room.

“Rob!” she called, weakly, “when you play with Ben, I wish you’d call me Charley to him, and never—that other name.”

“I’ll mind,” the child said, looking wistfully at her.

She was alone now. How long and steep the stairs were! She crawled up slowly. At the top she took a lump of something brown from her pocket, looked at it long and steadily. Then she glanced upward.



“It’s the only way to keep Benny from knowing,” she said. She ate it, nearly all, then looked around, below her, with a strange intentness, as one who says good-bye. The bell tolled the hour. Unutterable pain was in its voice,—may-be dumb spirits like Lot’s crying aloud to God.

“One hour nearer Christmas,” said Adam Craig, uneasily. “Christ’s coming would have more meaning, Janet, if this were a better world. If it wasn’t for these social necessities that”——

He stopped. Jinny did not answer.

Lot went into her room, roused Ben with a kiss. “His last remembrance of me shall be good and pleasant,” she said. She took him on her lap, untying his shoes.

“My baby has been hunting eggs to-day in Rob’s stable,” shaking the hay from his stockings.



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“Why, Charley! how could you know?” with wide eyes.

“So many things I know! Oh, Charley’s wise! To-morrow, Bud will go see new friends, —such kind friends! Charley knows. A baby, Ben. My boy will like that: he’s a big giant beside that baby. *Ben* can hold it, and touch it, and kiss it.”

She looked at his pure hands with hungry eyes.

“Go on. What else but the baby?”

“Kind friends for Ben, better and kinder than Charley.”

“That’s not true. Where are you going, Charley? I hate the kind friends. I’ll stay with you,”—beginning to cry.

Her eyes sparkled, and she laughed childishly.

“Only a little way, Bud, I’m going. You watch for me,—all the time you watch for me. Some day you and I’ll go out to the country, and be good children together.”

What dawning of a new hope was this? She did not feel as if she lied. Some day,—it might be true. Yet the vague gleam died out of her heart, and when Ben, in his white night-gown, knelt down to say the prayer his mother had taught him, it was “Devil Lot’s” dead, crime-marked face that bent over him.

“God bless Charley!” he said.

She heard that. She put him into the bed, then quietly bathed herself, filled his stocking with the candies she had bought, and lay down beside him,—her limbs growing weaker, but her brain more lifeful, vivid, intent.

“Not long now,” she thought. “Love me, Benny. Kiss me good-night.”

The child put his arms about her neck, and kissed her forehead.

“Charley’s cold,” he said. “When we are good children together, let’s live in a tent. Will you, Sis? Let’s make a tent now.”

“Yes, dear.”

She struggled up, and pinned the sheet over him to the head-board; it was a favorite fancy of Ben’s.

“That’s a good Charley,” sleepily. “Good night. I’ll watch for you all the time, all the time.”



He was asleep,—did not waken even when she strained him to her heart, passionately, with a wild cry.

“Good bye, Benny.” Then she lay quiet. “We might have been good children together, if only—I don’t know whose fault it is,” throwing her thin arms out desperately. “I wish—oh, I do wish somebody had been kind to me!”

Then the arms fell powerless, and Charley never moved again. But her soul was clear. In the slow tides of that night, it lived back, hour by hour, the life gone before. There was a skylight above her; she looked up into the great silent darkness between earth and heaven,—Devil Lot, whose soul must go out into that darkness alone. She said that. The world that had held her under its foul heel did not loathe her as she loathed herself that night. *Lot.*



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The dark hours passed, one by one. Christmas was nearer, nearer,—the bell tolled. It had no meaning for her: only woke a weak fear that she should not be dead before morning, that any living eye should be vexed by her again. Past midnight. The great darkness slowly grayed and softened. What did she wait for? The vile worm Lot,—who cared in earth or heaven when she died? *Then the Lord turned, and looked upon Charley.* Never yet was the soul so loathsome, the wrong so deep, that the loving Christ has not touched it once with His hands, and said, “Will you come to me?” Do you know how He came to her? how, while the unquiet earth needed Him, and the inner deeps of heaven were freshening their fairest morning light to usher in the birthday of our God, He came to find poor Charley, and, having died to save her, laid His healing hands upon her? It was in her weak, ignorant way she saw Him. While she, Lot, lay there corrupt, rotten in soul and body, it came to her how, long ago, Magdalene, more vile than Lot, had stood closest to Jesus. Magdalene loved much, and was forgiven.

So, after a while, Charley, the child that might have been, came to His feet humbly, with bitter sobs. “Lord, I’m so tired!” she said. “I’d like to try again, and be a different girl.” That was all. She clung close to His hand as she went through the deep waters.

Benny, stirring in his sleep, leaned over, and kissed her lips. “So cold!” he whispered, drowsily. “God—bless—Charley!” She smiled, but her eyes were closed.

The darkness was gone: the gray vault trembled with a coming radiance; from the East, where the Son of Man was born, a faint flush touched the earth: it was the promise of the Dawn. Lot’s foul body lay dead there with the Night: but Jesus took the child Charley in His arms, and blessed her.

Christmas evening. How still and quiet it was! The Helper had come. Not to the snow-covered old earth, falling asleep in the crimson sunset mist: it did not need Him. Not an atom of its living body, from the granite mountain to the dust on the red sea-fern, had failed to perform its work: taking time, too, to break forth in a wild luxuriance of beauty as a psalm of thanksgiving. The Holy Spirit you talk of in the churches had been in the old world since the beginning, since the day it brooded over the waters, showing itself as the spirit of Life in granite rock or red sea-fern,—as the spirit of Truth in every heroic deed, in every true word of poet or prophet,—as the spirit of Love as—Let your own hungry heart tell how. To-day it came to man as the Helper. We all saw that dimly, and showed that we were glad, in some weak way. God, looking down, saw a smile upon the faces of His people.



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The fire glowed redder and cheerier in Adam's little cottage; the lamp was lighted; Jinny had set out a wonderful table, too. Benny had walked around and around it, rubbing his hands slowly in dumb ecstasy. Such oranges! and frosted cakes covered with crushed candy! Such a tree in the middle, hung with soft-burning tapers, and hidden in the branches the white figure of the loving Christ-child. That was Adam's fancy. Benny sat in Jinny's lap now, his head upon her breast. She was rocking him to sleep, singing some cheery song for him, although that baby of hers lay broad awake in the cradle, aghast and open-mouthed at his neglect. It had been just "Benny" all day,—Benny that she had followed about, uneasy lest the wind should blow through the open door on him, or the fire be too hot, or that every moment should not be full to the brim with fun and pleasure, touching his head or hand now and then with a woful tenderness, her throat choked, and her blue eyes wet, crying in her heart incessantly, "Lord, forgive me!"

"Tell me more of Charley," she said, as they sat there in the evening.

He was awake a long time after that, telling her, ending with,—

"She said, 'You watch for me, Bud, all the time.' That's what she said. So she'll come. She always does, when she says. Then we're going to the country to be good children together. I'll watch for her."

So he fell asleep, and Jinny kissed him,—looking at him an instant, her cheek growing paler.

"That is for you, Benny," she whispered to herself,—"and this," stooping to touch his lips again, "this is for Charley. Last night," she muttered, bitterly, "it would have saved her."

Old Adam sat on the side of the bed where the dead girl lay.

"Nelly's child!" he said, stroking the hand, smoothing the fair hair. All day he had said only that,—"Nelly's child!"

Very like her she was,—the little Nell who used to save her cents to buy a Christmas-gift for him, and bring it with flushed cheeks, shyly, and slip it on his plate. This child's cheeks would have flushed like hers—at a kind word; the dimpled, innocent smile lay in them,—only a kind word would have brought it to life. She was dead now, and he—he had struck her yesterday. She lay dead there with her great loving heart, her tender, childish beauty,—a harlot,—Devil Lot. No more.

The old man pushed his hair back, with shaking hands, looking up to the sky. "Lord, lay not this sin to my charge!" he said. His lips were bloodless. There was not a street in any city where a woman like this did not stand with foul hand and gnawing heart. They came from God, and would go back to Him. To-day the Helper came; but who showed Him to them, to Nelly's child?

Old Adam took the little cold hand in his: he said something under his breath: I think it was, "Here am I, Lord, and the wife that Thou hast given," as one who had found his life's work, and took it humbly. A sworn knight in Christ's order.

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Christmas-day had come,—the promise of the Dawn, sometime to broaden into the full and perfect day. At its close now, a still golden glow, like a great Peace, filled the earth and heaven, touching the dead Lot there, and the old man kneeling beside her. He fancied that it broke from behind the dark bars of cloud in the West, thinking of the old appeal, “Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and the King of Glory shall come in.” Was He going in, yonder? A weary man, pale, thorn-crowned, bearing the pain and hunger of men and women vile as Lot, to lay them at His Father’s feet? Was he to go with loving heart, and do likewise? Was that the meaning of Christmas-day? The quiet glow grew deeper, more restful; the bell tolled: its sound faded, solemn and low, into the quiet, as one that says in his heart, Amen.

That night, Benny, sleeping in the still twilight, stirred and smiled suddenly, as though some one had given him a happy kiss, and, half waking, cried, “Oh, Charley! Charley!”

IN THE HALF-WAY HOUSE.

I.

At twenty we fancied the blest Middle Ages
A spirited cross of romantic and grand,
All templars and minstrels and ladies and pages,
And love and adventure in Outre-Mer land;
But, ah, where the youth dreamed of building a minster,
The man takes a pew and sits reckoning his pelf,
And the Graces wear fronts, the Muse thins to a spinster,
When Middle-Age stares from one’s glass at himself!

II.

Do you twit me with days when I had an Ideal,
And saw the sear future through spectacles green?
Then find me some charm, while I look round and see all
These fat friends of forty, shall keep me nineteen;
Should we go on pining for chaplets of laurel
Who’ve paid a perruquier for mending our thatch,
Or, our feet swathed in baize, with our fate pick a quarrel,
If, instead of cheap bay-leaves, she sent a dear scratch?

III.

We called it our Eden, that small patent-baker,
When life was half moonshine and half Mary Jane;
But the butcher, the baker, the candlestick-maker!—



Bid Adam have duns and slip down a back-lane?
Nay, after the Fall did the modiste keep coming
With last styles of fig-leaf to Madam Eve's bower?
Did Jubal, or whoever taught the girls thrumming,
Make the Patriarchs deaf at a dollar the hour?

IV.

As I think what I was, I sigh, *Desunt nonnulla!*
Years are creditors Sheridan's self could not bilk;
But then, as my boy says, "What right has a fullah
To ask for the cream, when himself spilled the milk?"
Perhaps when you're older, my lad, you'll discover
The secret with which Auld Lang Syne there is gilt,—
Superstition of old man, maid, poet, and lover,—
That cream rises thickest on milk that was spilt!



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V.

We sailed for the moon, but, in sad disillusion,
Snug under Point Comfort are glad to make fast,
And strive (sans our glasses) to make a confusion
'Twixt our rind of green cheese and the moon of the past;
Ah, Might-have-been, Could-have-been, Would-have-been! rascals,
He's a genius or fool whom ye cheat at two-score,
And the man whose boy-promise was likened to Pascal's
Is thankful at forty they don't call him bore!

VI.

With what fumes of fame was each confident pate full!
How rates of insurance should rise on the Charles!
And which of us now would not feel wisely grateful,
If his rhymes sold as fast as the Emblems of Quarles?
E'en if won, what's the good of Life's medals and prizes?
The rapture's in what never was or is gone;
That we missed them makes Helens of plain Ann Elizys,
For the goose of To-day still is Memory's swan.

VII.

And yet who would change the old dream for new treasure?
Make not youth's sourest grapes the best wine of our life?
Need he reckon his date by the Almanac's measure
Who is twenty life-long in the eyes of his wife?
Ah, Fate, should I live to be nonagenarian,
Let me still take Hope's frail I.O.U.s upon trust,
Still talk of a trip to the Islands Macarian,
And still climb the dream-tree for—ashes and dust!

* * * * *

MR. BUCKLE AS A THINKER.

The recent death of Henry Thomas Buckle calls a new attention to his published works. Pathetic it will seem to all that he should be cut off in the midst of labors so large, so assiduous and adventurous; and there are few who will not feel inclined to make up, as it were, to his memory for this untimely interruption of his pursuits, by assigning the highest possible value to his actual performance. Additional strength will be given to these dispositions by the impressions of his personal character. This was, indeed, such as to conciliate the utmost good-will. If we except occasional touches of self-



complacency, which betray, perhaps, a trifling foible, it may be said that everything is pleasing which is known concerning him. His devotion, wellnigh heroic, to scholarly aims; his quiet studiousness; his filial virtue; his genial sociability, graced by, and gracing, the self-supporting habit of his soul; his intrepidity of intellect, matched by a beautiful boldness and openness in speech; the absence, too, from works so incisive, of a single trace of truculence: all this will now be remembered; and those are unamiable persons, in whom the remembrance does not breed a desire to believe him as great in thought as he was brave, as prosperous in labor as he was persevering.



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But however it may be with others, certainly he who has undertaken the duties of a scholar must not yield too readily to these amiable wishes. He, as a sworn soldier of Truth, stands sacredly bound to be as free from favor as from fear, and to follow steadily wherever the standards of his imperial mistress lead him on. And so performing his lawful service, he may bear in mind that at last the interests of Truth are those of every soul, be it of them that we number with the dead, or that are still reckoned among these that we greet as living. Let us not be petty in our kindness. Over the fresh grave of a scholar let us rise to that high and large friendliness which respects more the scope of every man's nature than the limited measure of any man's performance, and sides bravely with the soul of the departed, even though it be against his fame. Who would not choose this for himself? Who would not whisper from his grave, "My personal weaknesses let those spare who can; my work do not praise, but judge; and never think in behalf of my mortal fame to lower those stars that my spirit would look up to yet and forever"?

As a man and scholar, Mr. Buckle needs no forbearance; and men must commend him, were it only in justice to themselves. Such intellectual courage, such personal purity, such devotion to ideal aims, such a clean separation of boldness from bitterness,—in thought, no blade more trenchant, in feeling, no heart more human;—when these miss their honor and their praise, then will men have forgotten how to estimate fine qualities.

Meanwhile, as a thinker, he must be judged according to the laws of thought. Here we are to forget whether he be living or dead, and whether his personal traits were delightful or disagreeable. Here there is but one question, and that is the question of truth.

And as a thinker, I can say nothing less than that Mr. Buckle signally failed. His fundamental conceptions, upon which reposes the whole edifice of his labor, are sciolistic assumptions caught up in his youth from Auguste Comte and other one-eyed seers of modern France; his generalization, multitudinous and imposing, is often of the card-castle description, and tumbles at the touch of an inquisitive finger; and his cobweb logic, spun chiefly out of his wishes rather than his understanding, is indeed facile and ingenious, but of a strength to hold only flies. Such, at any rate, is the judgment passed upon him in the present paper; and if it is stated roundly, the critic can be held all the better to its justification, and the more freely condemned, should these charges not be sustained.



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But while in the grand topography of thought and in the larger processes of reasoning the failure of Mr. Buckle, according to the judgment here given, is complete, it is freely admitted that as a writer and man of letters he has claims not only to respect, but even to admiration. His mental fertility is remarkable, his memory marvellous, his reading immense, his mind discursive and agile, his style pellucid as water and often vigorous, while his *subordinate* conceptions are always ingenious and frequently valuable. Besides this, he is a genuine enthusiast, and sees before him that El Dorado of the understanding where golden knowledge shall lie yellow on all the hills and yellow under every footfall,—where the very peasant shall have princely wealth, and no man shall need say to another, “Give me of thy wisdom.” It is this same element of romantic expectation which stretches a broad and shining margin about the spacious page of Bacon; it is this which wreathes a new fascination around the royal brow of Raleigh; it is this, in part, which makes light the bulky and antiquated tomes of Hakluyt; and the grace of it is that which we often miss in coming from ancient to modern literature. Better it is, too, than much erudition and many “proprieties” of thought; and one may note it as curious, that Mr. Buckle, seeking to disparage imagination, should have written a book whose most winning and enduring charm is the appeal to imagination it makes. Moreover, he is an enthusiast in behalf of just that which is distinctively modern: he is a white flame of precisely those heats which smoulder now in the duller breast of the world in general; he worships at all the pet shrines; he expresses the peculiar loves and hatreds of the time. Who is so devout a believer in free speech and free trade and the let-alone policy in government, and the coming of the Millennium by steam? Who prostrates himself with such unfeigned adoration before the great god, “State-of-Society,” or so mutters, for a mystic *O’m*, the word “Law”? Then how delightful it is, when he traces the whole ill of the world to just those things which we now all agree to detest,—to theological persecution, bigotry, superstition, and infidelity to Isaac Newton! In fine, the recent lessons of that great schoolboy, the world, or those over which the said youth now is poring or idling or blubbing, Mr. Buckle has not only got by heart, not only recites them capitally, but believes with assurance that they are the sole lessons worth learning in any time; and all the inevitable partialities of the text-book, all the errors and *ad captandum* statements with which its truth is associated, he takes with such implicit faith, and believes in so confidently as part and parcel of our superiority to all other times, that the effect upon most of us cannot be otherwise than delectable.

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Unhappily, the text-book in which he studied these fine lessons chanced to be the French edition, and, above all, the particular compilation of Auguste Comte,—Comte, the one-eyed Polyphemus of modern literature, enormous in stature and strength, but a devourer of the finer races in thought, feeding his maw upon the beautiful offspring of the highest intelligence, whom the Olympians love. Therefore it befell that our eager and credulous scholar unlearned quite as much as he learned, acquiring the wisdoms of our time in the crudest and most liberal commixture with its unwisdoms. And thus, though his house is laboriously put together, yet it is built upon the sand; and though his bark has much good timber, and is well modelled for speed, yet its keel is wholly rotten, so that whosoever puts to sea therein will sail far more swiftly to bottom than to port.

And precisely this, in lieu of all else, it is my present purpose to show: that the keel of his craft is unsound,—that his fundamental notions are fundamental falsities, such as no thinker can fall into without discredit to his powers of thought. Fortunately, he has begun by stating and arguing these; so that there can be no question either what they are, or by what considerations he is able to support them.

The foundation-timber of Mr. Buckle's work consists of three pieces, or propositions, two of which take the form of denial. First, he denies that there is in man anything of the nature of Free-Will, and attributes the belief in it to vulgar and childish ignorance. Secondly, and in support of the primary negation, he denies that there is any oracle in man's bosom,—that his spirit had any knowledge of itself or of the relationships it sustains: in other words, denies the validity of Consciousness. Thirdly and lastly, he attempts to show that all actions of individuals originate not in themselves, but result from a law working in the general and indistinguishable *lump* of society,—from laws of like nature with that which preserves the balance of the sexes; so that no man has more to do with his own deed than the mother in determining whether her child shall be male or female. By the two former statements man is stripped of all the grander prerogatives and characteristics of personality; by the last he is placed as freight, whether dead or alive it were hard to say, in the hold of the self-steering ship, "Society." These propositions and the reasons, or unreasons, by which they are supported, we will examine in order.

1. *Free-Will*. The question of free-will has at sundry times and seasons, and by champions many and furious, been disputed, till the ground about it is all beaten into blinding dust, wherein no reasonable man can now desire to cloud his eyes and clog his lungs. It is, indeed, one of the cheerful signs of our times, that there is a growing relish for clear air and open skies, a growing indisposition to mingle in old and

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profitless controversies. It commonly happens in such controversies, as it undoubtedly has happened in the dispute about free-will, that both parties have been trying to pull up Life or Spirit by the roots, and make a show, *a la* Barnum, of all its secrets. The enterprise was zealously prosecuted, but would not prosper. In truth, there are strict and jealous limits to the degree in which man's mind can become an object to itself. By silent consciousness, by an action of reason and imagination sympathetic with pure inward life, man may *feel* far down into the sweet, awful depths and mysteries of his being; and the results of this inward intimation are given in the great poems, the great art and divine philosophy of all time, and in the commanding beliefs of mankind; but so soon as one begins to come to his own existence as an outsider and stranger, and attempts to bear away its secret, so soon he begins to be balked.

Mr. Buckle, however, has assumed in a summary and authoritative way to settle this question of free-will; and, without entering into the dust and suffocation of the old interminable dispute, we may follow him far enough to see whether he has thrown any light upon the matter, or has only thrown light upon his own powers as a thinker.

His direct polemic against the doctrine of Free-Will consists simply of an attempt to identify it with the notion of Chance in physics. The notion of Chance, he says, is the same with that of Free-Will; the doctrine of Necessary Connection with the dogma of Predestination. This statement has certainly an imposing air. But consider it. To assert the identity of chance and free-will is but another way of saying that pure freedom is one and the same with absolute lawlessness,—that where freedom exists, law, order, reason do not. If this be a misconception, as it surely is a total and fatal misconception, of the nature of freedom, then does the statement of our author, with all that rests upon it, fall instantly and utterly to the ground.

It is a misconception. Freedom and lawlessness are not the same. To make this finally clear, let us at once give the argument the widest possible scope; since the largest way of looking at the matter, as indeed it often happens, will prove also the nearest and simplest. In the universe as a whole Will does certainly originate, since there is, undoubtedly, origination somewhere. Freely, too, it must arise, for there is nothing behind it to bring it under constraint: indeed, all origination is by its nature free. But our philosopher tells us that wherever there is a pure and free origination of will, there is lawlessness, caprice, chance. The universe, therefore, should be a scene, not of absolute order, but of absolute disorder; and since it is not such, we have nothing for it but to say that either the logic of the universe, or that of Mr. Buckle, is very much awry.

In the universe, Will freely originates, but forever in unison with divine Reason; and the result is at once pure necessity and pure freedom: for these, if both be, as we say, absolutely *pure*, are one and the same. A coercing necessity is impure, for it is at war with that to which it applies; only a necessity in sweetest affinity with that which it

governs is of the purest degree; and this is, of course, identical with the highest and divinest freedom.

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And here we approach the solution of our problem, so far as it can be solved. Freedom and free-will exist only in virtue of reason, only in connection with the rational soul. In a rough account of man, and leaving out of sight all that is not strictly relevant to the present point, we discriminate in him two natures. One of these comprises the whole body of organic desires and energies, with all that *kind* of intellect by which one perceives the relation of things to his selfish wishes. By this nature, man is a selfish and intellectual animal; a polyp with arms that go round the world; a sponge with eyes and energies and delights; a cunning *ego*, to whom all outside of himself is but for a prey. But aloft over this, and constituting the second nature, into whose kingdom one should be born as by a second birth, is the sovereign eye and soul of Reason, discerning Justice and Beauty and the Best, creating in man's bosom an ideal, redeeming him out of his littleness, bringing him into fellowship with Eternal Truth, and making him universal. Now between these two natures there is, for there must be, a mediating term, a power by which man *enacts* reason, and causes doing to accord with seeing. This is will, and it must, from its very nature, be free; for to say that it is a mere representative of the major force in desire is simply to say that it does not exist. A mediation without freedom in the mediator is something worse than the mediation of Holland between England and the United States in the dispute concerning the North-East Boundary.

So far, now, as the sovereign law and benefaction of the higher nature, through a perfect mediation of the will, descends upon the lower, so far man enters into free alliance with that which is sovereign in the universe, and is himself established in perfected freedom. The right action of free-will is, then, freedom in the making. But by this entrance into the great harmonies of the world, by this loyalty to the universal reason which alone makes one free, it must be evident that the order of the world is graced and supported rather than assailed.

But how if free-will fail of its highest function? Must not the order of the world then suffer? Not a whit. Universal Reason prevails, but in two diverse ways: she may either be felt as a mere Force or Fate, or she may be recognized and loved and obeyed as an Authority. Wherever the rational soul, her oracle, is given, there she proffers the privilege of knowing her only as a divine authority,—of free loyalty, of honorable citizenship in her domains. But to those who refuse this privilege she appears as fate; and though their honor is lost, hers is not; for the order of the world continues to be vindicated. The just and faithful citizen, who of his own election obeys the laws, illustrates in one way the order of society and the supremacy of moral law. The villain in the penitentiary illustrates the order of society and the supremacy of moral law in quite another way. But order and law are illustrated by both, though in ways so very different. So one may refuse to make reason a free necessity in his own bosom; but then the constable of the universe speedily taps him upon the shoulder, and law is honored, though he is disgraced.

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Now Mr. Buckle supposed that order in the world and in history could be obtained only by sacrificing the freedom of the individual; and that he so supposed determines his own rank as a thinker. There is no second question to be asked concerning a candidate for the degree of master in philosophy who begins by making this mistake.

But does some one, unwilling so soon to quit the point, require of me to explain *how* will can originate in man? My only answer is, I do not know. Does the questioner know *how* motion originates in the universe? It does or did originate; science is clear in assigning a progress, and therefore a beginning, to the solar system: can you find its origin in aught but the self-activity of Spirit, whose *modus operandi* no man can explain? *All* origination is inscrutable; the plummet of understanding cannot sound it; but wherefore may not one sleep as sweetly, knowing that the wondrous fact is near at hand, in the bosoms of his contemporaries and in his own being, as if it were pushed well out of sight into the depths of primeval time? To my mind, there is something thoroughly weak and ridiculous in the way that Comte and his company run away from the Absolute and Inexplicable, fearing only its nearness; like a child who is quite willing there should he bears at the North Pole, but would lie awake of nights, if he thought there were one in the nearest wood. And it is the more ridiculous because Mystery is no bear; nor can I, for one, conceive why it should not be to every man a joy to know that all the marvel which ever was in Nature is in her now, and that the divine inscrutable processes are going on under our eyes and in them and in our hearts.

Doubtless, however, many will adhere to the logic that has satisfied them so long and so well,—that it is impossible the will should move otherwise than in obedience to motives, and that, obeying a motive, it is not free. Why should we not, then, amuse ourselves a little with these complacent motive-mongers? They profess a perfect explanation of mental action, and make it the stigma of a deeper philosophy, that it must leave somewhat in all action of the mind, and therefore in a doctrine of the will, unexplained. Let, now, these good gentlemen explain to us how a motive ever gets to be a motive. For there is precisely the same difficulty in initiating motion here as elsewhere. You look on a peach; you desire it; and you are moved by the desire to pluck or purchase it. Now it is plain that you could not desire this peach until you had perceived that it was a desirable fruit. But you could not perceive that the fruit was desirable until you had experienced desire of it. And here we are at the old, inexplicable seesaw. It must appear desirable in order to be desired; it must be desired in order to appear desirable: the perception must precede the desire, and the desire must precede the perception. These are foolish subtleties, but all the fitter for their purpose. Our motive-mongering friends should understand that they can explain no farther than their neighbors,—that by enslaving the will they only shift the difficulty, not solve it.



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Anything but this shallow sciolism! More philosophical a thousand times than the knowing and facile metaphysic which makes man a thing of springs and pivots and cogs, are the notions of old religionists, which attributed human action in large part to preventing, suggesting, and efficient “grace,” or those of older poets, who gave Pallas Athene for a counsellor to Odysseus, and Krishna for a teacher to the young Aryan warrior,—which represent human action, that is, as issuing in part out of the Infinite. A thousand times more *philosophical*, as well as ten thousand times more inspiring, I say, are the metaphysics of Imagination,—of scriptures and great poems and the *live* human heart,—than the cut-and-dried sciolisms which explain you a man in five minutes, and make everything in him as obvious as the movements of a jumping-jack.

To deny, then, the existence of free-will is, in my judgment, a grave error; but to deny it on the ground of its identity with chance is more than an ordinary error, however grave; it is a poison in the blood of one’s thought, conveying its vice to every part and function of the system. And herewith we pass to the next head.

2. *Consciousness*. It has been the persuasion of wise men in various ages, and is the persuasion of many, as wise, doubtless, as their neighbors, now, that the soul has a native sense of its quality and perpetual relations. By Plato this sense, in some of its aspects, was named Reminiscence; by modern speakers of English it is denoted as Consciousness. This, according to its grades and applications, is qualified as personal, moral, intellectual, or, including all its higher functions, as intuitive or spiritual. Of this high spiritual sense, this self-recognition of soul, all the master-words of the language—God, Immortality, Life, Love, Duty—are either wholly, or in all their grander suggestions, the product. Nothing, indeed, is there which confers dignity upon human life and labor, that is not primarily due to the same source. In union with popular and unconscious imagination, it generates mythology; in union with imagination and reason, it gives birth to theology and cosmogony; in union with imagination, reason, and experience, it is the source of philosophy; in union with the same, together with the artistic sense and high degrees of imaginative sympathy, it creates epic poetry and art. Its total outcome, however, may be included under the term Belief. And it results from an assumed validity of consciousness, that universal belief is always an indication of universal truth. At the same time, since this master-power finds expression through faculties various in kind and still more various in grade of development, its outcome assumes many shapes and hues,—just as crystallized alumina becomes here ruby and there sapphire, by minute admixtures of different coloring substances.



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We assume the validity of this prime source of belief. Why not? Here is a great natural product, human belief; we treat it precisely as we do other natural products; we judge, that, like these, it has its law and justification. We assume that it is to be studied as Lyell studies the earth's crust, or Agassiz its life, or Mueller its languages. As our author shuns metaphysical, so do we shun metapsychical inquiries. We do not presume to go behind universal fact, and inquire whether it has any business to be fact; we simply endeavor to see it in its largest and most interior aspect, and then accept it without question.

But M. Comte made the discovery that this great product of man's spiritual nature is nothing but the spawn of his self-conceit: that it is purely gratuitous, groundless, superfluous, and therefore in the deepest possible sense lawless, Mr. Buckle follows his master, for such Comte really is. Proclaiming Law everywhere else, and, from his extreme partiality to the word, often lugging it in, as it were, by the ears, he no sooner arrives at these provinces than he instantly faces the other way, and denies all that he has before advocated. Of a quadruped he will question not a hair, of a fish not a scale; everywhere else he will accept facts and seek to cooordinate them; but when he arrives at the great natural outcome and manifestation of man's spirit, then it is in an opposite way that he will not question; he simply lifts his eyebrows. The fact has no business to be there! It signifies nothing!

Why this reversal of position? First, because, if consciousness be allowed, free-will must be admitted; since the universal consciousness is that of freedom to choose. But there is a larger reason. In accordance with his general notions, personality must be degraded, denuded, impoverished,—that so the individual may lie passive in the arms of that society whose laws he is ambitious to expound. Having robbed the soul of choice, he now deprives it of sight; having denied that it is an originating source of will, he now makes the complementary denial, that it is a like source of knowledge; having first made it helpless, he now proceeds to make it senseless. And, indeed, the two denials belong together. If it be true that the soul is helpless, pray let us have some kind drug to make it senseless also. Nature has dealt thus equally with the stone; and surely she must design a like equality in her dealings with man. Power and perceiving she will either give together, or together withhold.

But how does our author support this denial? By pointing to the great varieties in the outcome of consciousness. There is no unity, he says, in its determinations: one believes this, another that, a third somewhat different from both; and the faith that one is ready to die for, another is ready to kill him for. And true it is that the diversities of human belief are many and great; let not the fact be denied nor diminished.



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But does such diversity disprove a fundamental unity? All modern science answers, No. How much of outward resemblance is there between a fish and a philosopher? Is not the difference here as wide as the widest unlikenesses in human belief? Yet Comparative Anatomy, with none to deny its right, includes philosopher and fish in one category: they both belong to the vertebrate sub-kingdom. See what vast dissimilarities are included in the unity of this vertebrate structure: creatures that swim, creep, walk, fly; creatures with two feet, with four feet, with no feet, with feet and hands, with hands only, with neither feet nor hands; creatures that live in air only, or in water only, or that die at once in water or air; creatures, in fine, more various and diverse than imagination, before the fact, could conceive. Yet, throughout this astonishing, inconceivable variety, science walks in steady perception of a unity extending far toward details of structure. The boor laughs, when told that the forefoot of his horse and his own hand are essentially the same member. A "Positive Philosopher" laughs, when told that through Fetichism and Lutheranism there runs a thread of unity,—that human belief has its law, and may be studied in the spirit of science. But it is more than questionable whether the laugh is on their side.[A]

[Footnote A: Comte did, indeed, profess to furnish a central law of belief. It is due, he said, to the tendency of man to flatter his own personality by foisting its image upon the universe. This, however, is but one way of saying that it is wholly gratuitous,—that it has no root in the truth of the world. But universal truth and universal law are the same; and therefore that which arises without having any root in eternal verity is lawless in the deepest possible sense,—lawless not merely as being irregular in its action, but in the deeper and more terrible sense of being in the universe without belonging there. To believe, however, that any product of universal dimensions can be generated, not by the truth of the universe, but by somewhat else, is to believe in a Devil more thoroughly than the creed of any Calvinist allows. But this is quite in character. Comte was perhaps the most superstitious man of his time; superstition runs in the blood of his "philosophy"; and Mr. Buckle, in my opinion, escapes and denounces the black superstitions of ignorance only to fall into the whited superstitions of sciolism.]

But our author does not quit this subject without attempting to adduce a specific instance wherein consciousness proves fallacious. Success, however, could hardly be worse; he fails to establish his point, but succeeds in discrediting either his candor or his discrimination. "Are we not," he says, "in certain circumstances, conscious of the existence of spectres and phantoms; and yet is it not generally admitted that such beings have no existence at all?" Now I should be ashamed to charge a scholar, like



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Mr. Buckle, with being unaware that consciousness does not apply to any matter which comes properly under the cognizance of the senses, and that the word can be honestly used in such applications only by the last extreme of ignorant or inadvertent latitude. *Conscious* of the existence of spectres! One might as lawfully say he is “conscious” that there is a man in the moon, or that the color of his neighbor’s hair is due to a dye. Mr. Buckle is undoubtedly honest. How, then, could he, in strict philosophical discussion, employ the cardinal word in a sense flagrantly and even ludicrously false, in order to carry his point? It is partly to be attributed to his controversial ardor, which is not only a heat, but a blaze, and frequently dazzles the eye of his understanding; but partly it is attributable also to an infirmity in the understanding itself. He shows, indeed, a singular combination of intellectual qualities. He has great external precision, and great inward looseness and slipperiness of mind: so that, if you follow his words, no man’s thought can be clearer, no man’s logic more firm and rapid in its march; but if you follow strictly the *conceptions*, the clearness vanishes, and the logic limps, nay, sprawls. It is not merely that he writes better than he thinks, though this is true of him; but the more characteristic fact is that he is a master in the forms of thought and an apprentice in the substance. Read his pages, and you will find much to admire; read under his pages, and you will find much not to admire.

It appears from the foregoing what Mr. Buckle aims to accomplish at the outset. His purpose is to effect a thorough degradation of Personality. Till this is done, he finds no clear field for the action of social law. To discrown and degrade Personality by taking away its two grand prerogatives,—this is his preliminary labor, this is his way of procuring a site for that edifice of scientific history which he proposes to build.

But what an enormous price to pay for the purchase! If there is no kingdom for social law, if there is no place for a science of history, till man is made unroyal, till the glory is taken from his brow, the sceptre from his right hand, and the regal hopes from his heart, till he is made a mere serf and an appanage of that ground and territory of circumstance whereon he lives and labors,—why, then a science of history means much the same with an extinction of history, an extinction of all that in history which makes it inspiring. The history of rats and mice is interesting, but not to themselves,—interesting only to man, and this because he is man; but if men are nothing but rats and mice, pray let them look for cheese, and look out for the cat, and let goose-quills and history alone.

But the truth is that Person and Society are mutually supporting facts, each weakened by any impoverishment of its reciprocal term. Whenever a *real* history of human civilization is written, they will thus appear. And Mr. Buckle, in seeking to empty one term in order to obtain room for the other, was yielding concessions, not to the pure necessities of truth, but to his own infirmity as a thinker.

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Having, however, taken the crown and kingdom from Personality, our philosophical Warwick proceeds to the coronation of his favorite autocrat, Society. His final proposition, which indeed is made obscurely, and as far as possible by implication, is this:—

3. *That Society is the Real Source of Individual Action.* A proposition made obscurely, but argued strenuously, and altogether necessary for the completion of his foundation. He attempts proof by reference to the following facts:—that in a given kingdom there occur, year after year, nearly the same number of murders, suicides, and letters mailed without direction, and that marriages are more frequent when food is low and wages high, and so conversely. This is the sum total of the argument on which he relies here and throughout his work: if this proves his point, it is proven; if otherwise, otherwise.

To begin with, I admit the facts alleged. They are overstated; there *is* considerable departure from an exact average: but let this pass. I will go farther, and admit, what no one has attempted to show, that an average in these common and outward matters proves the like regularity in all that men do and think and feel. This to concentrate attention upon the main question.

And the main question is, What do these regular averages signify? Do they denote the dominancy of a social fate? “Yea, yea,” cry loudly the French fatalists; and “Yea, yea,” respond with firm assurance Buckle & Co. in England; and “Yea,” there are many to say in our own land. Even Mr. Emerson must summon his courage to confront “the terrible statistics of the French statisticians.” But I live in the persuasion that these statistics are extremely innocent, and threaten no man’s liberty. Let us see.

Take first the instance of forgetfulness. In the United Kingdom some millions of letters are annually mailed; and of these, one in a certain number of thousands, “making allowance,” as our author innocently says, “for variation of circumstances,” is found to be mailed without a superscription. Now provision for a forgetting is made in every man’s individual constitution. Partly for permanent and final forgetting; in this way we get rid of vast quantities of trash, which would suffocate us, if we could not obtain riddance. Partly also for temporary forgetting; by means of which we become oblivious to everything but the matter in hand, and, by a sole concentration upon that, act intensely and efficaciously. Then, as all particular constitutions have their debilities, this provision for temporary obliviousness may become an infirmity, and in some is an habitual and chronic infirmity.

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Let us now assume an individual man, and suppose ourselves able to analyze perfectly his mental condition. From his temperament, constitution, and habit, we shall then be able also to infer with precision the measure of his *liability* to lapse of memory. Place him, now, in a world by himself; give him a life of several centuries' duration; and secure him through life from essential change of constitution. Divide, then, his life into centuries; count the instances of forgetfulness in each century; and in each century they will be found nearly the same. The Law of Probability determines this, and enables us to speak with entire confidence of a case so supposed. Here, then, is the continuous average; but it surely indicates no subjection of the individual soul to a law of society; for there is no society to impose such law,—there is only the constitution of the individual.

Now, instead of one individual, let us suppose a hundred; and let each of these be placed on a separate planet. Obtain in respect to each one the measure of his liability to infirm lapse of memory, and add these together. And now it will appear that the average outward result which one man gave in one hundred years one hundred men will give in one year. The law of probability again comes in, and, matching the irregularities of one by those of another, gives in this case, as in the former, an average result. Here, then, is Mr. Buckle's average without the existence of a society, and therefore without any action of social law. Does another syllable need to be said?

Perhaps, however, it will be objected that I redeem the individual from a fate working in the general whole of society, only to subject him to an equal fate working in his own constitution. There is undoubtedly a certain *degree* of fate expressed in each man's temperament and particular organization. But mark the difference. Mr. Buckle's social fate subjects each man totally, and in effect robs him of personality; the fate which works in his own constitution subjects him *only in that proportion which his abnormal liability bears to the total force of his mind*. One letter in ten thousand, say, is mailed without direction. Our historian of civilization infers hence that each individual is *totally* subject to a social fate. My inference is, that, on the average, each individual is *one ten-thousandth part* subject to a fate in his private constitution. There is the difference, and it does not seem to me insignificant. Our way to the cases of crime is now somewhat more clear; for it is already established beyond cavil that the mere fact of an average, to which, without any discriminations, our philosopher appeals with such confidence, proves nothing for his purpose.



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The case of murders, however, differs from the foregoing in one important particular. The persons who are detected in the commission of this crime are commonly, by their punishment, withdrawn from the number of active criminals; and consequently the average is kept up, not by the same persons, but in part by different ones. Here is, therefore, more appearance of the mediation of compulsory social law; and indeed the action of social forces in the case I am far more disposed to assert than to question. What we are to inquire, however, is not whether social forces contribute to this result, but whether they are *such* forces as supersede and annihilate individual will. Let us see.

All men are liable to collisions of passion and interest with their neighbors and contemporaries. All desire to remove the obstructions thus opposed. All would labor for this end with brute directness, that is, by lawless violence and cunning, were it not for the rational and moral elements in their nature, which suggest noble pieces of abstinence and self-restraint, thus securing a certain freedom, a certain superiority to the brute pressure of interest and impulse. These rational and moral elements are in variable counterpoise with the ruder desires,—sometimes commanding them with imperial ease, sometimes overcoming them by struggle, sometimes striving with them feebly and vainly, or even ceasing to strive.

Suppose, now, a nation of thirty millions. Of these, twenty-nine millions, let us say, are never consciously tempted to commit a felony. Why? For want of opportunity? Not at all; good men, whom the police do not watch, have more opportunities for crime than those whose character causes them to be suspected. Is it because wrathful passion, the love of money, and other incentives to aggression are unknown to them? To none are they wholly unknown. Why, then, this immunity from temptation? Simply because their choices, or characters,—for character is but structural choice,—run in favor of just and prudent courses with a tide so steady and strong as to fill all the river-beds of action, and leave no room for worse currents. In other words, the elements that make men free hold, in this respect, easy sovereignty in their souls. Below these millions, suppose nine hundred thousand who might be open to such temptation, but for the influence of good customs, which are the legacies left by good men dead, and kept in force by the influence of just men who are living. In these, the freedom-making elements still keep the throne, and preserve regal sway; but they are like sovereigns who might be dethroned, but for the countenance of more powerful neighbors. Below these, the liability to actual commission of violence begins to open; but there are, we will suppose, ninety thousand in whom it is practically suppressed by the dangers which, in civilized communities, attend upon crime. These men have that in them which *might* make them felons, but for penal laws,

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prisons, and the executioner. But below these are ten thousand who have a liability *in excess* of all restraining influences whatsoever; and the result of this liability, in accordance with the law of probability already mentioned, is two hundred murders in a year.[B] Now here the action of fate does not *begin* until you reach the lowest ten thousand. Even here, freedom is not extinguished; the rational and moral elements that confer it are weak, but they are not necessarily dead or inoperative; for, in conjunction with lower restraints, they actually make the number of crimes not ten thousand, but two hundred. True it is, that these are partially enslaved, partially subject to fate; but they are enslaved not by any inscrutable law of society, comparable with “that which preserves the balance of the sexes”; they are “taken captive by their own lusts,” as one of our philosopher’s “ignorant men” said many years ago. But above these the enslaving liability begins to disappear, and freedom soon becomes, so far as this test applies, supreme.

[Footnote B: It may be said that this is a mere arguing by supposition. But the supposition here has respect only to the *numbers*.]

Thus for one year we apply a measure of the liability to crime, and obtain a result which is inexpressibly far from sustaining Mr. Buckle’s inference; since it shows that the fatal force is to all freeing forces as two hundred to thirty millions,—and shows, moreover, that this fate, instead of inclosing in its toils every man in the nation, and utterly depriving all of freedom, actually touches at all but a small number, and only diminishes, not destroys, the freedom of these. Next year we apply the same measure to nearly the same persons, in the presence of nearly the same restraints; and find, of course, the result to be nearly the same. But this result no more proves universal enslavement in the second year than it did in the first. And so of the third, fourth, or fortieth application of the measure.

But a portion of these murderers are yearly withdrawn: ought not the number of crimes to diminish? It would do so, but for that law of social propagation which is ever and everywhere active. But this law, which connects men and generations, and tends to make history a unit, is not a part of fate alone; it carries just so much fate and so much freedom as there are to be carried. It changes nothing; it is simply a vehicle, and transports freight,—precious stones or ballast stones, as the case may be. Therefore, in unveiling a single year, and seeing precisely what this fact of two hundred murders means, we find its meaning for any possible succession of years. It shows certain measures of fate working in the bosoms of certain numbers of men; but that there is a fate inhabiting society as such, and holding every man and woman in its unfeeling hand, must be proven, if at all, by other facts than these.



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Mr. Buckle generalizes with marvellous facility, but often with an infatuation, or even fatuity, equally marvellous. Specious and audacious generalization is, however, a vice of thinking more attractive to most than any virtue,—above all, if it flatter their wishes and opinions. There are few to appreciate an exquisite temperance, an exquisite virgin modesty, continence, and reserve, whether in thought or art. The great masters disappoint, the great showmen dazzle, at first sight; the multitudes crave sensations and sudden effects. Even among thoughtful men, there are, in this galloping age, too many who prefer to frequent a philosophical slop-shop, where they can be fitted to a full suit in five minutes; and they willingly forgive some bagging and wrinkling, some ripping of seams and dropping-off of buttons, in consideration of promptitude in the supply. Nor is this unnatural. Ordinary travel goes by steam; does it not seem a little hard that thought should have to journey still in the ancient fashion? And so far as the mass of readers is concerned, this appetite for fast thinking and reckless generalization is a cheerful token: it is a gainful substitute for that hiding away from the blaze of intellect, that terror of large results in thought, which has harbored in the Vatican since the days of Galileo, and even in Protestant lands may sometimes be found, like the graveyard, in the neighborhood of churches. A relish for premature and extravagant generalization may be pardoned in the mass of readers; but in the writer? “It must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!”

Mr. Buckle finds some general book-facts, and, never trying to think down to their roots, he seizes upon their specious aspect, and thence rushes out into a generalization, which, rightly understood, sweeps Personality off the earth. Not such is the spirit of science; not such the manner of its masters. Look at Newton investigating colors. What effort for nearness, nearness, nearness to his facts! What solicitation for entrance to their households and sanctuaries! See Agassiz or Tyndale investigating the flow of glaciers. Here is no catching at book-aspects of the matter, and launching instantly into generalization. No, these men must get within eyeshot, within hand-reach, of the facts, and know first precisely and intimately what these are. Yet the generalizations for which they were seeking a basis were trivial in comparison with those which our author hurtles out after a glance at M. Quetelet. “A continuous average of so many murders a year; then so many *must* happen; then somebody *must* commit them; then free-will is a figment, and society is the source of all action which we call individual.”



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Intemperate and infatuated generalization, if supported by a certain ability, is an attractive vice. Yet he who indulges in this will be sure to leave upon his brilliant and exciting pages statements that are simply ludicrous. Our philosopher furnishes an instance of this in his treatment of the matter of marriage. If wages be low and food high, marriages are less frequent; if the converse be the case, they are more frequent. What conclusion would common sense base upon this fact? Why, of course, that the number of marriages is definitely *influenced* by the ease with which sustenance is obtained. But this is a commonplace result; there is nothing in it bold, brilliant, striking; besides, it does not make man the slave of outward influences. Accordingly, Mr. Buckle generalizes from it as follows:—"Marriages, instead of having *any connection* with personal feelings, are completely controlled by the price of food and the rate of wages." He does not distinguish between a definite modifying influence and a controlling cause. His facts prove the former; he asserts the latter. Let us see how this procedure would work elsewhere. There is "a definite relation," in our author's words, between the force and direction of the winds and the rise or fall of the sea upon our coast: therefore tidal rise and fall, "instead of having any connection" with the influence of the moon, are "completely controlled" by the direction and force of the wind! There is "a definite relation" between the straightness or want of straightness in a railroad and the speed of the train: *ergo*, the speed of the train, "instead of having any connection" with the locomotive and the force of steam, is "completely controlled" by the line of the road! It is by no means difficult to philosophize after this fashion; but if we are to have many professors of such philosophy, let the mediaeval cap-and-bells, by all means, be reproduced.

Again, having stated the fact of an approximation to a continuous average of suicides, and having assumed for this a cause operating in the indivisible whole of society, he goes on to say, "And the power of this larger law is so irresistible, that neither the love of life nor the fear of another world can avail anything toward even checking its operation." How, pray, does Mr. Buckle know? What shadow of a fact has he to justify this vaunting of his "larger law"? Has he ever known the love of life and the awe of another world to be suspended? Has he afterwards seen their action restored, and ascertained that in their presence and in their absence the ratio of suicides remained the same? These questions answer themselves. But when a writer who loudly professes and fully believes himself to proceed purely upon facts adventures statement so groundless, so gratuitous and reckless as this, who can pass to the next paragraph in full confidence of his intellectual rectitude? If you retain, as in this case I do retain, assurance of his moral rectitude,—of his intention to be fair,—to what conclusion can you come more charitable than this, that his partiality to his own notions is so vigorous as not only to overslaugh his sense of logical truth, but to supersede the necessity of other grounds for believing these notions and for urging them?



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Only our author's first chapter has been dealt with; firstly, because in this are enunciated those radical conceptions which he afterwards argues not *to*, but *from*; and secondly, because it has been the writer's desire, avoiding all vagrant and indecisive criticism, to have a fair grapple, and come to some clear result,—like that of a wrestler, who frankly proffers himself to throw or be thrown. It only remains to indicate, so far as may be, a comprehensive estimate of Mr. Buckle as a thinker.

And at last it must be said in plain words that he is to be regarded as an adventurer in the kingdoms of thought,—though the word must be freed from all customary flavors of charlatany and wickedness. One of the boldest and cleverest of his class; a man, too, of probity, of dignity and character, amiable, estimable; but *intellectually* an adventurer nevertheless. The grand masters in thought are those to whom the subtlest and most purely universal principles are nearest and most habitual, coming to the elucidation of all minutest matters no less than to that of the greatest,—as those forces which hold the solar system together apply themselves, as on the same level, to a mote wandering in the air; and because to these masters first principles, through all their changes of seeming, through all their ranging by analogy up and down, are never disguised, but are always near and clear and sure, they can admit the action of all modifying principles without imperilling the great stabilities of truth; so that in their thought, as in Nature, the dust-particle shall float and fly with the wind, and yet gravitation shall hold particle and world in firm, soft, imperial possession. And next to these are the inventors, guided by a fine felicity of intelligence to special discoveries and admirable combinations, often surpassing in this way the masters themselves. And then come the wise and great scholars, who learn quickly what has been discovered, and follow the masters not by sight only, as a greyhound, but by long inferences; and these also do noble work. And after these follow the broader company of useful, able, eloquent men, applying, explaining, illustrating, and preparing the way for schools and commerce and the newspaper. Finally comes a man with a genius for boldness more than for anything else, so that he has a pleasant feeling of himself only when he gives himself the sense of being startling, novel, venturesome, and therefore goes off in his thought as in a balloon: and of such man,—being daring, ingenious, agile, and not being profound,—this will be the unfailing characteristic, that he substitutes and asserts secondary principles, which are obvious, outward, and within his reach, for primary principles, which are deep, subtle, inward, and beyond his reach; he will swing loose from the principles which are indeed prime and imperial in Nature, and will boldly assert secondary principles as fundamental: this man is the intellectual adventurer.



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And this is Mr. Buckle. The first fact with regard to man is his possession of a rational soul, and consequently of that liberation of will without which, despite the existence of reason, he could not be in act a reasonable being. But the secondary fact in this connection is that man's freedom is modified by pedigree, by temperament, by influences almost numberless, and that he is included in laws, so that, if he falls away from reason, he falls into the hands of fate. And this secondary or modifying congeries of facts our author announces as primary.

The first fact with regard to the soul is that it is intelligent and vocal,—that it is not merely a subject, but also an organ, of THAT WHICH KNOWS in the universe. The modifying fact is that its voice is commonly obscure, and the language it shall use and the logic of its utterance prescribed by the accident of time, place, and other circumstances; so that it has the semblance of voices many and contradictory. And this modifying fact Mr. Buckle announces, with much assurance and complacency, as primary.

The first fact in the world of man is Personality. The secondary fact is Society,—secondary, but reciprocal, and full of import. And Mr. Buckle begins with making Personality acephalous, and ends-with appending its corpse to Society, to be galvanized into seemings of life. And if you follow him through his book, you find this inversion constantly maintained,—and find, moreover, that it is chiefly this revolutionary audacity which makes his propositions so startling and his pages to many so fascinating.

Therefore an adventurer. This is concerning *him* the primary fact. But the modifying fact is that he has the manners of a gentleman, the heart of a humanitarian, the learning of a scholar, the pen of a ready writer, the outside or *shell* of a philosophical genius, excellent admixtures of sense, and an attractive hatred of ecclesiastical and political barbarisms.

He has great surface-reach, but no inward breadth. He invariably takes the liberal side with regard to practical and popular questions; he invariably takes the illiberal side in respect to questions of philosophy. In politics and in social feeling he is cosmopolitan; in questions of pure thought he is cockney. Here he is a tyrant; he puts out the soul's eyes, and casts fetters about its feet; here he is hard, narrow, materialistic, mechanical,—or, in a word, English. For—we may turn aside to say—in philosophy no nation is so straitened, illiberal, and hard of hearing as England, except, perhaps, China. Its tympanum is sadly thickened at once with materialism and conceit; and the consequence is that a thinker there is either ignored into silence, like Wilkinson, or driven to bellow, like Carlyle, or to put rapiers and poignards into his speech, like Ruskin. Carlyle began speaking sweetly and humanly, and was heard only on this side the ocean; then he came to his bull-of-Bashan tones, and was attended to on his own side the water. It is observable, too, that, if a thinker in America goes beyond the

respectable dinner-table depth, your true Englishman takes it for a personal affront, and hastens to make an ass of himself in the “Saturday Review.”



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Apply to Mr. Buckle any test that determines the question of pure intellectual power, and he fails to sustain it. Let us proceed to apply one.

No man is an able thinker who is without power to comprehend that law of reciprocal opposites, on which the world is built. For an example of this: the universe is indeed a *uni*-verse, a pure unit, emanating, as we think, from a spirit that is, in the words of old Hooker, "not only one, but very oneness," simple, indivisible, and therefore total in all action; and yet this universe is various, multifarious, full of special character, full even of fierce antagonisms and blazing contradictions. Infinite and Finite, Same and Diverse, Eternal and Temporary, Universal and Special,—here they are, purest opposites, yet mutual, reciprocal, necessary to each other; and he is a narrow man who cannot stand in open relations with both terms, reconciling in the depths of his life, though he can never explain, the mystery of their friendship. He who will adhere only to the universal, and makes a blur of the special, is a rhapsodist; he who can apprehend only the special, being blind and callous to the universal, is a chatterer and magpie. From these opposites we never escape; Destiny and Freedom, Rest and Motion, Individual and Society, Origination and Memory, Intuition and Observation, Soul and Body,—you meet them everywhere; and everywhere they are, without losing their character of opposites, nay, in very virtue of their opposition, playing into and supporting each other.

But, from the fact that they *are* opposites, it is always easy to catch up one, and become its partisan as against the other. It is easy in such advocacy to be plausible, forcible, affluent in words and apparent reasons; also to be bold, striking, astonishing. And yet such an advocate will never speak a word of pure truth. "He who knows half," says Goethe, "speaks much, and says nothing to the purpose; he who knows all inclines to act, and speaks seldom or late." With such partisanship and advocacy the world has been liberally, and more than liberally, supplied. Such a number of Eureka's have been shouted! So often it has been discovered that the world is no such riddle, after all,—that half of it is really the whole! No doubt all this was good boy's-play once; afterwards it did to laugh at for a while; then it ceased to be even a joke, and grew a weariness and an affliction; and at length we all rejoiced when the mighty world-pedagogue of Chelsea seized his ferule, and roared, over land and sea, "Silence, babblers!"

If only Mr. Buckle had profited by the command! For, follow this writer where you will, you find him the partisan of a particular term as against its fraternal opposite. It is Fate *against* Free-Will; Society *against* the prerogatives of Personality; Man *against* Outward Nature (for he considers them only as antagonistic, one "triumphing" over the other); Intellect *against* the Moral



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Sense; Induction *against* Deduction and Intuition; Knowledge *against* Reverence; and so on and on to the utter weariness of one reader, if of no more. For what can be more wearying and saddening than to follow the pages of a writer who is fertile, ingenious, eloquent, rich in right feeling, in reading and courage, and yet who, in chapter after chapter of effective paragraphs, and tome after tome of powerful chapters, is merely persuading you that half is the whole? And if your duty as a scholar require you to peruse the book fully, instead of casting it aside, your mind at length fairly *aches* for the sense of poise and soundness, were it only for a single page. But no; it is always the same succession of perspicuous and vigorous sentences, all carrying flavors of important truth, and none utterly true. For the half *is* really half; but it simply is *not* the whole, be as eloquent about it as one may.

Such, then, is the estimate here given of Mr. Buckle's laborious and powerful work. Meantime, with every secondary merit which such a work *could* possess this is replete; while its faults are only such as were inseparable from the conjunction of such ambitions with such powers. He may whet and wield his blade; but he puts no poison on its edge. He may disparage reverence; but he is not himself irreverent. He may impugn the convictions that most men love; but, while withholding no syllable of dissent and reprehension, he utters not a syllable that can insult or sting. And all the while his pages teem with observations full of point, and half full of admirable sense and suggestion.

After all, we owe him thanks,—thanks, it may be, even for his errors. The popular notions of moral liberty are probably not profound, and require deepening. The grand fact that we name Personality *is* grand and of an unsounded depth only because in it Destiny and Freedom meet and become one. But the play into this of Destiny and Eternal Necessity is, in general, dimly discerned. The will is popularly pronounced free, but is thought to originate, as it were, “between one's hat and his boots”; and so man loses all largeness of relation, and personality all grandeur. Now blisters, though ill for health, may be wholesome for disease; and doctrines of Fate, that empty every man of his soul, may be good as against notions of moral liberty that make one's soul of a pin's-head dimension. It may be well, also, that the doctrine of Social Fate should be preached until all are made to see that Society is a fact,—that it is generative,—that personal development cannot go on but by its mediation,—that the chain of spiritual interdependence cannot be broken, and that in proportion as it is weakened every bosom becomes barren. In this case also Mr. Buckle may be medicinal. We owe him thanks also for refreshing our expectation of a science of civilization,—for affirming the venerableness of intellect, which recent

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teachers have undervalued,—for vindicating the uses of doubt,—and, finally, for a specimen of intellectual intrepidity of which one could wish there were less need. And withal how royally he presumes upon a welcome for candid confession of his thought! Such a presumption could be created in his soul only by a great magnanimity; and the evidence of this on his pages sheds a beauty about all his words.

But he is not an Oedipus. He has guessed; and the riddle awaits another comer. A science of history he has not established; the direction in which it lies he has not pointed out; and if Hegel and his precursors have failed to indicate such a science, the first clear step toward it remains yet to be taken. And should some majestic genius—for no other will be sufficient for the task—at length arise to lay hold upon the facts of man's history, and exercise over them a Newtonian sway, he will be the last man on the planet to take his initial hint from Auguste Comte and the "Positive Philosophy." This mud-mountain is indeed considerably heaped up, but it is a very poor Pisgah nevertheless; for it is a mountain in a pit, whose top does not rise to an equality with the broad common levels, far less with the high table-lands and skyward peaks and summits of intelligence.

RECOLLECTIONS OF A GIFTED WOMAN.

From Leamington to Stratford-on-Avon the distance is eight or nine miles, over a road that seemed to me most beautiful. Not that I can recall any memorable peculiarities; for the country, most of the way, is a succession of the gentlest swells and subsidences, affording wide and far glimpses of champaign-scenery here and there, and sinking almost to a dead level as we draw near Stratford. Any landscape in New England, even the tamest, has a more striking outline, and besides would have its blue eyes open in those lakelets that we encounter almost from mile to mile at home, but of which the Old Country is utterly destitute; or it would smile in our faces through the medium of those way-side brooks that vanish under a low stone arch on one side of the road, and sparkle out again on the other. Neither of these pretty features is often to be found in an English scene. The charm of the latter consists in the rich verdure of the fields, in the stately way-side trees and carefully kept plantations of wood, and in the old and high cultivation that has humanized the very sods by mingling so much of man's toil and care among them. To an American there is a kind of sanctity even in an English turnip-field, when he thinks how long that small square of ground has been known and recognized as a possession, transmitted from father to son, trodden often by memorable feet, and utterly redeemed from savagery by old acquaintanceship with civilized eyes. The wildest things in England are more than half tame. The trees, for instance, whether in hedgerow, park, or what they call forest,



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have nothing wild about them. They are never ragged; there is a certain decorous restraint in the freest outspread of their branches, though they spread wider than any self-nurturing tree; they are tall, vigorous, bulky, with a look of age-long life, and a promise of more years to come, all of which will bring them into closer kindred with the race of man. Somebody or other has known them from the sapling upward; and if they endure long enough, they grow to be traditionally observed and honored, and connected with the fortunes of old families, till, like Tennyson's Talking Oak, they babble with a thousand leafy tongues to ears that can understand them.

An American tree, however, if it could grow in fair competition with an English one of similar species, would probably be the more picturesque object of the two. The Warwickshire elm has not so beautiful a shape as those that overhang our village-street; and as for the redoubtable English oak, there is a certain John-Bullism in its figure, a compact rotundity of foliage, a lack of irregular and various outline, that make it look wonderfully like a gigantic cauliflower. Its leaf, too, is much smaller than that of most varieties of American oak; nor do I mean to doubt that the latter, with free leave to grow, reverent care and cultivation, and immunity from the axe, would live out its centuries as sturdily as its English brother, and prove far the nobler and more majestic specimen of a tree at the end of them. Still, however one's Yankee patriotism may struggle against the admission, it must be owned that the trees and other objects of an English landscape take hold of the observer by numberless minute tendrils, as it were, which, look as closely as we choose, we never find in an American scene. The parasitic growth is so luxuriant, that the trunk of the tree, so gray and dry in our climate, is better worth observing than the boughs and foliage; a verdant mossiness coats it all over, so that it looks almost as green as the leaves; and often, moreover, the stately stem is clustered about, high upward, with creeping and twining shrubs, the ivy, and sometimes the mistletoe, close-clinging friends, nurtured by the moisture and never too fervid sunshine, and supporting themselves by the old tree's abundant strength. We call it a parasitical vegetation; but, if the phrase imply any reproach, it is unkind to bestow it on this beautiful affection and relationship which exist in England between one order of plants and another: the strong tree being always ready to give support to the trailing shrub, lift it to the sun, and feed it out of its own heart, if it crave such food; and the shrub, on its part, repaying its foster-father with an ample luxuriance of beauty, and adding Corinthian grace to the tree's lofty strength. No bitter winter nips these tender little sympathies, no hot sun burns the life out of them; and therefore they outlast the longevity of the oak, and, if the woodman permitted, would bury it in a green grave, when all is over.

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Should there be nothing else along the road to look at, an English hedge might well suffice to occupy the eyes, and, to a depth beyond what he would suppose, the heart of an American. We often set out hedges in our own soil, but might as well set out figs or pineapples and expect to gather fruit of them. Something grows, to be sure, which we choose to call a hedge; but it lacks the dense, luxuriant variety of vegetation that is accumulated into the English original, in which a botanist would find a thousand shrubs and gracious herbs that the hedge-maker never thought of planting there. Among them, growing wild, are many of the kindred blossoms of the very flowers which our pilgrim fathers brought from England, for the sake of their simple beauty and home-like associations, and which we have ever since been cultivating in gardens. There is not a softer trait to be found in the character of those stern men than that they should have been sensible of these flower-roots clinging among the fibres of their rugged hearts, and have felt the necessity of bringing them over sea and making them hereditary in the new land, instead of trusting to what rarer beauty the wilderness might have in store for them.

Or, if the road-side has no hedge, the ugliest stone fence (such as, in America, would keep itself bare and unsympathizing till the end of time) is sure to be covered with the small handiwork of Nature; that careful mother lets nothing go naked there, and, if she cannot provide clothing, gives at least embroidery. No sooner is the fence built than she adopts and adorns it as a part of her original plan, treating the hard, uncomely construction as if it had all along been a favorite idea of her own. A little sprig of ivy may be seen creeping up the side of the low wall and clinging fast with its many feet to the rough surface; a tuft of grass roots itself between two of the stones, where a pinch or two of way-side dust has been moistened into nutritious soil for it; a small bunch of fern grows in another crevice; a deep, soft, verdant moss spreads itself along the top and over all the available inequalities of the fence; and where nothing else will grow, lichens stick tenaciously to the bare stones and variegate the monotonous gray with hues of yellow and red. Finally, a great deal of shrubbery clusters along the base of the stone wall, and takes away the hardness of its outline; and in due time, as the upshot of these apparently aimless or sportive touches, we recognize that the beneficent Creator of all things, working through His handmaiden whom we call Nature, has deigned to mingle a charm of divine gracefulness even with so earthly an institution as a boundary-fence. The clown who wrought at it little dreamed what fellow-laborer he had.

The English should send us photographs of portions of the trunks of trees, the tangled and various products of a hedge, and a square foot of an old wall.



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They can hardly send anything else so characteristic. Their artists, especially of the later school, sometimes toil to depict such subjects, but are apt to stiffen the lithe tendrils in the process. The poets succeed better, with Tennyson at their head, and often produce ravishing effects by dint of a tender minuteness of touch, to which the genius of the soil and climate artfully impels them: for, as regards grandeur, there are loftier scenes in many countries than the best that England can show; but, for the picturesqueness of the smallest object that lies under its gentle gloom and sunshine, there is no scenery like it anywhere.

In the foregoing paragraphs I have strayed away to a long distance from the road to Stratford-on-Avon; for I remember no such stone fences as I have been speaking of in Warwickshire, nor elsewhere in England, except among the Lakes, or in Yorkshire, and the rough and hilly countries to the north of it. Hedges there were along my road, however, and broad, level fields, rustic hamlets, and cottages of ancient date,—from the roof of one of which the occupant was tearing away the thatch, and showing what an accumulation of dust, dirt, mouldiness, roots of weeds, families of mice, swallows' nests, and hordes of insects, had been deposited there since that old straw was new. Estimating its antiquity from these tokens, Shakspeare himself, in one of his morning rambles out of his native town, might have seen the thatch laid on; at all events, the cottage-walls were old enough to have known him as a guest. A few modern villas were also to be seen, and perhaps there were mansions of old gentility at no great distance, but hidden among trees; for it is a point of English pride that such houses seldom allow themselves to be visible from the high-road. In short, I recollect nothing specially remarkable along the way, nor in the immediate approach to Stratford; and yet the picture of that June morning has a glory in my memory, owing chiefly, I believe, to the charm of the English summer-weather, the really good days of which are the most delightful that mortal man can ever hope to be favored with. Such a genial warmth! A little too warm, it might be, yet only to such a degree as to assure an American (a certainty to which he seldom attains till attempered to the customary austerity of an English summer-day) that he was quite warm enough. And after all, there was an unconquerable freshness in the atmosphere, which every little movement of a breeze shook over me like a dash of the ocean-spray. Such days need bring us no other happiness than their own light and temperature. No doubt, I could not have enjoyed it so exquisitely, except that there must be still latent in us Western wanderers (even after an absence of two centuries and more) an adaptation to the English climate which makes us sensible of a motherly kindness in its scantiest sunshine, and overflows us with delight at its more lavish smiles.



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The spire of Shakspeare's church—the Church of the Holy Trinity—begins to show itself among the trees at a little distance from Stratford. Next we see the shabby old dwellings, intermixed with mean-looking houses of modern date, and the streets being quite level, you are struck and surprised by nothing so much as the tameness of the general scene; as if Shakspeare's genius were vivid enough to have wrought pictorial splendors in the town where he was born. Here and there, however, a queer edifice meets your eye, endowed with the individuality that belongs only to the domestic architecture of times gone by; the house seems to have grown out of some odd quality in its inhabitant, as a sea-shell is moulded from within by the character of its inmate; and having been built in a strange fashion, generations ago, it has ever since been growing stranger and quainter, as old humorists are apt to do. Here, too, (as so often impressed me in decayed English towns,) there appeared to be a greater abundance of aged people wearing small-clothes and leaning on sticks than you could assemble on our side of the water by sounding a trumpet and proclaiming a reward for the most venerable. I tried to account for this phenomenon by several theories: as, for example, that our new towns are unwholesome for age and kill it off unseasonably; or that our old men have a subtle sense of fitness, and die of their own accord rather than live in an unseemly contrast with youth and novelty: but the secret may be, after all, that hair-dyes, false teeth, modern arts of dress, and other contrivances of a skin-deep youthfulness, have not crept into these antiquated English towns, and so people grow old without the weary necessity of seeming younger than they are.

After wandering through two or three streets, I found my way to Shakspeare's birthplace, which is almost a smaller and humbler house than any description can prepare the visitor to expect; so inevitably does an august inhabitant make his abode palatial to our imaginations, receiving his guests, indeed, in a castle in the air, until we unwisely insist on meeting him among the sordid lanes and alleys of lower earth. The portion of the edifice with which Shakspeare had anything to do is hardly large enough, in the basement, to contain the butcher's stall that one of his descendants kept, and that still remains there, windowless, with the cleaver-cuts in its hacked counter, which projects into the street under a little penthouse-roof, as if waiting for a new occupant. The upper half of the door was open, and, on my rapping at it, a young person in black made her appearance and admitted me: she was not a menial, but remarkably genteel (an American characteristic) for an English girl, and was probably the daughter of the old gentlewoman who takes care of the house. This lower room has a pavement of gray slabs of stone, which may have been rudely squared when the house was new, but are now all cracked, broken, and disarranged in a most



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unaccountable way. One does not see how any ordinary usage, for whatever length of time, should have so smashed these heavy stones; it is as if an earthquake had burst up through the floor, which afterwards had been imperfectly trodden down again. The room is whitewashed and very clean, but wofully shabby and dingy, coarsely built, and such as the most poetical imagination would find it difficult to idealize. In the rear of this apartment is the kitchen, a still smaller room, of a similar rude aspect; it has a great, rough fireplace, with space for a large family under the blackened opening of the chimney, and an immense passage-way for the smoke, through which Shakspeare may have seen the blue sky by day and the stars glimmering down at him by night. It is now a dreary spot where the long-extinguished embers used to be. A glowing fire, even if it covered only a quarter part of the hearth, might still do much towards making the old kitchen cheerful; but we get a depressing idea of the stifled, poor, sombre kind of life that could have been lived in such a dwelling, where this room seems to have been the gathering-place of the family, with no breadth or scope, no good retirement, but old and young huddling together cheek by jowl. What a hardy plant was Shakspeare's genius, how fatal its development, since it could not be blighted in such an atmosphere! It only brought human nature the closer to him, and put more unctuous earth about his roots.

Thence I was ushered up-stairs to the room in which Shakspeare is supposed to have been born; though, if you peep too curiously into the matter, you may find the shadow of an ugly doubt on this, as well as most other points of his mysterious life. It is the chamber over the butcher's shop, and is lighted by one broad window containing a great many small, irregular panes of glass. The floor is made of planks, very rudely hewn, and fitting together with little neatness; the naked beams and rafters, at the sides of the room and overhead, bear the original marks of the builder's broad-axe, with no evidence of an attempt to smooth off the job. Again we have to reconcile ourselves to the smallness of the space inclosed by these illustrious walls,—a circumstance more difficult to accept, as regards places that we have heard, read, thought, and dreamed much about, than any other disenchanting particular of a mistaken ideal. A few paces—perhaps seven or eight—take us from end to end of it. So low it is, that I could easily touch the ceiling, and might have done so without a tiptoe-stretch, had it been a good deal higher; and this humility of the chamber has tempted a vast multitude of people to write their names overhead in pencil. Every inch of the side-walls, even into the obscurest nooks and corners, is covered with a similar record; all the window-panes, moreover, are scrawled with diamond-signatures, among which is said to be that of Walter Scott; but so many persons have sought to immortalize themselves in close vicinity to his name that I really could not trace him out. Methinks it is strange that people do not strive to forget their forlorn little identities, in such situations, instead of thrusting them forward into the dazzle of a great renown, where, if noticed, they cannot but be deemed impertinent.

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This room, and the entire house, so far as I saw it, are whitewashed and exceedingly clean; nor is there the aged, musty smell with which old Chester first made me acquainted, and which goes far to cure an American of his excessive predilection for antique residences. An old lady, who took charge of me up-stairs, had the manners and aspect of a gentlewoman, and talked with somewhat formidable knowledge and appreciative intelligence about Shakspeare. Arranged on a table and in chairs were various prints, views of houses and scenes connected with Shakspeare's memory, together with editions of his works and local publications about his home and haunts, from the sale of which this respectable lady perhaps realizes a handsome profit. At any rate, I bought a good many of them, conceiving that it might be the civillest way of requiting her for her instructive conversation and the trouble she took in showing me the house. It cost me a pang (not a curmudgeonly, but a gentlemanly one) to offer a downright fee to the lady-like girl who had admitted me; but I swallowed my delicate scruples with some little difficulty, and she digested hers, so far as I could observe, with no difficulty at all. In fact, nobody need fear to hold out half a crown to any person with whom he has occasion to speak a word in England.

I should consider it unfair to quit Shakspeare's house without the frank acknowledgment that I was conscious of not the slightest emotion while viewing it, nor any quickening of the imagination. This has often happened to me in my visits to memorable places. Whatever pretty and apposite reflections I may have made upon the subject had either occurred to me before I ever saw Stratford, or have been elaborated since. It is pleasant, nevertheless, to think that I have seen the place; and I believe that I can form a more sensible and vivid idea of Shakspeare as a flesh-and-blood individual now that I have stood on the kitchen-hearth and in the birth-chamber; but I am not quite certain that this power of realization is altogether desirable in reference to a great poet. The Shakspeare whom I met there took various guises, but had not his laurel on. He was successively the roguish boy,—the youthful deer-stealer,—the comrade of players,—the too familiar friend of Davenant's mother,—the careful, thrifty, thriven man of property, who came back from London to lend money on bond, and occupy the best house in Stratford,—the mellow, red-nosed, autumnal boon-companion of John a' Combe, who (or else the Stratford gossips belied him) met his death by tumbling into a ditch on his way home from a drinking-bout, and left his second-best bed to his poor wife. I feel, as sensibly as the reader can, what horrible impiety it is to remember these things, be they true or false. In either case, they ought to vanish out of sight on the distant ocean-line of the past, leaving a pure, white memory, even as a sail, though perhaps darkened with many stains, looks snowy white



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on the far horizon. But I draw a moral from these unworthy reminiscences and this embodiment of the poet, as suggested by some of the grimy actualities of his life. It is for the high interests of the world not to insist upon finding out that its greatest men are, in a certain lower sense, very much the same kind of men as the rest of us, and often a little worse; because a common mind cannot properly digest such a discovery, nor ever know the true proportion of the great man's good and evil, nor how small a part of him it was that touched our muddy or dusty earth. Thence comes moral bewilderment, and even intellectual loss, in regard to what is best of him. When Shakspeare invoked a curse on the man who should stir his bones, he perhaps meant the larger share of it for him or them who should pry into his perishing earthliness, the defects or even the merits of the character that he wore in Stratford, when he had left mankind so much to muse upon that was imperishable and divine. Heaven keep me from incurring any part of the anathema in requital for the irreverent sentences above written!

From Shakspeare's house, the next step, of course, is to visit his burial-place. The appearance of the church is most venerable and beautiful, standing amid a great green shadow of lime-trees, above which rises the spire, while the Gothic battlements and buttresses and vast arched windows are obscurely seen through the boughs. The Avon loiters past the church-yard, an exceedingly sluggish river, which might seem to have been considering which way it should flow ever since Shakspeare left off paddling in it and gathering the large forget-me-nots that grow among its flags and water-weeds.

An old man in small-clothes was waiting at the gate; and inquiring whether I wished to go in, he preceded me to the church-porch, and rapped. I could have done it quite as effectually for myself; but, it seems, the old people of the neighborhood haunt about the church-yard, in spite of the frowns and remonstrances of the sexton, who grudges them the half-eleemosynary sixpence which they sometimes get from visitors. I was admitted into the church by a respectable-looking and intelligent man in black, the parish-clerk, I suppose, and probably holding a richer incumbency than his vicar, if all the fees which he handles remain in his own pocket. He was already exhibiting the Shakspeare monuments to two or three visitors, and several other parties came in while I was there.

The poet and his family are in possession of what may be considered the very best burial-places that the church affords. They lie in a row, right across the breadth of the chancel, the foot of each gravestone being close to the elevated floor on which the altar stands. Nearest to the side-wall, beneath Shakspeare's bust, is a slab bearing a Latin inscription addressed to his wife, and covering her remains; then his own slab, with the old anathematizing stanza upon it; then that of Thomas Nash, who married



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his grand-daughter; then that of Dr. Hall, the husband of his daughter Susannah; and, lastly, Susannah's own. Shakspeare's is the commonest-looking slab of all, being just such a flag-stone as Essex Street in Salem used to be paved with, when I was a boy. Moreover, unless my eyes or recollection deceive me, there is a crack across it, as if it had already undergone some such violence as the inscription deprecates. Unlike the other monuments of the family, it bears no name, nor am I acquainted with the grounds or authority on which it is absolutely determined to be Shakspeare's; although, being in a range with those of his wife and children, it might naturally be attributed to him. But, then, why does his wife, who died afterwards, take precedence of him and occupy the place next his bust? And where are the graves of another daughter and a son, who have a better right in the family-row than Thomas Nash, his grandson-in-law? Might not one or both of them have been laid under the nameless stone? But it is dangerous trifling with Shakspeare's dust; so I forbear to meddle further with the grave, (though the prohibition makes it tempting,) and shall let whatever bones be in it rest in peace. Yet I must needs add that the inscription on the bust seems to imply that Shakspeare's grave was directly underneath it.

The poet's bust is affixed to the northern wall of the church, the base of it being about a man's height, or rather more, above the floor of the chancel. The features of this piece of sculpture are entirely unlike any portrait of Shakspeare that I have ever seen, and compel me to take down the beautiful, lofty-browed, and noble picture of him which has hitherto hung in my mental portrait-gallery. The bust cannot be said to represent a beautiful face or an eminently noble head; but it clutches firmly hold of one's sense of reality and insists upon your accepting it, if not as Shakspeare the poet, yet as the wealthy burgher of Stratford, the friend of John a' Combe, who lies yonder in the corner. I know not what the phrenologists say to the bust. The forehead is but moderately developed, and retreats somewhat, the upper part of the skull rising pyramidally; the eyes are prominent almost beyond the penthouse of the brow; the upper lip is so long that it must have been almost a deformity, unless the sculptor artistically exaggerated its length, in consideration, that, on the pedestal, it must be foreshortened by being looked at from below. On the whole, Shakspeare must have had a singular rather than a prepossessing face; and it is wonderful how, with this bust before its eyes, the world has persisted in maintaining an erroneous notion of his appearance, allowing painters and sculptors to foist their idealized nonsense on us all, instead of the genuine man. For my part, the Shakspeare of my mind's eye is henceforth to be a personage of a ruddy English complexion, with a reasonably capacious brow, intelligent and quickly observant eyes, a nose curved slightly outward, a long, queer upper-lip, with the mouth a little unclosed beneath it, and cheeks considerably developed in the lower part and beneath the chin. But when Shakspeare was himself, (for nine-tenths of the time, according to all appearances, he was but the burgher of Stratford,) he doubtless shone through this dull mask and transfigured it into the face of an angel.

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Fifteen or twenty feet behind the row of Shakspeare gravestones is the great east-window of the church, now brilliant with stained glass of recent manufacture. On one side of this window, under a sculptured arch of marble, lies a full-length marble figure of John a' Combe, clad in what I take to be a robe of municipal dignity, and holding its hands devoutly clasped. It is a sturdy English figure, with coarse features, a type of ordinary man whom we smile to see immortalized in the sculpturesque material of poets and heroes; but the prayerful attitude encourages us to believe that the old usurer may not, after all, have had that grim reception in the other world which Shakspeare's squib foreboded for him. By-the-by, till I grew somewhat familiar with Warwickshire pronunciation, I never understood that the point of those ill-natured lines was a pun. "Oho!' quoth the Devil, 'tis my John a' Combe!"—that is, "my John has come!"

Close to the poet's bust is a nameless, oblong, cubic tomb, supposed to be that of a clerical dignitary of the fourteenth century. The church has other mural monuments and altar-tombs, one or two of the latter upholding the recumbent figures of knights in armor and their dames, very eminent and worshipful personages in their day, no doubt, but doomed to appear forever intrusive and impertinent within the precincts which Shakspeare has made his own. His renown is tyrannous, and suffers nothing else to be recognized within the scope of its material presence, unless illuminated by some side-ray from himself. The clerk informed me that interments no longer take place in any part of the church. And it is better so; for methinks a person of delicate individuality, curious about his burial-place, and desirous of six feet of earth for himself alone, could never endure to lie buried near Shakspeare, but would rise up at midnight and grope his way out of the church-door, rather than sleep in the shadow of so stupendous a memory.

I should hardly have dared to add another to the innumerable descriptions of Stratford-on-Avon, if it had not seemed to me that this would form a fitting framework to some reminiscences of a very remarkable woman. Her labor, while she lived, was of a nature and purpose outwardly irreverent to the name of Shakspeare, yet, by its actual tendency, entitling her to the distinction of being that one of all his worshippers who sought, though she knew it not, to place the richest and stateliest diadem upon his brow. We Americans, at least, in the scanty annals of our literature, cannot afford to forget her high and conscientious exercise of noble faculties, which, indeed, if you look at the matter in one way, evolved only a miserable error, but, more fairly considered, produced a result worth almost what it cost her. Her faith in her own ideas was so genuine, that, erroneous as they were, it transmuted them to gold, or, at all events, interfused a large proportion of that precious and indestructible substance among the waste material from which it can readily be sifted.



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The only time I ever saw Miss Bacon was in London, where she had lodgings in Spring Street, Sussex Gardens, at the house of a grocer, a portly, middle-aged, civil, and friendly man, who, as well as his wife, appeared to feel a personal kindness towards their lodger. I was ushered up two (and I rather believe three) pair of stairs into a parlor somewhat humbly furnished, and told that Miss Bacon would come soon. There were a number of books on the table, and, looking into them, I found that every one had some reference, more or less immediate, to her Shakspearian theory,—a volume of Raleigh's "History of the World," a volume of Montaigne, a volume of Lord Bacon's letters, a volume of Shakspeare's plays; and on another table lay a large roll of manuscript, which I presume to have been a portion of her work. To be sure, there was a pocket-Bible among the books, but everything else referred to the one despotic idea that had got possession of her mind; and as it had engrossed her whole soul as well as her intellect, I have no doubt that she had established subtile connections between it and the Bible likewise. As is apt to be the case with solitary students, Miss Bacon probably read late and rose late; for I took up Montaigne (it was Hazlitt's translation) and had been reading his journey to Italy a good while before she appeared.

I had expected (the more shame for me, having no other ground of such expectation than that she was a literary woman) to see a very homely, uncouth, elderly personage, and was quite agreeably disappointed by her aspect. She was rather uncommonly tall, and had a striking and expressive face, dark hair, dark eyes, which shone with an inward light as soon as she began to speak, and by-and-by a color came into her cheeks and made her look almost young. Not that she really was so; she must have been beyond middle-age: and there was no unkindness in coming to that conclusion, because, making allowance for years and ill-health, I could suppose her to have been handsome and exceedingly attractive once. Though wholly estranged from society, there was little or no restraint or embarrassment in her manner: lonely people are generally glad to give utterance to their pent-up ideas, and often bubble over with them as freely as children with their new-found syllables. I cannot tell how it came about, but we immediately found ourselves taking a friendly and familiar tone together, and began to talk as if we had known one another a very long while. A little preliminary correspondence had indeed smoothed the way, and we had a definite topic in the contemplated publication of her book.



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She was very communicative about her theory, and would have been much more so, had I desired it; but, being conscious within myself of a sturdy unbelief, I deemed it fair and honest rather to repress than draw her out upon the subject. Unquestionably, she was a monomaniac; these overmastering ideas about the authorship of Shakspeare's plays, and the deep political philosophy concealed beneath the surface of them, had completely thrown her off her balance; but at the same time they had wonderfully developed her intellect, and made her what she could not otherwise have become. It was a very singular phenomenon: a system of philosophy growing up in this woman's mind without her volition,—contrary, in fact, to the determined resistance of her volition,—and substituting itself in the place of everything that originally grew there. To have based such a system on fancy, and unconsciously elaborated it for herself, was almost as wonderful as really to have found it in the plays. But, in a certain sense, she did actually find it there. Shakspeare has surface beneath surface, to an immeasurable depth, adapted to the plummet-line of every reader; his works present many faces of truth, each with scope enough to fill a contemplative mind. Whatever you seek in him you will surely discover, provided you seek truth. There is no exhausting the various interpretation of his symbols; and a thousand years hence, a world of new readers will possess a whole library of new books, as we ourselves do, in these volumes old already. I had half a mind to suggest to Miss Bacon this explanation of her theory, but forbore, because (as I could readily perceive) she had as princely a spirit as Queen Elizabeth herself, and would at once have motioned me from the room.

I had heard, long ago, that she believed that the material evidences of her dogma as to the authorship, together with the key of the new philosophy, would be found buried in Shakspeare's grave. Recently, as I understood her, this notion had been somewhat modified, and was now accurately defined and fully developed in her mind, with a result of perfect certainty. In Lord Bacon's letters, on which she laid her finger as she spoke, she had discovered the key and clue to the whole mystery. There were definite and minute instructions how to find a will and other documents relating to the conclave of Elizabethan philosophers, which were concealed (when and by whom she did not inform me) in a hollow space in the under surface of Shakspeare's gravestone. Thus the terrible prohibition to remove the stone was accounted for. The directions, she intimated, went completely and precisely to the point, obviating all difficulties in the way of coming at the treasure, and even, if I remember right, were so contrived as to ward off any troublesome consequences likely to ensue from the interference of the parish-officers. All that Miss Bacon now remained in England for—indeed, the object for which she had come hither, and which had kept her here for three years past—was to obtain possession of these material and unquestionable proofs of the authenticity of her theory.



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She communicated all this strange matter in a low, quiet tone; while, on my part, I listened as quietly, and without any expression of dissent. Controversy against a faith so settled would have shut her up at once, and that, too, without in the least weakening her belief in the existence of those treasures of the tomb; and had it been possible to convince her of their intangible nature, I apprehend that there would have been nothing left for the poor enthusiast save to collapse and die. She frankly confessed that she could no longer bear the society of those who did not at least lend a certain sympathy to her views, if not fully share in them; and meeting little sympathy or none, she had now entirely secluded herself from the world. In all these years, she had seen Mrs. F. a few times, but had long ago given her up,—Carlyle once or twice, but not of late, although he had received her kindly; Mr. Buchanan, while minister in England, had once called on her, and General Campbell, our consul in London, had met her two or three times on business. With these exceptions, which she marked so scrupulously that it was perceptible what epochs they were in the monotonous passage of her days, she had lived in the profoundest solitude. She never walked out; she suffered much from ill-health; and yet, she assured me, she was perfectly happy.

I could well conceive it; for Miss Bacon imagined herself to have received (what is certainly the greatest boon ever assigned to mortals) a high mission in the world, with adequate powers for its accomplishment; and lest even these should prove insufficient, she had faith that special interpositions of Providence were forwarding her human efforts. This idea was continually coming to the surface, during our interview. She believed, for example, that she had been providentially led to her lodging-house and put in relations with the good-natured grocer and his family; and, to say the truth, considering what a savage and stealthy tribe the London lodging-house keepers actually are, the honest kindness of this man and his household appeared to have been little less than miraculous. Evidently, too, she thought that Providence had brought me forward—a man somewhat connected with literature—at the critical juncture when she needed a negotiator with the booksellers; and, on my part, though little accustomed to regard myself as a divine minister, and though I might even have preferred that Providence should select some other instrument, I had no scruple in undertaking to do what I could for her. Her book, as I could see by turning it over, was a very remarkable one, and worthy of being offered to the public, which, if wise enough to appreciate it, would be thankful for what was good in it and merciful to its faults. It was founded on a prodigious error, but was built up from that foundation with a good many prodigious truths. And, at all events, whether I could aid her literary views or no, it would have



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been both rash and impertinent in me to attempt drawing poor Miss Bacon out of her delusions, which were the condition on which she lived in comfort and joy, and in the exercise of great intellectual power. So I left her to dream as she pleased about the treasures of Shakspeare's tombstone, and to form whatever designs might seem good to herself for obtaining possession of them. I was sensible of a lady-like feeling of propriety in Miss Bacon, and a New-England orderliness in her character, and, in spite of her bewilderment, a sturdy common-sense, which I trusted would begin to operate at the right time, and keep her from any actual extravagance. And as regarded this matter of the tombstone, so it proved.

The interview lasted above an hour, during which she flowed out freely, as to the sole auditor, capable of any degree of intelligent sympathy, whom she had met with in a very long while. Her conversation was remarkably suggestive, alluring forth one's own ideas and fantasies from the shy places where they usually haunt. She was indeed an admirable talker, considering how long she had held her tongue for lack of a listener,—pleasant, sunny and shadowy, often piquant, and giving glimpses of all a woman's various and readily changeable moods and humors; and beneath them all there ran a deep and powerful under-current of earnestness, which did not fail to produce in the listener's mind something like a temporary faith in what she herself believed so fervently. But the streets of London are not favorable to enthusiasms of this kind, nor, in fact, are they likely to flourish anywhere in the English atmosphere; so that, long before reaching Paternoster Row, I felt that it would be a difficult and doubtful matter to advocate the publication of Miss Bacon's book. Nevertheless, it did finally get published.

Months before that happened, however, Miss Bacon had taken up her residence at Stratford-on-Avon, drawn thither by the magnetism of those rich secrets which she supposed to have been hidden by Raleigh, or Bacon, or I know not whom, in Shakspeare's grave, and protected there by a curse, as pirates used to bury their gold in the guardianship of a fiend. She took a humble lodging and began to haunt the church like a ghost. But she did not condescend to any stratagem or underhand attempt to violate the grave, which, had she been capable of admitting such an idea, might possibly have been accomplished by the aid of a resurrection-man. As her first step, she made acquaintance with the clerk, and began to sound him as to the feasibility of her enterprise and his own willingness to engage in it. The clerk apparently listened with not unfavorable ears; but, as his situation (which the fees of pilgrims, more numerous than at any Catholic shrine, render lucrative) would have been forfeited by any malfeasance in office, he stipulated for liberty to consult the vicar. Miss Bacon requested to tell her own story to the reverend gentleman, and



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seems to have been received by him with the utmost kindness, and even to have succeeded in making a certain impression on his mind as to the desirability of the search. As their interview had been under the seal of secrecy, he asked permission to consult a friend, who, as Miss Bacon either found out or surmised, was a practitioner of the law. What the legal friend advised she did not learn; but the negotiation continued, and certainly was never broken off by an absolute refusal on the vicar's part. He, perhaps, was kindly temporizing with our poor countrywoman, whom an Englishman of ordinary mould would have sent to a lunatic-asylum at once. I cannot help fancying, however, that her familiarity with the events of Shakspeare's life, and of his death and burial, (of which she would speak as if she had been present at the edge of the grave,) and all the history, literature, and personalities of the Elizabethan age, together with the prevailing power of her own belief, and the eloquence with which she knew how to enforce it, had really gone some little way towards making a convert of the good clergyman. If so, I honor him above all the hierarchy of England.

The affair certainly looked very hopeful. However erroneously, Miss Bacon had understood from the vicar that no obstacles would be interposed to the investigation, and that he himself would sanction it with his presence. It was to take place after nightfall; and all preliminary arrangements being made, the vicar and clerk professed to wait only her word in order to set about lifting the awful stone from the sepulchre. So, at least, Miss Bacon believed; and as her bewilderment was entirely in her own thoughts, and never disturbed her perception or accurate remembrance of external things, I see no reason to doubt it, except it be the tinge of absurdity in the fact. But, in this apparently prosperous state of things, her own convictions began to falter. A doubt stole into her mind whether she might not have mistaken the depository and mode of concealment of those historic treasures; and after once admitting the doubt, she was afraid to hazard the shock of uplifting the stone and finding nothing. She examined the surface of the gravestone, and endeavored, without stirring it, to estimate whether it were of such thickness as to be capable of containing the archives of the Elizabethan club. She went over anew the proofs, the clues, the enigmas, the pregnant sentences, which she had discovered in Bacon's letters and elsewhere, and now was frightened to perceive that they did not point so definitely to Shakspeare's tomb as she had heretofore supposed. There was an unmistakably distinct reference to a tomb, but it might be Bacon's, or Raleigh's, or Spenser's; and instead of the "Old Player," as she profanely called him, it might be either of those three illustrious dead, poet, warrior, or statesman, whose ashes, in Westminster Abbey, or the Tower burial-ground, or wherever they sleep, it was her mission to disturb.



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But she continued to hover around the church, and seems to have had full freedom of entrance in the daytime, and special license, on one occasion at least, at a late hour of the night. She went thither with a dark-lantern, which could but twinkle like a glow-worm through the volume of obscurity that filled the great dusky edifice. Groping her way up the aisle and towards the chancel, she sat down on the elevated part of the pavement above Shakspeare's grave. If the divine poet really wrote the inscription there, and cared as much about the quiet of his bones as its deprecatory earnestness would imply, it was time for those crumbling relics to bestir themselves under her sacrilegious feet. But they were safe. She made no attempt to disturb them; though, I believe, she looked narrowly into the crevices between Shakspeare's and the two adjacent stones, and in some way satisfied herself that her single strength would suffice to lift the former, in case of need. She threw the feeble ray of her lantern up towards the bust, but could not make it visible beneath the darkness of the vaulted roof. Had she been subject to superstitious terrors, it is impossible to conceive of a situation that could better entitle her to feel them, for, if Shakspeare's ghost would rise at any provocation, it must have shown itself then; but it is my sincere belief, that, if his figure had appeared within the scope of her dark-lantern, in his slashed doublet and gown, and with his eyes bent on her beneath the high, bald forehead, just as we see him in the bust, she would have met him fearlessly, and controverted his claims to the authorship of the plays, to his very face. She had taught herself to contemn "Lord Leicester's groom" (it was one of her disdainful epithets for the world's incomparable poet) so thoroughly, that even his disembodied spirit would hardly have found civil treatment at Miss Bacon's hands.

Her vigil, though it appears to have had no definite object, continued far into the night. Several times she heard a low movement in the aisles: a stealthy, dubious foot-fall prowling about in the darkness, now here, now there, among the pillars and ancient tombs, as if some restless inhabitant of the latter had crept forth to peep at the intruder. By-and-by the clerk made his appearance, and confessed that he had been watching her ever since she entered the church.

About this time it was that a strange sort of weariness seems to have fallen upon her: her toil was all but done, her great purpose, as she believed, on the very point of accomplishment, when she began to regret that so stupendous a mission had been imposed on the fragility of a woman. Her faith in the new philosophy was as mighty as ever, and so was her confidence in her own adequate development of it, now about to be given to the world; yet she wished, or fancied so, that it might never have been her duty to achieve this unparalleled task, and to stagger feebly forward

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under her immense burden of responsibility and renown. So far as her personal concern in the matter went, she would gladly have forfeited the reward of her patient study and labor for so many years, her exile from her country and estrangement from her family and friends, her sacrifice of health and all other interests to this one pursuit, if she could only find herself free to dwell in Stratford and be forgotten. She liked the old slumberous town, and awarded the only praise that ever I knew her to bestow on Shakspeare, the individual man, by acknowledging that his taste in a residence was good, and that he knew how to choose a suitable retirement for a person of shy, but genial temperament. And at this point, I cease to possess the means of tracing her vicissitudes of feeling any farther. In consequence of some advice which I fancied it my duty to tender, as being the only confidant whom she now had in the world, I fell under Miss Bacon's most severe and passionate displeasure, and was cast off by her in the twinkling of an eye. It was a misfortune to which her friends were always particularly liable; but I think that none of them ever loved, or even respected, her most ingenuous and noble, but likewise most sensitive and tumultuous character, the less for it.

At that time her book was passing through the press. Without prejudice to her literary ability, it must be allowed that Miss Bacon was wholly unfit to prepare her own work for publication, because, among many other reasons, she was too thoroughly in earnest to know what to leave out. Every leaf and line was sacred, for all had been written under so deep a conviction of truth as to assume, in her eyes, the aspect of inspiration. A practised book-maker, with entire control of her materials, would have shaped out a duodecimo volume full of eloquent and ingenious dissertation,—criticisms which quite take the color and pungency out of other people's critical remarks on Shakspeare,—philosophic truths which she imagined herself to have found at the roots of his conceptions, and which certainly come from no inconsiderable depth somewhere. There was a great amount of rubbish, which any competent editor would have shovelled out of the way. But Miss Bacon thrust the whole bulk of inspiration and nonsense into the press in a lump, and there tumbled out a ponderous octavo volume, which fell with a dead thump at the feet of the public, and has never been picked up. A few persons turned over one or two of the leaves, as it lay there, and essayed to kick the volume deeper into the mud; for they were the hack critics of the minor periodical press in London, than whom, I suppose, though excellent fellows in their way, there are no gentlemen in the world less sensible of any sanctity in a book, or less likely to recognize an author's heart in it, or more utterly careless about bruising, if they do recognize it. It is their trade. They could not do otherwise. I never thought of blaming them.

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From the scholars and critics of her own country, indeed, Miss Bacon might have looked for a worthier appreciation, because many of the best of them have higher cultivation and finer and deeper literary sensibilities than all but the very profoundest and brightest of Englishmen. But they are not a courageous body of men; they dare not think a truth that has an odor of absurdity, lest they should feel themselves bound to speak it out. If any American ever wrote a word in her behalf, Miss Bacon never knew it, nor did I. Our journalists at once republished some of the most brutal vituperations of the English press, thus pelting their poor countrywoman with stolen mud, without even waiting to know whether the ignominy was deserved. And they never have known it, to this day, nor ever will.

The next intelligence that I had of Miss Bacon was by a letter from the mayor of Stratford-on-Avon. He was a medical man, and wrote both in his official and professional character, telling me that an American lady, who had recently published what the mayor called a “Shakspeare book,” was afflicted with insanity. In a lucid interval she had referred to me, as a person who had some knowledge of her family and affairs. What she may have suffered before her intellect gave way, we had better not try to imagine. No author had ever hoped so confidently as she; none ever failed more utterly. A superstitious fancy might suggest that the anathema on Shakspeare’s tombstone had fallen heavily on her head in requital of even the unaccomplished purpose of disturbing the dust beneath, and that the “Old Player” had kept so quietly in his grave, on the night of her vigil, because he foresaw how soon and terribly he would be avenged. But if that benign spirit takes any care or cognizance of such things now, he has surely requited the injustice that she sought to do him—the high justice that she really did—by a tenderness of love and pity of which only he could be capable. What matters it, though she called him by some other name? He had wrought a greater miracle on her than on all the world besides. This bewildered enthusiast had recognized a depth in the man whom she decried, which scholars, critics, and learned societies, devoted to the elucidation of his unrivalled scenes, had never imagined to exist there. She had paid him the loftiest honor that all these ages of renown have been able to accumulate upon his memory. And when, not many months after the outward failure of her life-long object, she passed into the better world, I know not why we should hesitate to believe that the immortal poet may have met her on the threshold and led her in, reassuring her with friendly and comfortable words, and thanking her (yet with a smile of gentle humor in his eyes at the thought of certain mistaken speculations) for having interpreted him to mankind so well.



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I believe that it has been the fate of this remarkable book never to have had more than a single reader. I myself am acquainted with it only in insulated chapters and scattered pages and paragraphs. But, since my return to America, a young man of genius and enthusiasm has assured me that he has positively read the book from beginning to end, and is completely a convert to its doctrines. It belongs to him, therefore, and not to me, —whom, in almost the last letter that I received from her, she declared unworthy to meddle with her work,—it belongs surely to this one individual, who has done her so much justice as to know what she wrote, to place Miss Bacon in her due position before the public and posterity.

This has been too sad a story. To lighten the recollection of it, I will think of my stroll homeward past Charlecote Park, where I beheld the most stately elms, singly, in clumps, and in groves, scattered all about in the sunniest, shadiest, sleepest fashion; so that I could not but believe in a lengthened, loitering, drowsy enjoyment which these trees must have in their existence. Diffused over slow-paced centuries, it need not be keen nor bubble into thrills and ecstasies, like the momentary delights of short-lived human beings. They were civilized trees, known to man and befriended by him for ages past. There is an indescribable difference—as I believe I have heretofore endeavored to express—between the tamed, but by no means effete (on the contrary, the richer and more luxuriant) Nature of England, and the rude, shaggy, barbarous Nature which offers us its racier companionship in America. No less a change has been wrought among the wildest creatures that inhabit what the English call their forests. By-and-by, among those refined and venerable trees, I saw a large herd of deer, mostly reclining, but some standing in picturesque groups, while the stags threw their large antlers aloft, as if they had been taught to make themselves tributary to the scenic effect. Some were running fleetly about, vanishing from light into shadow and glancing forth again, with here and there a little fawn careering at its mother's heels. These deer are almost in the same relation to the wild, natural state of their kind that the trees of an English park hold to the rugged growth of an American forest. They have held a certain intercourse with man for immemorial years; and, most probably, the stag that Shakspeare killed was one of the progenitors of this very herd, and may himself have been a partly civilized and humanized deer, though in a less degree than these remote posterity. They are a little wilder than sheep, but they do not snuff the air at the approach of human beings, nor evince much alarm at their pretty close proximity; although, if you continue to advance, they toss their heads and take to their heels in a kind of mimic terror, or something akin to feminine skittishness, with a dim remembrance or tradition, as it were, of their having come of



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a wild stock. They have so long been fed and protected by man, that they must have lost many of their native instincts, and, I suppose, could not live comfortably through even an English winter without human help. One is sensible of a gentle scorn at them for such dependency, but feels none the less kindly disposed towards the half-domesticated race; and it may have been his observation of these tamer characteristics in the Charlecote herd that suggested to Shakspeare the tender and pitiful description of a wounded stag, in "As You Like It."

At a distance of some hundreds of yards from Charlecote Hall, and almost hidden by the trees between it and the road-side, is an old brick archway and porter's lodge. In connection with this entrance there appears to have been a wall and an ancient moat, the latter of which is still visible, a shallow, grassy scoop along the base of an embankment of the lawn. About fifty yards within the gate-way stands the house, forming three sides of a square, with three gables in a row on the front and on each of the two wings; and there are several towers and turrets at the angles, together with projecting windows, antique balconies, and other quaint ornaments suitable to the half-Gothic taste in which the edifice was built. Over the gate-way is the Lucy coat-of-arms, emblazoned in its proper colors. The mansion dates from the early days of Elizabeth, and probably looked very much the same as now when Shakspeare was brought before Sir Thomas Lucy for outrages among his deer. The impression is not that of gray antiquity, but of stable and time-honored gentility, still as vital as ever.

It is a most delightful place. All about the house and domain there is a perfection of comfort and domestic taste, an amplitude of convenience, which could have been brought about only by the slow ingenuity and labor of many successive generations, intent upon adding all possible improvement to the home where years gone by and years to come give a sort of permanence to the intangible present. An American is sometimes tempted to fancy that only by this long process can real homes be produced. One man's lifetime is not enough for the accomplishment of such a work of Art and Nature, almost the greatest merely temporary one that is confided to him; too little, at any rate,—yet perhaps too long, when he is discouraged by the idea that he must make his house warm and delightful for a miscellaneous race of successors, of whom the one thing certain is, that his own grandchildren will not be among them. Such repinings as are here suggested, however, come only from the fact, that, bred in English habits of thought, as most of us are, we have not yet modified our instincts to the necessities of our new forms of life. A lodging in a wigwam or under a tent has really as many advantages, when we come to know them, as a home beneath the roof-tree of Charlecote Hall. But, alas! our philosophers have not yet taught us to see what is best, nor have



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our poets sung us what is beautifullest, in the kind of life that we must lead; and therefore we still read the old English wisdom, and harp upon the ancient strings. And thence it happens, that, when we look at a time-honored hall, it seems more possible for men who inherit such a home, than for ourselves, to lead noble and graceful lives, quietly doing good and lovely things as their daily work, and achieving deeds of simple greatness when circumstances require them. I sometimes apprehend that our institutions may perish before we shall have discovered the most precious of the possibilities which they involve.

* * * * *

MR. AXTELL.

PART VI.

“The leaves of the second autumn were half-shrivelled in drawing near to the winter of their age.

“I had been to see your mother. She was ill. Mary’s death was slowly, surely bringing her own near. We had had a long talk that afternoon. Her visions of life were rare and beautiful. She was like Mrs. Wilton, the embodiment of all that is purely woman. She had wrought a solemn spell over me,—made Eternity seem near. I had been changed since that prayer on the sea-shore, fourteen months before, but now I felt a longing to go away. Earth seemed so drear,—mother was sick,—Abraham unhappy,—my father deep in the perplexing cares of his profession, mostly from home,—Mrs. Percival was dying,—the year was passing away,—and I, too, would be going; and as I went out of the house to go home, I remembered the day wherein I had waited in the viny arbor for Mary to awaken from sleep, how I had gone down to the sea to waken myself to a light that burned before it blessed. Since then I had avoided the place, barred with so many prison-wires. Now I felt a longing to go into it. The leaves were frost-bitten. I sympathized with them. Autumn winds went sighing over their misfortunes; spirit-winds blew past me, on their way to and from the land that is and the land that is not to us. The arbor was dear with a newborn love. I went out to greet it, as one might greet a ship sailing the same great ocean, though bound to a different port. There was a something in that old vine-clad arbor that was in me. I felt its shadows coming out to meet me. They chilled a little, but I went in. I looked at the little white office, across the yard, in the corner. I thought of the face that came out that day to see me,—the face that drank up my heart in one long draught, begun across Alice dead, finished when I read that letter. The cup of my heart was empty,—*so empty* now! I looked down into it; it was fringed with stalactites, crystallized from the poison of the glass. Oh! what did I



see there? A dead, dead crater, aching for the very fire that made it what it was, crying out of its fierce void for fiery fusion. Why did our God make us so,—us, who love, knowing we should not? I knew from the beginning that Bernard McKey ought not to be cared for by me; but could I help it? Now the veil of death, I believed, hung between, and the cup of my heart might be embalmed: the last change, I thought, had come to it, and left it as I that day found.



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“Chloe came around the corner, throwing her apron over her head. She looked up and down the way, as if in search of some one, went down the walk to the gate, looked as I had once seen her do at our house, taking it window by window, and finding no one, (the day seemed deserted,) she was walking back. I called to her from the arbor.

“I was just looking for you, Miss Lettie. I’ve got a letter here. Mistress is too sick to read it for me, and Master’s away. Would you?”

“It was addressed to Chloe. I broke the seal and opened it. It seemed a long letter. I gave a sigh at the task before me, and looked over to the end. I saw the signature: it was Bernard H. McKey. After that I saw Chloe’s troubled black face written on my vision, and felt dripping drops about my head.

“There, Miss Lettie, it’s all over, now. I’s so glad you’re come to! I won’t bother you with reading anymore letters. It would have to be much good in it that ‘ud pay me for seeing you so.’

“I was sitting in the arbor a little later, alone, reading the letter. Through the rending of the cup dew stole in; the mist was stifling. Still’t was better than the death that reigned before. The contents of my life were *not* poured out beyond the earth. The thought gave me comfort. It is so sad to feel the great gate shut down across the flame of your heart! to have the stilled waters set back, never more to join those that have escaped, gone on, to turn the wheel of Eternity! In that hour it was joy enough for me to know that he lived, even if the life was for another. I, too, had my bright portion in it.

“Chloe came back. She had forgotten the letter, when she went in to Mrs. Percival. She said ‘faintin’ must be good for me; she hadn’t seen me look so fine in a many days.’

“I told Chloe that the letter had been written to me, that it was not meant for her. At first she did not comprehend; after that I felt sure that a perception of the truth dawned in her mind, she watched me so closely.

“I carried my letter home. That night I compared the two,—the one Abraham had found (where I knew not, I never questioned him) with this. They bore no resemblance: but I remembered that two years make changes in all things; they might have effected this. The signatures were unlike; the latter contained the initial H. What if they were not written by the same person? The question was too mighty for me. I was compelled to await the answer.

“Bernard would be in Redleaf in November. He named the day,—appointed the place of meeting. It was the old tower in the church-yard. I had a fancy, as you have, for the dreary dimness there. As children, we made it our temple for all the worships childhood knows. The door had long been gone; it was open to every one who chose to enter in.

Before the coming of the day, I was in continual fear lest the new joy that had come into my life should trace itself visibly on my outward



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seeming. I took it in as the hungry do food, and tried to hide the sustenance it gave. I saw that my mother's eyes were often upon me,—that she was trying to follow my joy to its source. One day,—it was the very one before his coming,—she came suddenly upon me when I was wrapt in my mantle of exquisite consciousness. I had gone down to the river: you know it runs at the foot of the place. Tired of stirring up dry, dead leaves, I leaned against a tree,—one arm was around it,—and with my eyes traversing the blue of the sky, on and on, in quick, constant, flashing journeys, like fixed heat-lightning, I suddenly became conscious of a blue upon the earth, orbed in my mother's cool eyes. I don't know how I came out of the sky. She said only, 'Your thoughts harmonize with the season'; but I knew she meant much more. It was long since she had wandered so far from the house; but of late she had had my joy to trace,—my mother, to whom I could not intrust it, in all of whose nature it had no place, whose spirit mine was not formed to call out echoes from. The result of her walk to the river was a subsequent day of prostration and a nervous headache. All the morning of that November day I sat beside her in the darkened room. I bathed her head, until she said there was *too* much life in my hands, and sent for Abraham. Thus my time of release came."

A quick, involuntary smile crossed Miss Axtell's face at the memory of her first sight of Mr. McKey. I watched her now. She changed the style of her narration, taking it on quickly, in nervous periods, with electric pauses, which she did not fill as formerly.

"We met in the tower, happily without discovery. I told him of my mother's knowledge, showed him the notice of his (as I had thought) death.

"'It is my cousin,' he said carelessly,—adding, with a sigh, 'poor fellow! he was to have married soon.'

"I gave him the letter, the key of all my agony.

"'I remember when he wrote this,' he went on, as carelessly as if his words had all been known to me. 'You did not see him, perhaps; he was with me the first time I came to Redleaf,—was here the night he describes.'

"It was so strange that he did not ask where I obtained the letter! but he did not. He gave me an epitome of his cousin's life and death. The two were named after an uncle; each had received the baptismal sign ere it was known that the other received the name; in after-time the Herbert was added to one.

"We sat in the window of the tower all through the short November afternoon. We saw Chloe come into the church-yard; she came to take up some roses that had blossomed in summer beside Mary's grave. We heard her knife moving about in the pebbly soil,



and watched her going home. She was the only comer. In November, people never visit such places, save from necessity.

“Mr. McKey and I had discovered the passage leading from church to tower. Mary was with us then. There was a romance in keeping the secret, poetry in the knowledge that we three were sole proprietors; one was gone,—now it became only ours.



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“How came *you* to know of it?” she suddenly asked.

Questioned thus, I twined my story in with hers, she listening in a rapt way, peculiarly her own. I told her of my prisonment on the day of her visit. I confessed entirely, up to the point she had narrated. When I ended, she said,—

“You have kept this secret twenty-five days; mine has been mine eighteen years. Mr. McKey has wandered in the time over the world of civilization, coming here at every return, making only day-visits, wandering up and down familiar places, meeting people whom he knew, but who never saw him through his disguises. He met my mother twice; even her quick eyes had no ray of suspicion in them.

“Four years ago we went to Europe: father’s health demanded it. There, by accident, I met Mr. McKey. Fourteen years had so changed him from the medical student in Doctor Percival’s office, that, although without disguise, neither mother nor Abraham recognized him. It was in England that father died,—there that we met Mr. McKey. It was he who, coming as a stranger, proved our best friend, whom mother and Abraham called Mr. Herbert. It was his hand lifted up for the last time my father’s head just before he died. It was he who went to and fro making all needful arrangements for father’s burial. At last we prepared to leave. He came to the steamer to say parting words. Mother and Abraham, with tearful eyes, thanking him for his past kindness, begged, should he ever come to America, a visit from him. When their farewells were ended, he looked around for me. I was standing apart from them; the place where my feet then were is to-day fathoms deep under iceberg-soil: it was upon the Pacific’s deck. I wonder if just there where I then stood it is as cold as elsewhere,—if Ocean’s self hath power to congeal the vitality of spirit.”

Miss Axtell paused one moment, as if answering the question to herself. In that interval I remembered the face that only three weeks ago I had looked upon, over which Dead-Sea waves had beat in vain. After the pause, she went on:—

“I gave Mr. McKey the farewell, silent of all words. A few moments later, and we were on our homeward way, leaving a friend and a grave in England.

“After our coming home, an intense longing came to speak of Herbert,—to tell my proud mother to whom she was indebted for so many acts of kindly friendship; but often as I said, ‘I will,’ I yet did not. To-day I would wait for the morrow; on the morrow indecision came; and at last, when the intent was stronger than ever, when I had laid me down to sleep after an interview with Mr. McKey, solemnly promising Heaven that with the morning light I would confess all and leave the consequences with my God, in that night-time He sent forth His angel to gather in her spirit.”

Miss Axtell covered her face with the hands so long rigidly clasped about her precious package, and the very air that was in the room caught the thrill and quiver of her heart, strong to suffer, strong to love. When she again spoke, it was in low, murmurous tones.



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"I wanted my mother to know what God had permitted me to be to this man, his great anchor of clinging in all storms,—how, in loving him, I had been permitted to save him. Do you think it is good," she asked,—“my story? It isn't a story of what the world calls 'happy love'; I don't think I should find it happy even now. I have come to a solemn bridge in the journey of Time. I know it must be crossed,—only how? It is high; my head is dizzied by the very thought. It has none of the ordinary protective railings; I must walk out alone, and—I cannot see the other end; it is too far, too misty. My mother's face fills up all the way; it comes out to meet me, and I do not rightly hear what she says, for my ears are filled with the roar of the life-current that frets over rocks below. I try to stay it while I listen; it only floods the way. There is time given me; there is no immediate cause for action: for this I am thankful. Mr. McKey left me at the tower on the day you heard us there. He is a surgeon in the naval service. His ship sailed last week on a three years' voyage. I shall have time to think, to decide what I ought to do; perhaps the roar will cease, and I shall hear what my mother tries to say.

"I have one great thought of torment. Abraham, what if he should die, too,—die without knowing? that I could not bear"; and the face, still looking toward Zoar, lifted up itself from the little City of Refuge, and looked into the face of Anna Percival. "Poor Abraham!" she said, "he has suffered, perhaps even more than I. He will hear *you*. Will you tell him this for me? Tell him all; and when you tell how Mary came to die, give him this,"—and she handed to me the very package I had twice journeyed with,—“it will prove to him the truth of what I say.”

I hesitated to take that which she proffered.

"You must not disappoint me," she said. "I have spent happy hours since you went away, in the belief that Providence sent you here to me in the greatness of my need. I cannot tell Abraham; I could not bear the joy that will, that must come, when he lays down the burden of his crime,—for, oh! it will be at the feet of Bernard McKey. You will not refuse me this?" she pleaded.

Anna Percival, in the silence of that upper room where so much of life had come to her, sat at Miss Axtell's side, and thought of the dream that came one Sunday morning to her, sleeping, and out of the memory of it came tolling down to her heart the words then spoken, and, taught by them, she answered Miss Axtell's pleading by an "I will."

"Good little comfort-giver!" Miss Lettie said; and she left the package, containing the precious jewel, in my hands.



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Bewildered by the story, filled with sorrow for sufferers passed away from the great, suffering earth, aching for those that still were in the void of misery, I arose to go. "It was near to mid-day; Aaron and Sophie would wait dinner for me," I said to Miss Lottie's pleading for another hour. Ere I went, the conventionalities that signalled our meeting were repeated, and, wrapped in the web and woof Miss Axtell had woven, I went down the staircase and through the wide hall and out of the solemn old house, wondering if ever again Anna Percival would cross its entrance-porch. Kino heard the noise of the closing of the door, and came around the corner to see who it might be. I stayed a moment to say a few comforting words to the dog. Kino saw me safely outside of the gate by way of gratitude. I walked on toward the parsonage.

Redleaf seemed very silent, almost deserted. I met none of the villagers in my homeward walk. "It will be ten minutes yet ere Sophie and Aaron will, waiting, say, 'I wonder why Anna does not come,'" I thought, as I drew near, and my fingers held the tower-key. I had not been there since the Sunday morning memorable to me through all coming time. I lifted the fastening to the church-yard, and went in. My sister Mary lay in this church-yard now. I had until this day known only sister Sophie, and in my heart I thanked Miss Axtell for her story. I went in to look at Mary's grave. A sweet perfume filled the inclosure; it came to me through the branching evergreens; it was from Mary's grave, covered with the pale pink flowers of the trailing-arbutus. I knew that Abraham Axtell had brought them hither. I gathered one, the least of the precious fragments. I knew that Mary, out of heaven seeing me, would call it no sacrilege, and with it went to my tower.

Spring fingers had gathered up the leaves of snow, winter's growth, from in among the crevices of stone. I noticed this as I went in. The great stone was over the passage-opening, just where Mr. Axtell had dropped it, lest Aaron should see. Something said to me that my love for the tower was gone, that never more would I care to come to it; and I think the voice was speaking truly, everything did seem so changed. The time moss was only common moss to me, the old rocks might be a part of *any* mountain now. I had caught up all the romance, all the poetry, which is mystery, of the tower, and henceforth I might leave it to stand guard over the shore of the Sea of Death, white with marble foam. I went up to the very window whence I had taken the brown plaid bit of woman's wear. I looked out from where I had seen the dying day go down. I heard the sound, from the open door of the parsonage, of Sophie's voice, humming of contentment; I saw the little lady come and look down the village—street for me; I saw her part those bands of softly purplish hair, with fingers idly waiting the while she stood looking for me. I looked up at the window, down at the floor, down through the winding way of stair, where once I had trembling gone, and, with a farewell softly spoken, I left my churchyard tower with open door and key in the lock. Henceforth it was not mine. I left it with the hope that some other loving soul would take up my devotion, and wait and watch as I had done.



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Aaron chanced at dinner-time to let fall his eyes on the door, swinging in the wind. Turning, he looked at me. I, divining the questioning intent of his eyes, answered,—

“It is I, Aaron. I’ve left the key in the door. I resign ownership of the tower.”

The grave minister looked pleased. Sophie said,—

“Oh, I am so glad, you *are* growing rational, Anna!”—and Anna Percival did not tell these two that she had emptied the tower of all its mystery, and thrown the cup afloat on the future.

Aaron and Sophie were doomed to wonder why I came to Redleaf. Sophie begged my longer stay; Aaron thought, with his direct, practical way of looking at all things, save Sophie, that I “had better not have come at all, if only to stay during the day-journey of the sun.”

The stars were there to see, when I bade good—bye to Chloe at the parsonage, and went forth burdened with many messages for Jeffy. Aaron and Sophie went with me to the place of landing. It was past Miss Axtell’s house. Only one light was visible; that shone from Miss Lettie’s room. Aaron said,—

“I saw Mr. Axtell this morning. He was going across the country, he said.”

No one asked him “Where?” and he said no more.

We were late at the steamboat. I had just time to bid a hasty farewell, and hear a plankman say, “Better hurry, Miss, if you’re going on,” and in another minute I was at sea.

I had so much to think of, I knew it would be impossible for sleep to come to me; and so I went on deck to watch the twinkling lights of Redleaf and the stars up above, whilst my busy brain should plan a way to keep my promise to Miss Axtell. I could not break up her fancied security; I could not deprive her of the “time to think” before crossing the great bridge, by telling her of the stranger sick in Doctor Percival’s house, and so I let her dream on. It might be many weeks, nay, months, ere Mr. McKey would recover, hence there was no need that she should know; by that time she would be quite strong again.

Once on deck, and well wrapped from the March sea-breeze, blowing its latest breath over the sea, I took a seat near a large party who seemed lovers of the ocean, they sat so quietly and so long.

My face was turned away from all on deck. I heard footsteps going, coming, to and fro, until these steps came into my reverie. I wished to turn and see the owner, but, fearing that the charm would vanish, I kept my eyes steadily seaward. I scarcely know the time, it may have been an hour, that thus I had sat, when once again the footsteps drew



near. The owner paused an instant in passing me. I fancied some zephyr of emotion made his footsteps falter a little. Nothing more came. He walked, as before, and once, when I was certain that all the deck lay between my eyes and him who so often had drawn near, I turned to look. I saw only a gentleman far down the boat, wrapped in an ordinary travelling-shawl. Neither form nor walk was, I thought, familiar, and I lost my interest.



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I began to dream of other things,—of the going home, and should I find Mr. McKey improved during my absence? The party near me began to talk; it was pleasant to hear soft home words spoken by them,—it gave me, alone as I was, a sense of protection.

When the owner of the footsteps again came near, I scarcely noticed it. I had reason to do so a moment later. Instead of going straight on, as before, the gentleman stopped an instant,—then, with a strong gesture of excitement, stepped quite near to me, and saying hurriedly, as one does in sudden emergencies, “I beg your pardon, Madam,” he bent to look at the railing of the guard, just beside me. It so happened that a boat-light illumined a little space just there, and that within it lay a hand whose glove I had a few moments before removed, to put back some stray hairs the sea-breeze had brought from their proper place. No sooner did I divine his intent than I took my hand from off the railing. The gentleman looked up suddenly; he was quite near then, and no more light than that the stars gave was needful for me. I saw Mr. Axtell, and Mr. Axtell must have seen Miss Percival, for he said,—

“This is a great surprise. I did not hear of your being in Redleaf, Miss Anna.”

“Why should you, when I have only been there one day?”

“Did you see my sister?” he asked.

“I was with her during the morning,” I said.

“And she was as usual?”

“Better, I thought.”

“I trust so, for I have not been home since morning. I received a letter, as I came through the village, from your father, desiring to see me, and I had time only to send a message to Lettie. I hope Doctor Percival is well?”

“Oh, yes,—else I should not be here.”

I had gloved my hand again during these words of recognition. Mr. Axtell noticed it, and asked to see a ring that had attracted his attention.

“Excuse me,” I said,—“it is one of my father’s gifts to me,—I cannot take it off,—it is a simple ring, Mr. Axtell”; and I held it out for him to see.

“I knew it!” he exclaimed; “there could not be two alike; years have not changed its lustre. Mary wore it first on the day we were engaged.”

“Was it your gift to her, Mr. Axtell?”



He answered, "Yes"; and I, drawing it off, handed it to him, saying, "It should have been returned to you long ago."

"No, no," he said, quite solemnly, "it is in better keeping"; and he took the tiny circlet of gold, and looked a moment at it, with its shining cluster of brilliants, then gave it back to me.

"Have you no claim upon this?" I asked.

"On the ring? Oh, no,—none."

I put back with gladness the gift my father gave.



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My time had come. The opportunity was most mysteriously given me to redeem the promise made in the morning to Miss Lettie. I began, quite timidly at first, to say that I had a message for Mr. Axtell, one from his sister,—that I was to tell him of events whose occurrence he never knew. He listened quietly, and I went on, commencing at the afternoon of my imprisonment in the tower. I told every word that I had heard from Miss Axtell,—no more. I trembled, it is true, when I came to the death of Alice, and the new life that came to his elder sister. I came at last to Mary. I told it all, the night when he came home, the very words he had spoken to his sister I repeated in his ears, and he was quiet, with a quietness Axtells know, I took out the package and opened it, saying,

—
“Your sister bade me give this to you.”

The careful folds were unwrapped, and within a box lay only a silver cup. Mr. Axtell took it into his hands, turned it to the light, and read on it the name of my sister. I said to him,

—
“Look on the inside.”

He did. It was the fatal cup from which Mary Percival drank the death-drops. Poisonous crystals lay in its depth. I told him so. I told him how Bernard McKey, driven to despair, had made the fatal mistake.

I thought to have seen the sunlight of joy go up his face. I looked for the glance whose coming his sister so dreaded; but it came not. My story gave no joy to this strange man. He asked a few questions only, tending to illumine points that my statement had left in uncertainty, and then, when my last words were said, he rose up, and, standing before me, very lowly pronounced these words:—

“Until to-night, Abraham Axtell never knew the weight of his guilt. He must work out his punishment.”

“How can you, Mr. Axtell? Heaven hath appointed forgiveness for the repentant.”

“And freedom from punishment, Miss Percival, is that, too, promised?”

“Strength to bear is freely offered in forgiveness.”

“May it come to me! In all God’s earth to-night there dwells not one more needy of Heaven’s mercy.”

“Mary forgives you,” I said.

“Bernard McKey, whom I have made most miserable, Lettie’s life-long suffering, is there any atonement that I can offer to them?”



“Yes, Mr. Axtell”; and I, too, arose, for the party had gone whilst I was telling my story.

“Will you name it?”

“Give unto the two a brother’s love. Good night, Mr. Axtell.”

“I will,” said a deep, solemn voice close beside me. I turned, and Mr. Axtell was gone. I heard footsteps all that night upon deck. They sounded like those that came and stood beside me hours before.

Day was scarcely breaking when we came to land in New York. I waited for the carriage to come from home. Mr. Axtell, was it he who came, with whitened hair, to ask for Miss Percival, to know if he could offer her any service? What a night of agony he must have lived through! He saw my look of astonishment, and said,—



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“It is but the beginning of my punishment.”

Ere I had answered Mr. Axtell’s question, my father appeared. He had come for me so early on this March morning,—or was it to meet Mr. Axtell? He said more, in words, to him than to his child. It was several years since my father had met Mr. Axtell, therefore he did not note the change last night had wrought. As I looked at him, during our homeward drive, I repented not having said words of comfort, not telling him that I believed Bernard McKey was at that hour in my father’s house; but I had not exceeded my instructions, by one word I had not gone beyond Miss Lettie’s story. Until Mr. McKey chose to reveal himself, he must exist as a stranger.

Jeffy reported the “hospital man” as “behaving just like other people.” Jeffy evidently regretted, with all the intensity of his Ethiopian nature, the subsiding of the delirium.

Not long after our arrival home, father went, with Mr. Axtell, into his own room, where, with closed doors, the two remained through half the morning. What could my father have to say to the “incomprehensible man,” his daughter Anna asked herself; but no answer breathed through mahogany, as several times she passed near. All was silent in there to other ears than those inside.

At last I heard the door open, and footsteps along the hall. “Surely,” I thought, “they are going the way to Mr. McKey’s room.” I was right. They went in. What transpired in there I may never know, but this much was revealed to me: there came thence two faces whereon was written the loveliness of the mercy extended to erring man. My father looked, like all who feel intensely, older than he did in the morning, and yet withal happier. Mr. Axtell went away without seeing me. Father made apology for him by saying that it was important that he should return home immediately, and asked “could I make ready to receive some visitors the following day?”

“Who, papa?” I asked.

“Mr. Axtell and his sister.”

Mr. McKey was able that evening to cross the room, and sit beside the fire. I went in to inquire concerning his comfort. Papa was away. Mr. Axtell must have told him something of me, for I had not been long there, when he, turning his large, luminous eyes from the coals, into which he had been peering, said,—

“Do you know the sweetness of reconciliation, young lady? If not, get angry with some one immediately.”

“I never had an enemy in my life, Mr. McKey,” I replied.

He started a little at the name, and only a little, and he questioned,—



“Where did you learn the name you give to me?”

“From Miss Axtell, yesterday.”

Question and answer succeeded, until I had told him half the story that I knew. I might have said more, but father’s coming in interrupted me.

“I expect our visitors by the day-boat,” papa said to me the day following. The carriage went for them. I watched its coming from afar down the street. I knew the expression of honest Yest’s hat out of all the street-throng. The carriage came laden. I saw faces other than the Axtells’, even Aaron’s and Sophie’s.



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What glad visitors they were, Aaron and Sophie! and what a surprise to them to see Miss Axtell there! I took off her wrappings, drew an easy-chair, made her sit in it, and she actually looked quite comfortable, outside of the solemn old house. "She had endured the journey well," she said. Abraham was so anxious that she should come that she would not refuse his request. "Abraham has forgiven me," she whispered, as I bent over her to adjust some stray folds,—“forgiven me for all my years of silent deceit.”

I shook my head a little at the word; speak I could not, for the minister's wife was not deaf.

Aaron called her away a moment later.

"It was deceit, Miss Percival," Miss Axtell said, so soon as she found our two selves alone. "I could not well avoid it; if I were tried again, I might repeat the sin; but, thank Heaven, two such trials never come into a single life. I sometimes wish Bernard were not at sea, that he were here to know my release and his forgiveness; it will be so sweet to feel that no longer I have the sin to bear of concealing his wrong."

I knew from this that Miss Axtell did not know of Mr. McKey's presence in the house; but she ought to know. What if a sound from his voice should chance to come down the passage-way, as I often had heard it? I watched the doors painfully, to see that not one was left open a hair's-breadth, until the time Miss Axtell went up to her own room. Talking rapidly, giving her no time to speak, I went on with her. Safely ignorant, I had her at last where ears of mortals could not intrude. Then I said,—

"We all of us are become wonderful story-tellers. Now it comes to pass that I have a little story to tell; my time is come at last"; and, watching every muscle of her face, and all the little veins of feeling that I had learned so well, I began.

Carefully I let in the light, until, without a shock, Miss Axtell learned that the room below contained Bernard McKey.

"They did not understand me," she said, "or they would not have brought me here thus."

After a long, long lull, Miss Axtell thanked me for telling her alone, where no one else could see how the knowledge played around her heart. Dear Miss Axtell, sitting there, in my father's house, only last March, with a holy joy stealing up, in spite of her endeavor to hide it from my eyes even, and suffusing her white face with warm, rosy tints, dear Miss Axtell, I hoped your day-dawn drawing near.

Miss Axtell said "she hated to have other people see her feel"; she asked "would I manage it for her, that no one should be nigh when she met Mr. McKey?"

It was that very evening that papa, calling Sophie and me into his room, told us a little of the former history of the people in his house.



“I want you to help me, children,” he said; “ladies manage such things better than we men know how to.”

I said, close to papa’s astonished hearing, “I know all about it; just let me take care of this mission”; and he appointed me diplomate on the occasion.



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Sophie was strangely disconcerted; she had such fearsome awe of the Axtells, “she couldn’t think of interfering,” she said, “unless to make gruel or some condiment.”

I coaxed Miss Lettie to have her tea in her own room: she certainly did not look like going down. Under pretext of having the care of her, I seated sister Sophie at my station, and thus I had the house, outside of the tea-room, under my control.

“Come down now; don’t lose time,” I said to Miss Axtell, running up to her, half breathless from my haste.

“What for? What is it?” she said.

“Papa is anticipating some grand effort in the managerial line from me, regarding two people in his house, and I don’t choose to manage at all. Mr. McKey is waiting to see you. I knocked to see, as I came up, and all the family are at tea.”

I went down with her. There was no trembling, only a stately calm in her manner, as she drew near.

I knocked. Mr. McKey answered, “Come in,” in his low, musical, variant tones. I turned the knob; the door opened. A moment later, I stood alone within the hall. I walked up and down, a true sentinel on true duty, that no enemy might draw near to hear the treaty of true peace which I knew was being written out by the Recording Angel for these two souls. They must have had a pleasant family-talk in the tea-room, they stayed so long.

At last I heard footsteps coming. I told Miss Lettie, thinking that she would leave; but no, she said “she would stay awhile”; and so, later on, the two were sitting there in quietness of joy, when my father came up to see his patient. Mr. Axtell was with him. They went in; indifferent words were spoken,—until, was it Abraham Axtell that I saw as I kept up my walking in the hall? What mysterious change had come to transfigure his face so that I scarcely believed the evidence of my own eyes? He came to the door and said, “Will you come in, Miss Percival?” I obeyed his request. He closed the door, and turned the key.

“In the presence of those against whom he had sinned he would confess his fault,” were his first words; and he went on, he of whom *they* had asked a pardon, and drew a fiery picture of all that he had done, of the murder that he had doubly committed, for he had made another soul to bear his sin.

It was terrible to hear him accuse himself. It was touching to see this proud Axtell begging forgiveness. He offered the fatal cup to my father,—

“Therein lies the evidence of my murder. It was I who killed your daughter, Doctor Percival. Although no court on earth condemns me, the Judge of all the Earth holds me responsible for her death.”



Doctor Percival tried to reason with him, said words of comfort, but he heeded them not: they might as well have fallen on the vacant air.

“Blessings be upon you two! if, out of suffering, God will send joy, it will be yours,” Mr. Axtell said; and he offered his hand to Mr. McKey and his sister, as one does when taking farewell.



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He went from them to my father, and offered his hand doubtingly, as if afraid it might be refused.

Papa took it in both his own. An instant later Mr. Axtell came to me. Surely he had no forgiveness to ask of Anna Percival. No; he only said, and I am certain that no one heard, save me, "I thank God that He has not let me shadow *your* life. Farewell!"

He left the room. We all looked, one at another, in that dim astonishment which is never expressed in words. Papa broke the spell by putting on fresh coals.

Miss Lettie said, "Poor Abraham!" and yet she looked so happy, so as I had never seen her yet!

A few moments later Jeffy came rushing in, his eyes dilate with amazement.

"The gentleman is gone," he said, "gone entirely."

It was even so. Mr. Axtell had gone, no one knew whither. It was late at night, when a letter came for Doctor Percival by a special messenger.

I never saw it. I only know that in it Mr. Axtell explained his intention of absence, and wrote, for his sister's sake, to make arrangements for her future. She was to return to Redleaf, at such time as she chose to go hence, with Mr. McKey; and to Aaron's and Sophie's care Mr. Axtell committed her.

Papa gave the letter to Miss Lettie. She read it in silence, and her face was immovable. I could divine nothing from it.

Last March! how long the time seems! Scarce six months have gone since I gave the record, and now the summer is dying.

I thought Miss Axtell would have ventured out on the bridge, far and high, ere now; but no, she says "the time is not yet,—that she will wait until Abraham comes home"; and Bernard McKey is content.

The solemn old house is closed. No longer Katie opens the door and Kino looks around the corner. Kino died, perhaps of grief: such deaths have been.

Miss Axtell has put off the old Dead-Sea-wave face. She has just put a calm, beautiful, happy one in at my door, to ask Anna Percival "why she sits and writes, when the last days of summer are drawing nigh?" Miss Axtell stays with me, and a great contentment sings to those who have ears to hear through all her life. If only Mr. Axtell would come home! Why does he stay away so long, and take such a dreary line of travel, where old earth is seamed *in memoriam* of man's rebellion? I'll send to him the althea-bud, when next his sister writes.



The leaves are fallen now. Winter is almost come. There is no need that I should send out the althea-fragment. Mr. Axtell wrote to me. Last night I received these words only,—and yet what need I more?

“God hath given me peace. I am coming home.”

THE LEGEND OF RABBI BEN LEVI.

Rabbi Ben Levi, on the Sabbath, read
A volume of the Law, in which it said,
“No man shall look upon my face and live.”
And as he read, he prayed that God would give
His faithful servant grace with mortal eye
To look upon His face and yet not die.



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Then fell a sudden shadow on the page,
And lifting up his eyes, grown dim with age,
He saw the Angel of Death before him stand,
Holding a naked sword in his right hand.
Rabbi Ben Levi was a righteous man,
Yet through his veins a chill of terror ran,
With trembling voice he said, "What wilt thou here?"
The Angel answered, "Lo! the time draws near
When thou must die; yet first, by God's decree,
Whate'er thou askest shall be granted thee."
Replied the Rabbi, "Let these living eyes
First look upon my place in Paradise."

Then said the Angel, "Come with me and look."
Rabbi Ben Levi closed the sacred book,
And rising, and uplifting his gray head,
"Give me thy sword," he to the Angel said,
"Lest thou shouldst fall upon me by the way."
The Angel smiled and hastened to obey,
Then led him forth to the Celestial Town,
And set him on the wall, whence gazing down,
Rabbi Ben Levi, with his living eyes,
Might look upon his place in Paradise.

Then straight into the city of the Lord
The Rabbi leaped with the Death Angel's sword,
And through the streets there swept a sudden breath
Of something there unknown, which men call death.
Meanwhile the Angel stayed without, and cried,
"Come back!" To which the Rabbi's voice replied,
"No! in the name of God, whom I adore,
I swear that hence I will depart no more!"

Then all the Angels cried, "O Holy One,
See what the son of Levi here has done!
The kingdom of Heaven he takes by violence,
And in Thy name refuses to go hence!"
The Lord replied, "My Angels, be not wroth;
Did e'er the son of Levi break his oath?
Let him remain; for he with mortal eye
Shall look upon my face and yet not die."

Beyond the outer wall the Angel of Death
Heard the great voice, and said, with panting breath,



“Give back the sword, and let me go my way.”
Whereat the Rabbi paused and answered, “Nay!
Anguish enough already has it caused
Among the sons of men!” And while he paused,
He heard the awful mandate of the Lord
Resounding through the air, “Give back the sword!”

The Rabbi bowed his head in silent prayer;
Then said he to the dreadful Angel, “Swear,
No human eye shall look on it again;
But when thou takest away the souls of men,
Thyself unseen and with an unseen sword
Thou wilt perform the bidding of the Lord.”

The Angel took the sword again, and swore,
And walks on earth unseen forevermore.

* * * * *

MY FRIEND THE WATCH.



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For two years I have had a most faithful, intimate, and useful friend, whom I have constantly worn next my heart. I do not know him for a Spiritualist, but by some mysterious sympathy he hears the incessant, ghostly foot-falls of Time, and repeats them accurately to my ear. While I wake he tells me how Time is passing. While I sleep he is still marking his steps, so that sometimes I have a feeling of awe, as if my mysterious friend were counting my own life away. Then again I am sure that in the faint, persistent monotone of his voice I hear the singing of the old mower's inevitable scythe. The Imagination contemplates this friend of mine with wonder. But Science sees him holding the hand of a captain in his ship at sea, or of a conductor in a train on shore, and honors in him the friend of civilization.

His native place is Waltham, in Massachusetts, and he invited me but a few days since to accompany him in a little visit thither. I cheerfully assented, and we took the cars in Boston, at the Worcester Depot, and after passing a range of unsavory back-yards and ill-favored houses, and winding beneath streets and by the side of kennels, we emerged upon the broad meadows and marshes from which rise in the distance the Roxbury and Brookline hills. The whole region is covered with bright, wooden houses. The villages have a pert, thrifty, contented air, which no suburbs in the world surpass. If the houses are very white and a village looks like a camp, it is because the instinct of the inhabitants assures them that they may strike their tents to-morrow and move Westward or elsewhere to a greater prosperity. In older countries the stained and ancient stone houses are symbols of the inflexible state of society to which they belong. The dwellers are anchored to that condition. There is no "Westward ho" for them. Like father, like son. The hod-carrier's son carries hods. Even the headsman's office is hereditary.

"Yes, yes," hummed my friend, in his patient, persistent monotone, "the American citizen is an aerial plant. He has no roots. There is no wrenching, when he changes place. If there were, how could he overrun the continent in time? He must carry lighter weight than Caesar's soldiers. What has he to do with old houses? His very inventions would make his house intolerable to him in twenty or thirty years."

"But we are going at this very moment to see your ancestral halls, are we not?" I modestly inquired.

"Yes," he replied; "but they are not ten years old, and every year changes them."

By this time we were gliding through the gardens of Brookline and Brighton, which have been afflicted of late years with the Mansard epidemic. It has swept the whole region. Scarcely a house has escaped. Even the newest are touched,—sometimes only upon the extremities or outbuildings, but more frequently they are covered all over with the Mansard.

"That affection of the house-top," whispered I to my friend, "was originally derived from the dome of the Invalides, and has raged now for a century and a half."



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“Yes,” replied my companion, gravely, “we are not very fastidious in our importations.”

He went on murmuring to himself as usual. Then he resumed more audibly,—

“I suppose that most people, upon looking at me, would take me for a foreigner. But you know how peculiarly native American I am. I am indeed only a watch, and,” added my modest friend, glancing at the gold chain which hung from my waistcoat button-hole to the pocket, “if you will pardon my melancholy joke, I am for putting Americans only upon guard.”

This military expression suddenly sent my thoughts elsewhere; and for some time the rattling of the cars sounded in my ears like another rattling, and the gentle Charles River was to my eyes the historic Rapidan or Rappahannock.

“Don’t you think,” unobtrusively ticked my watch, “that the exhortation to encourage home-industry has a peculiar force just now? I mean nothing personal; and I hope you will not think me too forward or fast.”

“I have never had reason to think so,” I answered; “and I am so used to look upon your candid face to know exactly what the hour is, that I shall be very much obliged, if you will tell me the time of day in this matter also; unless, indeed, you should find the jar of the cars too much for you, and prefer to stop before you talk.”

“If I stopped, I certainly could not talk,” my watch answered; “and did you ever know me to stop on account of any jar?”

I hastened to exculpate myself from any intention of unkind insinuation, and my watch ticked steadily on.

“If your mill turns only by a stream that flows to you through your neighbor’s grounds, your neighbor has your flour at his mercy. You can grind your grist when he chooses, not when you will.”

I nodded. My watch ticked on,—

“When you live on a marsh where the tide may suddenly rise house-high without warning, if you are a wise man, you will keep a boat always moored at the door.”

“I certainly will,” responded I, with energy.

“Very well. Every nation lives on that marsh which is called War. While war is possible,—that is to say, in any year this side of the Millennium,—there is but one sure means of safety, and that is actual independence. At this moment England is the most striking illustration of this truth. She is the most instructive warning to us, because she is the least independent and the most hated nation in the world. England and France and the



United States are the three great maritime powers. We all know how much love is lost just now between England and ourselves. How is it with her ancient enemy across the Channel? The answer is contained in the reported remark of Louis Napoleon: 'Why do the English try to provoke a war with me? They know, if I should declare war against England, that there is not an old woman in France who would not sell her last shift to furnish me with means to carry it on.' Great Britain is at this moment under the most enormous bonds to keep the peace. They are the bonds of vital dependence upon the rest of the world.—Shall I stop?" asked my watch.

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“No, no; lose no time; go regularly on,” answered I.

“Very well; while England sneers and rages at us, let us be warned by her. She lives by her looms; but her looms and her laborers are fed from abroad. Therefore she lies at the mercy of her enemies, and she takes care never to make friends. She snarls and shows her teeth at us. She sees us desperately fighting, and yet she can neither spring nor bite. It is the moment most favorable for her to strike, but she cannot improve it. She hopes and prays for the ruin of our government, seeing, that, if it falls from internal disease, and not from a foreign blow, her most threatening political and commercial rival is overthrown. And she does not shrink from those hopes and prayers, although she knows that the result she so ardently desires will be the establishment by military power of a huge slave-empire, a counter-civilization to that of Christianity. Fear of her life makes England false and timid. Her dependence upon other nations has compelled her to abdicate her position as the head of Saxon civilization, which is the gradual enlarging of liberty as the only permanent security of universal international prosperity and peace. Indeed, it is not denied that the tone of British opinion in regard to human slavery is radically changed. That change is the measure of the timidity and sophistication, the moral deterioration inevitably produced in any people by the consciousness of its dependence for the means of labor and life upon other nations. The crack of the plantation-whip scares Washington no longer, but it pierces the heart of Westminster with terror.

“See how utterly mean and mortifying is her attitude toward us. John Bull looks across the highway of the world into his neighbor’s house. ‘D’ ye see,’ he mutters, ‘that man chastising his son in his house yonder? Let’s play that they are not related, and ask him what he means by assaulting an innocent passenger.’ Then he turns to the rest of the people in the street, who know exactly how virtuous and mild John Bull is in his own family-relations, who have watched his tender forbearance with his eldest son Erin, and his long-suffering suavity with his youngest son India, and says to them,—‘To a moral citizen of the world it is very shocking to see such an insolent attack upon a peaceable person. That man is an intolerable bully. If he were smaller, I’d step over and kick him.’—Do you feel drowsy?” asked my watch.

“I was never more awake,” I answered; “but you seem to me,—although, when I look at you and think of Waltham, it is the most natural thing in the world,—yet you do seem hard upon Old England, Mother England, spite of all.”



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“Ah!” ticked my American watch, “not even I would for a moment seem to be unjust to all that is manly and noble and friendly in England and among Englishmen. There are two nations there, as Disraeli had already said in one sense, when Gasparin said it in another. There is the sound old stock from which flowers the finest modern civilization. From that come the sweetness, the candor, the perception and sympathy of men like Mill and Cairnes and Bright. From that springs all the nobler thought of England. It is to that thought, to that spirit of lofty humanity and pure justice, that Garibaldi appeals in his address to the English people from his prison,—an appeal which seems utterly ludicrous, if you think of it as addressed to the historic John Bull, but which is perfectly intelligible and appropriate, if you remember that Sir Philip Sidney was an Englishman as well as George IV., and that John Stuart Mill is no less English than Lord Palmerston or Russell. It is with that spirit that American civilization is truly harmonious. But there is the other, merely trading, short-sighted, selfish spirit, which is typified by the coarse John Bull of the pictures, and which has touched almost to a frenzy of despair Carlyle in the “Latter-Day Pamphlets” and Tennyson in “Maud.” That is the dominant England of the hour. That is the England which lives at the mercy of rivals. And that is the England which, consequently, with feverish haste, proclaims equal belligerence between the leaders of an insurrection for the extension and fortification of slavery and the nation which defends its existence against them. That is the England whose prime-minister alleges that a friendly power has authorized an insult, while at the very moment in which he speaks he carries in his pocket the express disclaimer of that power. That is the England which incessantly taunts and reviles and belies a kindred people, whose sole fault is that they were too slow to believe their brothers parricides, and who were credulous enough to suppose that England loved not only the profit, but the principle, of Liberty under Law.”

“It is very sad; but it certainly seems so,” said I.

“Seems, my dear friend? nay, it is,” ticked my watch, persistently. “It is the inevitable penalty of national deterioration which any people must pay that in its haste to be rich forgets to secure its actual independence. Thus Richard Cobden, the most sagacious of English statesmen, is the most unflinching apostle of peace, because he knows that England has put it out of her power to go to war. I saw you reading his late argument against a blockade. Did you reflect that it was really an argument against war? ‘How absurd,’ he cries, ‘that a commercial nation, which lives by imports and exports, paying for the one by the other, should, by shutting up ports in which it wishes to buy and sell, cut its own hands and feet off, and so bleed to death!’ ‘In a commercial nation,’ says the orator, ‘the system of blockade is mere suicide.’”



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“But a blockade may be clearly as effective a means of warfare as a cannonade. If you can cut off your enemy from all that he gives and all that he gets from without, you have taken the first great step in war. Unless he can supply himself, he must presently surrender or perish. For war is brute force. It is a process of terrible compulsion. ‘Do this,’ says War, ‘or you shall burn, and starve, and hunger, and be shot, and die.’

“The point to be settled between the two combatants is, which can stand starving and shooting longest. If one of them depends for his food upon the sale to others of what he makes, and depends for what he makes upon what he can get from others, it is easy enough to see, that, if the other is self-supporting, his victory is sure, if he have only the means to cut off supplies. England is at the mercy of a skilful and effective blockade. No wonder her shrewdest statesman implores her to see it.

“‘My dear John Bull,’ says Cobden, ‘an honorable member of your Parliament, a miller and grain-merchant, estimates that the food imported into England between September of last year and June of this year was equal to the sustenance of between three and four millions of people for a twelve-month; and his remark to me was, that, if that food had not been brought from America, all the money in Lombard Street could not have purchased it elsewhere, because elsewhere it did not exist.’

“That is the position of a nation with the hand of another upon its throat.—Do I tire you?” I ticked my watch.

“Not at all. I am listening intently, and trying to see what you are coming to,” I answered.

“We are coming, and very rapidly, to West Newton and the Waltham Watch-Factory,” ticked my companion.

“I hope so. It was where I understood you to invite me to go,” said I.

“Courage, my friend! Before we get to the factory, let us understand the reason of it. Let me finish showing you why I have a national pride in my ancestral halls, and why I think that the American flag floats over that building as appropriately as over Fort Adams or Monroe.”

“I have always trusted you implicitly,” I answered.

“Well, then, England is a nation whose mill grinds at the will of a neighbor. Is it wonderful that so sagacious a statesman as Cobden says that the blockade is a terrible thing for a commercial people? Take the estimate of his authority, and imagine the supply of food from this country into England stopped, and the bumptious little island necklaced with Monitors to cut off the Continental supply. Do we not hold one of her hands with our grain, and the other with our cotton? The grain she gets, but the cotton



is substantially stopped; what is the consequence? Listen to Mr. Cobden. The case, he says, 'is so grave, so alarming, and presents itself to those who reflect upon what may be the state of things six months hence in such a hideous aspect, that it is apt to beget thoughts of some violent remedy.' He computes that by Christmas the Government must come to the aid of the pauper operatives, of whom there are now seven hundred and fifty thousand, a number which will then have increased to nearly a million.



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“Of all nations, then, the industrial example of England is to be avoided by every sensible people. She has been willing to wear chains, because they were gold. But the pre-Millennial nations must be able to stand alone; and we at this moment know more than ever that we must work out our own national salvation, not only without aid, which we had no reason to ask, but without sympathy, which we had every honorable right to expect. But, to be a truly independent people, we must practically prove our self-sufficiency; and at this moment patriotism shows itself not only in defending the nation against the Rebellion, but in the heartiest encouragement of every art and manufacture for which our opportunities and capacities fit us.”

My watch here ticked so loudly and defiantly that I feared some neighboring passenger might have a Frodsham or Jurgensen in his pocket and feel insulted.

“A nation like ours,” steadily ticked my watch, “seated upon a continent from sea to sea, with so propitious a variety of climate and with such imperial resources of every kind, if it brought all its powers to bear upon its productions and opportunities, would be absolutely invincible, because entirely independent. It need not, therefore, sit a cynic recluse on the Western sea. It need not, therefore, deny nor delay the dawn of the Millennial day, which the poet beheld, when

‘The war-drum throbbed no longer, and the
battle-flags were furled,
In the Parliament of man, the Federation
of the world.’

“Tick, tick, tick,” urged my watch. But I made no reply.

“Why, then,” it continued, “do we consent to look longer to Europe for any of the essential conveniences of life? Why are our clothes not made of American cloth or of American silk? Why are our railroads not laid with American iron? Yes, and why,—pardon me, but we are very near Waltham,—why is our time not told by American watches? Tea and coffee, doubtless, we cannot grow, nor do lemons and bananas ripen in our sun. But has not the time come when every hearty American will say, ‘All that I can get here which is good enough and cheap enough for the purpose, I will not look for elsewhere; and all that I can do to develop every resource and possibility, I will do with all my heart?’”

“I do not wish to dampen your enthusiasm,” answered I, “but I remember a story of that friend of Southern liberty and author of the Fugitive-Slave Bill, Mason of Virginia. He appeared in the Senate during the Secession winter, in a suit of Southern-made clothes. The wool was grown and spun and woven in Virginia, and Mason wore it to show that Virginia unassisted could clothe her children. But a shrewder man than Mason quietly turned up the buttons on the Secession coat and showed upon them the stamp of a Connecticut factory.”



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“Have you ever found me unreasonable?” ticked my friend. “Have you ever seen even my hand tremble, as it pointed out to you so many hours in which you have been earnestly interested? I am not excited even by my own existence, and I claim nothing extravagant. There will always be some things that we may not be able to make advantageously. Absolute independence of the rest of the world is no more possible than desirable. But everything which tends to increase instead of diminishing a vital dependence is nationally dangerous. I think, if you will consider me attentively, you will agree that I ought to know that trade is everywhere controlled by positive laws; nor will any wise watch expect them to be long or willingly disregarded by the most enthusiastic patriotism. Knowing that, we do not need to go far to discover why so many important conveniences are still made for us by foreign hands. The immense and compact population of Europe compels a marvellous division of labor, whereby the detail of work is more perfected, and it also forces a low rate of wages, with which in a new country sparsely peopled like ours the manufacture of the same wares can scarcely compete. This is the great practical difficulty; but it can be obviated in two ways. If a people assume that the fostering of its own manufactures is a cardinal necessity, it can secure that result either by the coarse process of compulsory duties upon all foreign importations, or by developing the ingenuity and skill which will so cheapen the manufacture itself as to make up the difference of outlay in wages.

“Then, if the work is as well done and as cheaply furnished”——ticked my watch, a little proudly and triumphantly.

“Then it needs only to be known, to be universally and heartily welcomed,” said I. “Patriotism and the laws of trade will coincide, and there will be no excuse for depending longer upon the foreign supply.”

“But the fact must be made known,” ticked my watch, thoughtfully.

“It certainly must,” I answered.

“Well, it *is* a fact that a man can get a better watch more cheaply, if he buys an American instead of a foreign one.”

Friendship and gratitude inspired my reply.

“I will put my mouth to the ‘Atlantic Trumpet,’—I mean ‘Monthly,’—and blow a blast.”

“That is not necessary; but as we are very near the station at West Newton where we leave the railroad, and as I have endeavored to show you the national importance of doing everything for ourselves that we reasonably can, you will probably interest your hearers more, if you give them a little description of your visit to my birthplace. Excuse me, but I have watched you pretty constantly for two years, and, if you will be governed by me, as you have generally been during that time, you will not undertake any very

elaborate mechanical description, but say a few words merely of what you are going to see.”

This sensible advice was but another proof of the accuracy of my watch.



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While it was yet ticking, the train stopped at West Newton, and we stepped out upon the platform. The station nearest to the Watch-Factory is that at Waltham upon the Fitchburg Railroad; but by taking the Worcester cars to West Newton, you secure a pleasant drive of a mile or two across the country. If you can also secure, as my watch took care to do for me, the company of the resident manager of the factory, the drive is entirely pleasant and the talk full of value.

We import about five millions of dollars' worth of watches every year, mainly from England and Switzerland through France, and then pay about as much more to get them to go. Of course inquisitive Yankee ingenuity long ago asked the question, Why should we do it? If anything is to be made, why should not we make it better than anybody in the world? The answer was very evident,—because we could not compete with the skilled and poorly paid labor of Europe. But during the last war with England the question became as emphatic as it is now, and a practical answer was given in the excellent watches made at Worcester in Massachusetts, and at Hartford in Connecticut.

But these were merely prophetic protests. The best watches in use were Swiss. Four-fifths of the work in making them was done by hand in separate workshops, subject of course to the skill, temper, and conscience of the workmen. The various parts of each were then sent in to the finisher. Every watch was thus a separate and individual work. There could be no absolute precision in the parts of different watches even of the same general model; and only the best works of the best finishers were the best watches. The purchase of a watch became almost as uncertain as that of a horse, and many of the dealers might be called watch-jockeys as justly as horse-dealers horse-jockeys.

A.L. Dennison, of Maine, seems to have been the first who conceived American watch-making as a manufacture that could hold its own against European competition. It was clear enough that to put raw and well-paid American labor into the field against European skill and low wages, with no other protection than four per cent., which was then the tariff, was folly. But why not apply the same principle to making watches that Eli Whitney applied to making fire-arms, and put machinery to do the work of men, thereby saving wages and securing uniform excellence of work? There was no reason whatever, provided you could make the machinery. Mr. Dennison supplied the idea; who would supply the means of working it out? He was an enthusiast, of course,—visionary, probably; for in all inventors the imagination must be so powerful that it will sometimes disturb the conditions essential to the practical experiment; but he interested others until the necessary tools began to appear, and enough capital being willing to try the chances, the experiment of making American watches by machinery began in Roxbury in the year 1850. After various fortunes, the manufacture passed from the original hands into those of the present company, which is incorporated by the State of Massachusetts.



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“Do you think,” whispered I to my watch, as I listened to these facts, “that the experiment is still doubtful?”

My companion ticked so indignantly that my friend the manager evidently suspected what question I had asked, and he answered at once,—

“The experiment is already perfectly successful. We have had our critical moments, but”——

“But now,” proudly ticked my watch, “now we have weathered the Cape Horn of adversity and doubt, and ride secure upon the deep Pacific sea of prosperity and certainty. You had better blow a note like that through your Atlantic Bugle. Set your tune high, and play it up loud and lively.”

“It seems to me,” answered I, “that the tune plays itself. There is no need of puffing at the instrument.”

While my watch was thus pleasantly jesting, we had passed through a low pine wood and come out upon the banks of the Charles River. Just before us, upon the very edge of a river-basin, was a low two-story building full of windows, and beyond, over the trees, were spires. They were the steeples of Waltham, and the many-windowed building was the factory of the American Watch Company. It stands upon a private road opened by the Company in a domain of about seventy acres belonging to them. The building thus secures quiet and freedom from dust, which are essential conditions of so delicate and exquisite a manufacture.

The counting-room, which you enter first, is cheerful and elegant. A new building, which the Company is adding to the factory, will give them part of the ampler room the manufacture now demands; and within the last few months the Company has absorbed the machinery and labor of a rival company at Nashua, which was formed of some of the graduate workmen of Waltham, but which was not successful. Every room in the factory is full of light. The benches of polished cherry, the length of all of them together being about three-quarters of a mile, are ranged along the sides of the rooms, from the windows in which the prospect is rural and peaceful. There is a low hum, but no loud roar or jar in the building. There is no unpleasant smell, and all the processes are so neat and exquisite that an air of elegance pervades the whole.

The first impression, upon hearing that a watch is made by machinery, is, that it must be rather coarse and clumsy. No machine so cunning as the human hand, we are fond of saying. But, if you will look at this gauge, for instance, and then at any of these dainty and delicate machines upon the benches, miniature lathes of steel, and contrivances which combine the skill of innumerable exquisite fingers upon single points, you will feel at once, that, when the machinery itself is so almost poetic and sensitive, the result of its work must be correspondingly perfect.



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My friend—not the watch, but the watchmaker—said quietly, “By your leave,” and, pulling a single hair from my head, touched it to a fine gauge, which indicated exactly the thickness of the hair. It was a test of the twenty-five hundredth part of an inch. But there are also gauges graduated to the ten-thousandth part of an inch. Here is a workman making screws. Can you just see them? That hardly visible point exuding from the almost imperceptible hole is one of them. A hundred and fifty thousand of them make a pound. The wire costs a dollar; the screws are worth nine hundred and fifty dollars. The magic touch of the machine makes that wire nine hundred and fifty times more valuable. The operator sets them in regular rows upon a thin plate. When the plate is full, it is passed to another machine, which cuts the little groove upon the top of each,—and of course exactly in the same spot. Every one of those hundred and fifty thousand screws in every pound is accurately the same as every other, and any and all of them, in this pound or any pound, any one of the millions or ten millions of this size, will fit precisely every hole made for this sized screw in every plate of every watch made in the factory. They are kept in little glass phials, like those in which the homoeopathic doctors keep their pellets.

The fineness and variety of the machinery are so amazing, so beautiful,—there is such an exquisite combination of form and movement,—such sensitive teeth and fingers and wheels and points of steel,—such fairy knives of sapphire, with which King Oberon the first might have been beheaded, had he insisted upon levying dew-taxes upon primroses without the authority of his elves,—such smooth cylinders, and flying points so rapidly revolving that they seem perfectly still.—such dainty oscillations of parts with the air of intelligent consciousness of movement,—that a machinery so extensive in details, so complex, so harmonious, at length entirely magnetizes you with wonder and delight, and you are firmly persuaded that you behold the magnified parts of a huge brain in the very act of thinking out watches.

In various rooms, by various machines, the work of perfecting the parts from the first blank form cut out of Connecticut brass goes on. Shades of size are adjusted by the friction of whirring cylinders coated with diamond dust. A flying steel point touched with diamond paste pierces the heart of the “jewels.” Wheels rimmed with brass wisps hum steadily, as they frost the plates with sparkling gold. Shaving of metal peel off, as other edges turn, so impalpably fine that five thousand must be laid side by side to make an inch. But there is no dust, no unseemly noise. All is cheerful and airy, the faces of the workers most of all. You pass on from point to point, from room to room. Every machine is a day’s study and a life’s admiration, if you could only tarry. No wonder the director says to me, as we move on, that his whole consciousness is possessed by the elaborate works he superintends.



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He opens a door, while we speak, and you would not be in the least surprised, in the exalted condition to which the wonderful spectacle has brought you, to hear him say, "In this room we keep the Equator." In fact, as the door opens, and the gush of hot air breathes out upon your excited brain, it seems to you as if it undoubtedly were the back-door to—the Tropics. It is the dial-room, in which the enamel is set. The porcelain is made in London. It is reduced to a paste in this room, and fused upon thin copperplates at white heat. When cooled, it is ground off smoothly, then baked to acquire a smooth glaze. It is then ready for painting with the figures.

When all the pieces of the watch-movement are thus prepared, they are gathered in sets, and carried to the putting-up room, where each part is thoroughly tested and regulated. The pieces move in processions of boxes, each part by itself; and each watch, when put together, is as good as every other. In an old English lever-watch there are between eight and nine hundred pieces. In the American there are but about a hundred and twenty parts. My friend the director says, that, if you put a single American against a single European watch, the foreign may vary a second less in a certain time; but if you will put fifty or a hundred native against the same number of foreign watches, the native group will be uniformly more accurate. In the case of two watches of exactly the same excellence, the regulator of one may be adjusted to the precise point, while that of the other may imperceptibly vary from that point. But that is a chance. The true test is in a number.

"If now we add," ticked the faithful friend in my pocket, "that watch-movements of a similar grade without the cases are produced here at half the cost of the foreign, doesn't it seem to you that we have Lancashire and Warwickshire in England and Locle and La Chaux de Fond in Switzerland upon the hip?"

"It certainly does," I answered,—for what else could I say?

Five different sizes of watches are made at Waltham. The latest is the Lady's Watch, for which no parent or lover need longer go to Geneva. And the affectionate pride with which the manager took up one of the finest specimens of the work and turned it round for me to see was that of a parent showing a precious child.

While we strolled through every room, the workers were not less interesting to see than the work. There are now about three hundred and fifty of them, of whom nearly a third are women. Scarcely twenty are foreigners, and they are not employed upon the finest work. Of course, as the machinery is peculiar to this factory, the workers must be specially instructed. The foremen are not only overseers, but teachers; and I do not often feel myself to be in a more intelligent and valuable society than that which surrounded me, a wondering, staring, smiling, inquiring, utterly unskilful body in the ancestral halls of my tried friend and trusty counsellor, The American Watch.



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BENJAMIN BANNEKER, THE NEGRO ASTRONOMER.

In these days, when strong interests, embodied in fierce parties, are clashing, one recalls the French proverb of those who make so much noise that you cannot hear God thunder. It does not take much noise to drown the notes of a violin; but go to the hill a fourth of a mile off, and the noises shall die away at its base, whilst the music shall be heard. Those who can remove themselves away from and above the plane of party-din can hear God's modulated thunder in the midst of it, uttering ever a "certain tune and measured music." And such can hear now the great voice at the sepulchre's door of a race, saying, Come forth! This war is utterly inexplicable except as the historic method of delivering the African race in America from slavery, and this nation from the crime and curse inevitably linked therewith in the counsels of God, which are the laws of Nature. If the friends of freedom in the Government do not understand this, it is plain enough that the myrmidons of slavery throughout the land understand it. And hence it is that we are witnessing their unremitting efforts to exasperate the prejudices of the vulgar against the negro, and to prove degradation, and slavery to be his normal condition. They point to his figure as sculptured on ancient monuments, bearing chains, and claim that his enslavement is lawful as immemorial custom; but as well point to the brass collars on our Saxon forefathers' necks to prove *their* enslavement lawful. The fact that slavery belonged to a patriarchal age is the very reason why it is impracticable in a republican age,—as its special guardians in this country seem to have discovered. But this question is now scarcely actual. The South, by its first blow against the Union and the Constitution, whose neutrality toward it was its last and only protection from the spirit of the age, did, like the simple fisherman, unseal the casket in which the Afreet had been so long dwarfed. He is now escaping. Thus far, indeed, he is so much escaped force; for he might be bearing our burdens for us, if we only rubbed up the lamp which the genie obeys. But whether we shall do this or not, it is very certain that he is now emerging from the sea and the casket, and into it will descend no more. Henceforth the negro is to take his place in the family of races; and no studies can be more suitable to our times than those which recognize his special capacity.

The questions raised by military exigencies have brought before the public the many interesting facts drawn from the history of Hayti and from our own Revolution, showing the heroism of the negro, though we doubt whether they can surpass the stories of Tatnall, Small, and others, which have led a high European authority to observe that in this war no individual heroism among the whites has equalled that of the blacks.



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But the forthcoming social questions concerning the negro will be even more exciting than the military. What are we to expect from the unsealed Afreet,—good or evil? It was whilst studying in this direction that I came upon the few facts which relate to Benjamin Banneker,—facts which, though not difficult of access, are scarcely known beyond the district in Maryland where, on the spot where he was born, his unadorned grave receives now and then a visit from some pilgrim of his own race who has found out the nobleness which Jefferson recognized and Condorcet admired.

Benjamin Banneker was born in Baltimore County, near the village of Ellicott's Mills, in the year 1732. There was not a drop of the white man's blood in his veins. His father was born in Africa, and his mother's parents were both natives of Africa. What genius he had, then, must be credited to that race. Benjamin's mother was a remarkable woman, and of a remarkable family. Her name was Morton, before marriage, and a nephew of hers, Greenbury Morton, was gifted with a lively and impetuous eloquence which made its mark in his neighborhood. Of him it is related that he once came to a certain election-precinct in Baltimore County to deposit his vote; for, prior to the year 1809, negroes with certain property-qualifications voted in Maryland. It was in this year, in which the law restricting the right of voting to free whites was passed, that Morton, who had not heard of its passage, came to the polls. When his vote was refused, Morton in a state of excitement took his stand on a door-step, and was immediately surrounded by the crowd, whom he addressed in a strain of passionate and prophetic eloquence which bore all hearts and minds with him. He warned them that the new law was a step backward from the standard which their fathers had raised in the Declaration, and which they had hoped would soon be realized in universal freedom; that that step, unless retraced, would end in bitter and remorseless revolutions. The crowd was held in breathless attention, and none were found to favor the new law.

This man, we have said, was the nephew of Benjamin's mother. She was a woman of remarkable energy, and after she was seventy years of age was accustomed to run down the chickens she wished to catch. Her husband was a slave when she married him, but it was a very small part of her life's task to purchase his freedom. Together they soon bought a farm of one hundred acres, which we find conveyed by Richard Gist to Robert Bannaky, (as the name was then spelt,) and Benjamin Bannaky, his son, (then five years old,) on the tenth of March, 1737, for the consideration of seven thousand pounds of tobacco. The region in which Benjamin was born was almost a wilderness; for in 1732 Elkrige Landing was of more importance than Baltimore; and even in 1754 this city consisted only of some twenty poor houses straggling on the hills to the right of Jones's Falls. The residence of the Bannekers was ten miles into the wilderness from these.



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It was under these unpromising circumstances that little Benjamin grew up, his destiny being apparently nothing more than to work on the little farm beside his poor and ignorant parents. When he was approaching manhood, he went, in the intervals of toil, to an obscure and remote country-school; for, until the cotton-gin made negroes too valuable on the animal side for the human side to be allowed anything so perilous as education, there were to be found here and there in the South fountains whereat even negroes might slake their thirst for learning. At this school Benjamin acquired a knowledge of reading and writing, and advanced in arithmetic as far as "Double Position." Beyond these rudiments he was entirely his own teacher. After leaving school he had to labor constantly for his own support; but he lost nothing of what he had acquired. It is a frequent remark that up to a certain point the negroes learn even more rapidly than white children under the same teaching, but that afterward, in the higher branches, they are slow, and, some maintain, incapable. Young Banneker had no books at all, but in the midst of his labor he so improved upon and evolved what he had gained in arithmetic that his intelligence became a matter of general observation. He was such an acute observer of the natural world, and had so diligently observed the signs of the times in society, that it is very doubtful whether at forty years of age this African had his superior in Maryland.

Perhaps the first wonder amongst his comparatively illiterate neighbors was excited, when, about the thirtieth year of his age, Benjamin made a clock. It is probable that this was the first clock of which every portion was made in America; it is certain that it was as purely his own invention as if none had ever been made before. He had seen a watch, but never a clock, such an article not being within fifty miles of him. The watch was his model. He was a long time at work on the clock,—his chief difficulty, as he used often to relate, being to make the hour, minute, and second hands correspond in their motion. But at last the work was completed, and raised the admiration for Banneker to quite a high pitch among his few neighbors.

The making of the clock proved to be of great importance in assisting the young man to fulfil his destiny. It attracted the attention of the Ellicott family, who had just begun a settlement at Ellicott's Mills. They were well-educated men, with much mechanical knowledge, and some of them Quakers. They sought out the ingenious negro, and he could not have fallen into better hands. It was in 1787 that Benjamin received from Mr. George Ellicott Mayer's "Tables," Ferguson's "Astronomy," and Leadbetter's "Lunar Tables." Along with these, some astronomical instruments, also, were given him. Mr. Ellicott, prevented from telling Benjamin anything concerning the use of the instruments for some time after they were given, went over to



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repair this omission one day, but found that the negro had discovered all about them and was already quite independent of instruction. From this time astronomy became the great object of Banneker's life, and in its study he almost disappeared from the sight of his neighbors. He was unmarried, and lived alone in the cabin and on the farm which he had inherited from his parents. He had still to labor for his living; but he so simplified his wants as to be enabled to devote the greater portion of his time to astronomical studies. He slept much during the day, that he might the more devotedly observe at night the heavenly bodies whose laws he was slowly, but surely, mastering.

And now he began to have a taste of that persecution to which every genius under similar circumstances is subject. He was no longer seen in the field, where formerly his constancy had gained him a reputation for industry, and some who called at his cabin during the day-time found him asleep; so he began to be spoken of as a lazy fellow, who would come to no good, and whose age would disappoint the promise of his youth. There was a time when this so excited his neighbors against him that he had serious fears of disturbance. A memorandum in his hand-writing, dated December 18, 1790, states:—

“----- -----informed me that ----- stole my horse and great-coat, and that the said ----- intended to murder me when opportunity presented. ----- ----- gave me a caution to let no one come into my house after dark.”

The names were originally written in full; but they were afterward carefully cancelled, as though Banneker had reflected that it was wrong to leave on record an unauthenticated assertion against an individual, which, if untrue, might prejudice him by the mere fact that it had been made.

Very soon after the possession of the books already mentioned, Banneker determined to compile an almanac, that being the most familiar use that occurred to him of the information he had acquired. To make an almanac was a very different thing then from what it would be now, when there is an abundance of accurate tables and rules. Banneker had no aid whatever from men or tables; and Mr. George Ellicott, who procured some tables and took them to him, states that he had advanced far in the preparation of the logarithms necessary for his purpose. A memorandum in his calculations at this time thus corrects an error in Ferguson's Astronomy:—

“It appears to me that the wisest men may at times be in error: for instance, Dr. Ferguson informs us, that, when the sun is within 12 deg. of either node at the time of full, the moon will be eclipsed; but I find, that, according to his method of projecting a



lunar eclipse, there will be none by the above elements, and yet the sun is within 11 deg. 46' 11" of the moon's ascending node. But the moon being in her apogee prevents the appearance of this eclipse."

Another memorandum makes the following corrections:—



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“Errors that ought to be corrected in my Astronomical Tables are these:—2d vol. Leadbetter, p. 201, when [symbol] anomaly is $4^{\circ} 30'$ deg., the equation $3^{\circ} 30' 41''$ ought to have been $3^{\circ} 28' 41''$. In [symbol] equation, p. 155, the logarithm of his distance from [symbol] ought to have been 6 in the second place from the index, instead of 7, that is, from the time that his anomaly is $3^{\circ} 24'$ deg. until it is $4^{\circ} 0'$ deg..”

Both Ferguson and Leadbetter would have been amazed, had they been informed that their elaborate works had been reviewed and corrected by a negro in the then unheard-of valley of the Patapsco.

The first almanac prepared by Banneker for publication was for the year 1792. By this time his acquirements had become generally known, and amongst those who were attracted by them was James McHenry, Esq. Mr. McHenry wrote to Goddard and Angell, then the almanac-publishers of Baltimore, and procured the publication of this work, which contained, from the pen of Mr. McHenry, a brief notice of Banneker. In their editorial notice Goddard and Angell say, “They feel gratified in the opportunity of presenting to the public through their press what must be considered as an extraordinary effort of genius,—a complete and accurate Ephemeris for the year 1792, calculated by a sable son of Africa,” etc. And they further say that “they flatter themselves that a philanthropic public, in this enlightened era, will be induced to give their patronage and support to this work, not only on account of its intrinsic merits, (it having met the approbation of several of the most distinguished astronomers of America, particularly the celebrated Mr. Rittenhouse,) but from similar motives to those which induced the editors to give this calculation the preference, the ardent desire of drawing modest merit from obscurity, and controverting the long-established illiberal prejudice against the blacks.”

Banneker was himself entirely conscious of the bearings of his case upon the position of his people; and though remarkable for an habitual modesty, he solemnly claimed that his works had earned respect for the African race. In this spirit he wrote to Thomas Jefferson, then Secretary of State under Washington, transmitting a manuscript copy of his almanac. The letter is a fervent appeal for the down-trodden negro, and a protest against the injustice and inconsistency of the United States toward that color. Mr. Jefferson’s reply is as follows:—

“Philadelphia, Pa., August 30, 1791.

“Sir,—I thank you sincerely for your letter of the 19th instant, and for the almanac it contained. Nobody wishes more than I do to see such proofs as you exhibit, that Nature has given to our black brethren talents equal to those of the other colors of men, and that the appearance of a want of them is owing only to the degraded condition of their existence both in Africa and America. I can add with truth that no one wishes more ardently



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to see a good system commenced for raising the condition both of their body and mind to what it ought to be, as fast as the imbecility of their present existence, and other circumstances which cannot be neglected, will admit. I have taken the liberty of sending your almanac to Monsieur de Condorcet, Secretary of the Academy of Sciences at Paris, and Member of the Philanthropic Society, because I considered it a document to which your whole color had a right for their justification against the doubts which have been entertained of them.

"I am, with great esteem, Sir,

"Your most obedient serv't,

"THO. JEFFERSON."

When his first almanac was published, Banneker was fifty-nine years of age, and had received tokens of respect from all the scientific men of the country. The commissioners appointed after the adoption of the Constitution in 1789 to run the lines of the District of Columbia invited the presence and assistance of Banneker, and treated him as an equal. They invited him to take a seat at their table; but he declined, and requested a separate table.

Banneker continued to calculate and publish almanacs until the year 1802. Besides numerous valuable astronomical and mathematical notes found amongst his papers are observations of passing events, showing that he had the mind of a philosopher. For instance:—

"*27th Aug. 1797.* Standing at my door, I heard the discharge of a gun, and in four or five seconds of time the small shot came rattling about me, one or two of which struck the house; which plainly demonstrates that the velocity of sound is greater than that of a cannon-bullet."

"*23d Dec. 1790.* About 3 o'clock A.M., I heard a sound and felt a shock like unto heavy thunder. I went out, but could not observe any cloud. I therefore conclude it must be a great earthquake in some part of the globe."

In April, 1800, he writes:—

"The first great locust year that I can remember was 1749. I was then about seventeen years of age, when thousands of them came creeping up the trees. I imagined they came to destroy the fruit of the earth, and would occasion a famine in the land. I therefore began to destroy them, but soon saw that my labor was in vain. Again, in the year 1766, seventeen years after their first appearance, they made a second. I then, being about thirty-four years of age, had more sense than to endeavor to destroy them,



knowing they were not so pernicious to the fruit as I had imagined. Again, in the year 1783, which was seventeen years later, they made their third appearance to me; and they may be expected again in 1800. The female has a sting in her tail as sharp and hard as a thorn, with which she perforates the branches of trees, and in the holes lays eggs. The branch soon dies and falls. Then the egg, by some occult cause, immerges a great depth into the earth, and there continues for the space of seventeen years, as aforesaid.”



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The following is worthy of Pliny:—

“In the month of January, 1797, on a pleasant day for the season, I observed my honey-bees to be out of their hives, and they seemed to be very busy, excepting one hive. Upon examination, I found all the bees had evacuated this hive, and left not a drop behind them. On the 9th of February ensuing, I killed the neighboring hives of bees, and found a great quantity of honey, considering the season,—which I imagine the stronger had taken from the weaker, and the weaker had pursued them to their home, resolved to be benefited by their labor, or die in the contest.”

Mr. Benjamin H. Ellicott, who was a true friend of Banneker, and collected from various sources all the facts concerning him, wrote in a letter as follows:—

“During the whole of his long life he lived respectably and much esteemed by all who became acquainted with him, but more especially by those who could fully appreciate his genius and the extent of his acquirements. Although his mode of life was regular and extremely retired,—living alone, having never married, cooking his own victuals and washing his own clothes, and scarcely ever being absent from home,—yet there was nothing misanthropic in his character; for a gentleman who knew him thus speaks of him: ‘I recollect him well. He was a brave-looking, pleasant man, with something very noble in his appearance. His mind was evidently much engrossed in his calculations; but he was glad to receive the visits which we often paid him.’ Another writes: ‘When I was a boy I became very much interested in him, as his manners were those of a perfect gentleman: kind, generous, hospitable, humane, dignified, and pleasing, abounding in information on all the various subjects and incidents of the day, very modest and unassuming, and delighting in society at his own house. I have seen him frequently. His head was covered with a thick suit of white hair, which gave him a very dignified and venerable appearance. His dress was uniformly of superfine drab broadcloth, made in the old style of a plain coat, with straight collar and long waistcoat, and a broad-brimmed hat. His color was not jet-black, but decidedly negro. In size and personal appearance, the statue of Franklin at the library in Philadelphia, as seen from the street, is a perfect likeness of him. Go to his house when you would, either by day or night, there was constantly standing in the middle of the floor a large table covered with books and papers. As he was an eminent mathematician, he was constantly in correspondence with other mathematicians in this country, with whom there was an interchange of questions of difficult solution.’”

Banneker died in the year 1804, beloved and respected by all who knew him. Though no monument marks the spot where he was born and lived a true and high life and was buried, yet history must record that the most original scientific intellect which the South has yet produced was that of the pure African, Benjamin Banneker.



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THE SLEEPING SENTINEL.

When the great Theban, in his midnight tramp,
A sleeping guard beside the postern saw,
He slew him on the instant, that the camp
Might read in blood a soldier's swerveless law.

"Blame not your General!"—pointing to the slain,—
The wise, severe Epaminondas said,—
"I was not cruel, comrades, for 't is plain
I only left him, as I found him, dead!"

IRON-CLAD SHIPS AND HEAVY ORDNANCE.

The new system of naval warfare which characterizes the age was proposed by John Stevens of Hoboken during the War of 1812, recommended by Paixhans in 1821, made the subject of official and private experiment here and in Europe during the last ten years especially, subjected to practical test at Kinburn in 1855, recognized then by France and England in the commencement of iron-clad fleets, first practised by the United States Government in the capture of Fort Henry, and at last established and inaugurated not only in fact, but in the principle and direction of progress, by the memorable action of the ninth of March, 1862, in the destruction of the wooden sailing-frigates Cumberland and Congress by the steam-ram Merrimack, and the final discomfiture of that powerful and heavily armed victor by the turreted, iron, two-gun Monitor.

The consideration of iron-clad vessels involves that of armor, ordnance, projectiles, and naval architecture.

ARMOR.

Material. In 1861, the British iron-plate committee fired with 68-pounders at many varieties of iron, cast-steel and puddled-steel plates, and combinations of hard and soft metals. The steel was too brittle, and crumbled, and the targets were injured in proportion to their hardness. An obvious conclusion from all subsequent firing at thick iron plates was, that, to avoid cracking on the one hand, and punching on the other, wrought-iron armor should resemble copper more than steel, except that it should be elastic, although not necessarily of the highest tensile strength. Copper, however, proved much too soft. The experiments of Mr. E.A. Stevens of Hoboken, with thick plates, confirm this conclusion. But for laminated armor, (several thicknesses of thin



plates,) harder and stronger iron offers greater resistance to shot, and steel crumbles less than when it is thicker. The value of hard surfaces on inclined armor will be alluded to.

Solid and Laminated Armor compared. Backing. European experimenters set out upon the principle that the resistance of plates is nearly as the square of their thickness,—for example, that two 2-inch plates are but half as strong as one 4-inch plate; and the English, at least, have never subjected it to more than one valuable test. During the last year, a 6-inch target, composed of 5/8-inch boiler-plates,



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with a 1-1/2-inch plate in front, and held together by alternate rivets and screws 8 inches apart, was completely punched; and a 10-inch target, similarly constructed, was greatly bulged and broken at the back by the 68-pounder (8 inch) smooth-bore especially, and the 100-pounder rifle at 200 yards,—guns that do not greatly injure the best solid 4-1/2-inch plates at the same range. On the contrary, a 124-pounder (10 inch) round-shot, having about the same penetrating power, as calculated by the ordinary rule, fired by Mr. Stevens in 1854, but slightly indented, and did not break at the back, a 6-5/8-inch target similarly composed. All the experiments of Mr. Stevens go to show the superiority of laminated armor. Within a few months, official American experiments have confirmed this theory, although the practice in the construction of ships is divided. The Roanoke's plates are solid; those of the Monitor class are laminated. Solid plates, generally 4-1/2 inches thick and backed by 18 inches of teak, are exclusively used in Europe. Now the resistance of plates to punching *in a machine* is directly as the sheared area, that is to say, as the depth and the diameter of the hole. But, the argument is, in this case, and in the case of laminated armor, the hole is cylindrical, while in the case of a thick armor-plate it is conical,—about the size of the shot, in front, and very much larger in the rear,—so that the sheared or fractured area is much greater. Again, forged plates, although made with innumerable welds from scrap which cannot be homogeneous, are, as compared with rolled plates made with few welds from equally good material, notoriously stronger, because the laminae composing the latter are not thoroughly welded to each other, and they are therefore a series of thin plates. On the whole, the facts are not complete enough to warrant a conclusion. It is probable that the heavy English machinery produces better-worked thick plates than have been tested in America, and that American iron, which is well worked in the *thin* plate used for laminated armor, is better than English iron; while the comparatively high velocities of shot used in England are more trying to thin plates, and the comparatively heavy shot in America prove most destructive to solid plates. So that there is as yet no common ground of comparison. The cost of laminated armor is less than half that of solid plates. Thin plates, breaking joints, and bolted to or through the backing, form a continuous girder and add vastly to the strength of a vessel, while solid blocks add no such strength, but are a source of strain and weakness. In the experiments mentioned, there was no wooden backing behind the armor. It is hardly possible,—in fact, it is nowhere urged,—that elastic wooden backing prevents injury to the *armor* in any considerable degree. Indeed, the English experiments of 1861 prove that a rigid backing of masonry—in other words, more armor—increases the endurance of the plates struck. Elastic backing, however, deadens the blow upon the structure behind it, and catches the iron splinters; it is, therefore, indispensable in ships.



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Vertical and Inclined Armor. In England, in 1860, a target composed of 4-1/2-inch plates backed with wood and set at 38 deg. from the horizon was injured about one-half as much by round 68-pounder shot as vertical plates of the same thickness would have been. In 1861, a 3-1/4 plate at 45 deg. was more injured by elongated 100-pounder shot than a 4-1/2 vertical plate, both plates having the same backing and the weights of iron being equal for the same vertical height. When set at practicable angles, inclined armor does not glance flat-fronted projectiles. Its greater cost, and especially the waste of room it occasions in a ship, are practically considered in England to be fatal objections. The result of Mr. Stevens's experiments is, substantially, that a given thickness of iron, measured on the line of fire, offers about equal resistance to shot, whether it is vertical or inclined. Flat-fronted or punch shot will be glanced by armor set at about 12 deg. from the horizon. A hard surface on the armor increases this effect; and to this end, experiments with Franklinite are in progress. The inconvenience of inclined armor, especially in sea-going vessels, although its weight is better situated than that of vertical armor, is likely to limit its use generally.

Fastening Armor. A series of thin plates not only strengthen the whole vessel, but fasten each other. All methods of giving continuity to thick plates, such as tonguing and grooving, besides being very costly, have proved too weak to stand shot, and are generally abandoned. The *fastenings* must therefore be stronger, as each plate depends solely on its own; and the resistance of plates must be decreased, either by more or larger bolt-holes. The working of the thick plates of the European vessels *Warrior* and *La Gloire*, in a sea-way, is an acknowledged defect. There are various practicable plans of fastening bolts to the backs of plates, and of holding plates between angle-irons, to avoid boring them through. It is believed that plates will ultimately be welded. Boiler-joints have been welded rapidly and uniformly by means of light furnaces moving along the joint, blowing a jet of flame upon it, and closely followed by hammers to close it up. The surfaces do not oxidize when enveloped in flame, and the weld is likely to be as strong as the solid plate. Large plates prove stronger than small plates of equally good material. English 4-1/2-inch armor-plates are generally 3-1/2 feet wide and to 24 feet long. American 4-1/2-inch plates are from 2 to 3 feet wide and rarely exceed 12 feet in length. Armor composed of light bars, like that of the *Galena*, is very defective, as each bar, deriving little strength from adjacent, offers only the resistance of its own small section. The cheapness of such armor, however, and the facility with which it can be attached, may compensate for the greater amount required, when weight is not objectionable. The 14-inch and 10-inch targets, constructed, without backing, on this principle, and tested in England in 1859 and 1860, were little damaged by 68-and 100-pounders.



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The necessary thickness of armor is simply a question of powder, and will be further referred to under the heads of Ordnance and Naval Architecture.

ORDNANCE AND PROJECTILES.

Condition of Greatest Effect. It is a well-settled rule, that the penetration projectiles is proportionate directly to their weight and diameter, and to the square of their velocity. For example, the 10-1/2-inch Armstrong 150-pound shot, thrown by 50 pounds of powder at 1,770 feet per second, has nearly twice the destructive effect upon striking, and four times as much upon passing its whole diameter through armor, as the 15-inch 425-pound shot driven by the same powder at 800 feet. The American theory is, that very heavy shot, at necessarily low velocities, with a given strain on the gun, will do more damage, by racking and straining the whole structure than lighter and faster shot which merely penetrate. This is not yet sufficiently tested. The late remarkable experiments in England—firing 130-and 150-pound Whitworth steel shells, holding 3 to 5 pounds of powder, from a 7-inch Armstrong gun, with 23 to 27 pounds of powder, through the Warrior target, and bursting them in and beyond the backing—certainly show that large calibres are not indispensable in fighting iron-clads. A destructive blow requires a *heavy charge of powder*; which brings us to

The Strain and Structure of Guns, and Cartridges. The problem is, 1st, to construct a gun which will stand the heaviest charge; 2d, to reduce the strain on the gun without reducing the velocity of the shot. It is probable that powder-gas, from the excessive suddenness of its generation, exerts a percussive as well as a statical pressure, thus requiring great elasticity and a certain degree of hardness in the gun-metal, as well as high tensile strength. Cast-iron and bronze are obviously inadequate. Solid wrought-iron forgings are not all that could be desired in respect of elasticity and hardness, but their chief defect is want of homogeneity, due to the crude process of puddling, and to their numerous and indispensable welds. Low cast-steel, besides being elastic, hard, tenacious, and homogeneous, has the crowning advantage of being produced in large masses without flaw or weld. Krupp, of Prussia, casts ingots of above 20 tons' weight, and has forged a cast-steel cannon of 9 inches bore. One of these ingots, in the Great Exhibition, measured 44 inches in diameter, and was uniform and fine-grained throughout. His great success is chiefly due to the use of manganesian iron, (which, however, is inferior to the Franklinite of New Jersey, because it contains no zinc,) and to skill in heating the metal, and to the use of heavy hammers. His heaviest hammer weighs 40 tons, falls 12 feet, and strikes a blow which does not draw the surface like a light hammer, but compresses the whole mass to the core. Krupp is now introducing the



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Bessemer process for producing ingots of any size at about the cost of wrought-iron. These and other makes of low-steel have endured extraordinary tests in the form of small guns and other structures subject to concussion and strain; and both the theory and all the evidence that we have promise its superiority for gun-metal. But another element of resistance is required in guns with thick walls. The explosion of the powder is so instantaneous that the exterior parts of the metal do not have time to act before the inner parts are strained beyond endurance. In order to bring all parts of a great mass of metal into simultaneous tension, Blakely and others have hooped an inner tube with rings having a successively higher initial tension. The inner tube is therefore under compression, and the outer ring under a considerable tension, when the gun is at rest, but all parts are strained simultaneously and alike when the gun is under pressure. The Parrott and Whitworth cannon are constructed on this principle, and there has been some practice in winding tubes with square steel wire to secure the most uniform gradation of tension at the least cost. There is some difficulty as yet in fastening the wire and giving the gun proper longitudinal strength. Mr. Wiard, of New York, makes an ingenious argument to show that large cannon burst from the expansion of the inner part of the gun by the heat of frequent successive explosions. In this he is sustained to some extent by Mr. Mallet, of Dublin. The greater the enlargement of the inner layer of metal, the less valuable is the above principle of initial tension. In fact, placing the inner part of the gun in initial tension and the outer part in compression would better resist the effect of internal heat. But Mr. Wiard believes that the *longitudinal* expansion of the inner stratum of the gun is the principal source of strain. A gun made of annular tubes meets this part of the difficulty; for, if the inner tube is excessively heated, it can elongate and slip a little within those surrounding it, without disturbing them. In fact, the inner tube of the Armstrong gun is sometimes turned within the others by the inertia of the rifled projectile. On the whole, then, hooping an inner steel tube with successively tighter steel rings, or, what is better, tubes, is the probable direction of improvement in heavy ordnance. An inner tube of iron, cast hollow on Rodman's plan, so as to avoid an inherent rupturing strain, and hooped with low-steel without welds, would be cheaper and very strong. An obvious conclusion is, that perfect elasticity in the metal would successfully meet all the foregoing causes of rupture.



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In America, where guns made entirely of cast-iron, and undoubtedly the best in the world for horizontal shell-firing, are persisted in, though hardly adequate to the heavy charges demanded by iron-clad warfare, the necessity of decreasing the strain on the gun without greatly reducing the velocity of the shot has become imperative. It would be impossible even to recapitulate the conflicting arguments of the experts on this subject, within the limits of this paper. It does appear from recent experiments, however, that this result can be accomplished by compressing the powder, so that, we will suppose, it burns slowly and overcomes the inertia of the shot before the whole mass is ignited; and also by leaving an airspace around the cartridge, into which the gases probably expand while the inertia of the shot is being overcome, thus avoiding the excessive blow upon the walls of the gun during the first instant of the explosion. Whatever the cause may be, the result is of the highest importance, not only as to cast-iron guns, but as to all ordnance, and warrants the most earnest and thorough investigation. The principles of the Armstrong gun differ in some degree from all those mentioned, and will be better referred to under the head of *Heavy Ordnance Described*. The Armstrong gun is thus fabricated. A long bar of iron, say 3 by 4 inches in section, is wound into a close coil about 2 feet long and of the required diameter,—say 18 inches. This is set upon end at a welding heat under a steam-hammer and “upset” into a tube which is then recessed in a lathe on the ends so as to fit into other tubes. Two tubes set end to end are heated to welding, squeezed together by a heavy screw passing through them, and then hammered lightly on the outside without a mandrel. Other short tubes are similarly added. Five tubes of different lengths and diameters are turned and bored and shrunk over one another, without successively increasing tension, however, to form a gun. The breech-end of the second tube from the bore is forged solid so that its grain will run parallel with the bore and give the gun longitudinal strength. Both the wedge and the screw breech-loading apparatus are employed on guns of 7 inches bore (110-pounders) and under. It will thus be seen that the defects of large solid forgings are avoided; that the iron may be well worked before it is formed into a gun; and that its greatest strength is in the direction of the greatest strain; and on the other hand, that the gun is weak longitudinally and excessively costly, (the 7-inch gun costs \$4,000, and tin 10-1/2-inch, \$9,000,) and that the material, although strong and pretty trustworthy in the shape of bars, has insufficient elasticity and hardness. Still, it is a formidable gun, especially when relieved of the weak and complex breech-loading apparatus, and used with a better system of rifling and projectiles than Armstrong’s. The 110-pounder Armstrong rifle has 99-1/2 inches length and 7 inches diameter of bore, 27 inches maximum



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diameter, and weighs 4-1/3 tons. The "300-pounder" smooth-bore has 11 feet length and 10-1/2 inches diameter of bore, 38 inches maximum diameter, and weighs 10-1/2 tons. The Mersey Iron-Works guns are of wrought-iron, and are forged solid like steamboat-shafts, or hollow by laying up staves into the form of a barrel and welding layers of curved plates upon them until the whole mass is united. But few of these guns have been fabricated. The most remarkable of them are, 1st, the Horsfall smooth-bore, of 13 inches bore, 44 inches maximum diameter, and 24 tons weight,—price, \$12,500; 2d, the "Alfred" rifle, in the recent Exhibition, of 10 inches bore,—price, \$5,000; 3d, the 12-inch smooth-bore in the Brooklyn Navy-Yard, which, though very light, has fired a double 224-pound shot with 45 pounds of powder: if properly hooped, it would make the most formidable gun in America. Blakely has constructed for Russia two 13-inch smooth-bore guns, 15 feet long and 47 inches maximum diameter, of cast-iron hooped with steel: price, \$10,000 each. He has also fabricated many others of large calibre, on the principles before mentioned. The 15-inch Rodman smooth-bore cast-iron gun is of 48 inches maximum diameter, 15 feet 10 inches long, and weighs 25 tons. The cost of such guns is about \$6,000. The Dahlgren 15-inch guns on the Monitors are about four feet shorter.

Results of Heavy Ordnance. The 10-1/2-inch Armstrong gun sent a round 150-pound shot, with 50 pounds of powder, through a 5-1/2-inch solid plate and its 9-inch teak backing and 5/8-inch iron lining, at 200 yards, and one out of four shots with the same charge through the Warrior target, namely, a 4-1/2-inch solid plate, 18-inch backing, and 5/8-inch lining. The Horsfall 13-inch gun sent a round 270-pound shot, with 74 pounds of powder, entirely through the Warrior target at 200 yards, making an irregular hole about 2 feet in diameter. The same charge at 800 yards did not make a clean breach. The Whitworth shell burst in the backing of the same target has been referred to. Experiments on the effect of the 15-inch gun are now in progress. Its hollow 375-pound shot (3-inch walls) was broken without doing serious damage to 10-1/2-inch laminated armor backed with 18 inches of oak. The comparative test of solid and laminated armor has already been mentioned. The best 4-1/2-inch solid plates, well backed, are practically proof against the guns of English iron-clads, namely, 68-pounder smooth-bores and Armstrong 110-pounder rifles, the service charge of each being 16 pounds.

Rifling and Projectiles. The spherical shot, presenting a larger area to the action of the powder, for a given weight, than the elongated rifle-shot, has a higher initial velocity with a given charge; and all the power applied to it is converted into velocity, while a part of the power applied to the rifle-shot is employed in spinning it on its axis. But, as compared with the rifle-shot, at long ranges,



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it quickly loses, 1st, velocity, because it presents a larger area to the resisting air; 2d, penetration, because it has to force a larger hole through the armor; and 3d, accuracy, because the spinning of the rifle-shot constantly shifts from side to side any inaccuracy of weight it may have on either side of its centre, so that it has no time to deviate in either direction. Practically, however, iron-clad warfare must be at close quarters, because it is almost impossible to *aim* any gun situated on a movable ship's deck so that it will hit a rapidly moving object at a distance. It is believed by some authorities that elongated shot can be sufficiently well balanced to be projected accurately from smooth-bores; still, it is stated by Whitworth and others that a spinning motion is necessary to keep an elongated shot on end while passing through armor. On the whole, so far as penetrating armor is concerned, the theory and practice favor the spherical shot. But a more destructive effect than mere penetration has been alluded to,—the bursting of a shell within the backing of an iron-clad vessel. This can be accomplished only by an elongated missile with a solid head for making the hole and a hollow rear for holding the bursting charge. The rifle-shot used in America, and the Armstrong and some other European shot, are covered with soft metal, which in muzzle-loaders is expanded by the explosion so as to fill the grooves of the gun, and in breech-loaders is planed by the lands of the gun to fit the rifling,—all of which is wasteful of power. Whitworth employs a solid iron or steel projectile dressed by machinery beforehand to fit the rifling. But as the bore of his gun is hexagonal, the greater part of the power employed to spin the shot tends directly to burst the gun. Captain Scott, R.N., employs a solid projectile dressed to fit by machinery; but the surfaces of the lands upon which the shot presses are radial to the bore, so that the rotation of the shot tends, not to split the gun, but simply to rotate it in the opposite direction.

Mounting Heavy Ordnance, so that it may be rapidly manoeuvred on shipboard and protected from the enemy's shot, has been the subject of so much ingenious experiment and invention, that in a brief paper it can only be alluded to in connection with the following subject:—

THE STRUCTURE OF WAR-VESSELS.

Size. To attain high speed and carry heavy armor and armament, war-vessels must be of large dimensions. By doubling all the lineal dimensions of a vessel of given form, her capacity is increased eight fold, that is to say, she can carry eight times as much weight of engines, boilers, armor, and guns. Meanwhile her resistance is only quadrupled; so that to propel each ton of her weight requires but half the power necessary to propel each ton of the weight of a vessel of half the dimensions. High speed is probably



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quite as important as invulnerability. Light armor is a complete protection against the most destructive shells, and the old wooden frigates could stand a long battle with solid shot. But without superior speed, the most invulnerable and heavily armed vessel could neither keep within effective range of her enemy, nor run her down as a ram, nor retreat when overpowered. And a very fast vessel can almost certainly run past forts, as they are ordinarily situated, at some distance from the channel, without being hit. Indeed, the difficulty of hitting a moving object with heavy cannon is so great that slow wooden ships do not hesitate to encounter forts and to reduce them, for a moving ship can be so manoeuvred as to hit a stationary fort.

The disadvantages of large ships are, first, great draught. Although draught need not be increased in the same degree as length, a stable and seaworthy model cannot be very shallow or flat-bottomed. Hence the harbors in which very large vessels can manoeuvre are few, and there must be a light-draught class of vessels to encounter enemies of light draught, although they cannot be expected to cope very successfully with fast and heavy vessels. Second, a given sum expended exclusively in large vessels concentrates coast-defences upon a few points, while, if it is devoted to a greater number, consisting partly of small vessels, the line of defences is made more continuous and complete.

System of Protection. But the effectiveness of war-vessels need not depend solely upon their size. First, twice or thrice the power may be obtained, with the same weight of boilers and machinery, and with considerable economy, by carrying very much higher steam, employing simple surface-condensers, and maintaining a high rate of combustion and vaporization, in accordance with the best commercial-marine practice. Second, *the battery may be reduced in extent*, and the armor thus increased rather than diminished in thickness, with a given buoyancy. At the same time, *the fewer guns may be made available in all directions and more rapidly worked*, so that, on the whole, a small ship thus improved will be a match in every respect for a large ship as ordinarily constructed. Working the guns in small revolving turrets, as by Ericsson's or by Coles's plan, and loading and cooling them by steam-power, and taking up their recoil by springs in a short space, as by Stevens's plan, are improvements in this direction. The plan of elevating a gun above a shot-proof deck at the moment of aiming and firing, and dropping it for loading or protection by means of hydraulic cylinders, and the plan of placing a gun upon the top of the armor-clad portion of the ship, covering it with a shot-proof hood, and loading it from below, and the plan of a rotating battery, in which one gun is in a position to fire while the others attached to the same revolving frame are loading,—all these obviously feasible plans have the advantages of avoiding port-holes



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in the inhabited and vital parts of the vessel, of rendering the possible bursting of a gun comparatively harmless to the crew and ship, and of rapid manoeuvring, as compared with the turret system, besides all the advantages of the turret as compared with the casemate or old-fashioned broadside system. The necessity of fighting at close quarters has been remarked. At close quarters, musket-balls, grape, and shells can be accurately thrown into ordinary port-holes, which removes the necessity of smashing any other holes in the armor.

Protection at, and extending several feet below the water-line, is obviously indispensable around the battery of a vessel. It is valuable at other points, but not indispensable, provided the vessel has numerous horizontal and vertical bulkheads to prevent too great a loss of buoyancy when the vessel is seriously damaged between wind and water. Harbor-craft may be very low on the water, so that only a little height of protection is required. But it is generally supposed that sea-going vessels must be high out of water. Mr. Ericsson's practice, however, is to the contrary; and it may turn out that a low vessel, over which the sea makes a clean breach, can be made sufficiently buoyant on his plan. If high sides are necessary, the plan of Mr. Lungley, of London, may be adopted,—a streak of protection at the water-line, and another forming at the top of the battery at the top of the structure, with an intermediate unprotected space. A shot-proof deck at the water-line, and the necessary shot-proof passages leading from the parts below water to the battery, would of course be necessary.

Considering the many expedients for vastly increasing the thickness of armor, the idea, somewhat widely expressed, especially in England, that, in view of the exploits of Armstrong, Clay, and Whitworth, iron-protection must be abandoned, is at least premature. The manner in which the various principles of construction have thus far been carried out will be noticed in a brief.

Description of Prominent Iron-Clad Vessels. CLASS I. Classified with reference to the protection, the dimensions of the English Warrior and Black Prince are, length 380 feet, beam 58 feet, depth 33 feet, measurement 6,038 tons. Their armor (previously described) extends from the upper deck down to 5 feet below water, throughout 200 feet of the length amidships. Vertical shot-proof bulkheads joining the side armor form a box or casemate in the middle of the vessel, in which the 26 casemate-guns, mostly 68-pounder smooth-bores, are situated and fired through port-holes in the ordinary manner. Their speed on trial is about 14 knots,—at sea, about 12. The Defence and Resistance, of 275 feet length and 3,668 tons, and carrying 14 casemate-guns, are similarly constructed, though their speed is slow. All these vessels are built entirely of iron.



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CLASS II. This differs from the first mentioned in having protection all around at the water-line. The New Ironsides, (American,) of 3,250 tons, 240 feet length, 58-1/2 feet beam, 28-1/2 feet depth, and 15 feet draught, and built of wood, has 4-1/2-inch solid armor with 2 feet backing, extending from the upper deck down to 4 feet below water, with vertical bulkheads like the Warrior, making a casemate 170 feet long, in which there are sixteen 11-inch smooth-bores and two 200-pounder Parrott rifles. A streak of armor, 4 feet below water and 3 feet above, runs from this forward and aft entirely around the vessel. Her speed is 8 knots. The Stevens Battery, (American,) 6,000 tons, constructed of iron and nearly completed, is 420 feet long, 53 feet wide, and 28 feet deep from the top of the casemate, and is iron-clad from end to end along the water-line. As proposed to the last Congress, the central casemate was to be about 120 feet long on the top, its sides being inclined 27-1/2 degrees from the horizon, and composed of 6-3/4 inches of iron, 14 inches of locust backing, and a half-inch iron lining. Upon the top of it, and to be loaded and manoeuvred from within it, were to be five 15-inch smooth-bores and two 10-inch rifled guns clad with armor. The actual horse-power of this ship being above 8,000, her speed would be much higher than that of any other war-vessel. Congress, declining to make an appropriation to complete this vessel, made it over to Mr. Stevens, who had already borne a considerable portion of its cost, and who intends to finish it at his own expense, and is now experimenting to still further perfect his designs. The Achilles (English) now building of iron, about the size of the Warrior, and of 6,039 tons, with a casemate 200 feet long holding 26 guns, belongs to this class. The Enterprise, 180 feet length, 990 tons, 4 casemate-guns, and the Favorite, 220 feet length, 2,168 tons, 8 casemate-guns, are building in England on the same plan. The Solferino and Magenta, (French,) built of wood, and a little longer than the Royal Oak, (see Class III.,) are iron-clad all round up to the main deck, and have two 13-gun casemates above it.

CLASS III. The Minotaur, Agincourt, and Northumberland, 6,621 tons, and 390 feet length, resembling, but somewhat larger than the Warrior, in all their proportions, and now on the stocks in England; are built of iron, and are to have 5-1/2-inch armor and 9-inch backing extending through their whole length from the upper deck to 5 feet below water, forming a casemate from stem to stern, to hold 40 broadside-guns. Five vessels of the Royal-Oak class, 4,055 tons, building in England, 277 feet long and 58-1/2 feet wide, are of wood, being partially constructed frigates adapted to the new service, and are iron-clad throughout their length and height to 5 feet below water. They are to carry thirty-two 68-pounders. The Hector and Valiant, 4,063 tons, and 275 feet long, are English iron vessels not yet finished. They are completely



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protected, and carry 30 casemate-guns. All the above vessels are to carry two or more Armstrong swivel-guns fore and aft. Four vessels of La Gloire class, (French,) 255 feet long and built of wood, resembling the Royal Oak, carry 34 guns, and are completely clad in 4-1/2-inch solid armor. Ten French vessels, of a little larger dimensions, are similarly constructed. The Galena (American) is of this class as to extent of protection. The quality of her armor has been referred to.

CLASS IV. *Ships with Revolving Turrets.* The Roanoke, (American,) a razeed wooden frigate of 4,500 tons, is 265 feet long, 52 1/2 feet wide, and 32 feet deep, and will draw about 21 feet, and have a speed of 8 to 9 knots. This and all the vessels to be referred to in this class are iron-clad from end to end, and from the upper deck to 4 or 5 feet below the water-line. The Roanoke's plates (solid) are 4-1/2 inches thick, except at the ends, where they are 3-1/2, and are backed with 30 inches of oak. She has three turrets upon her main-deck, each 21 feet in diameter inside, 9 feet high, and composed of 11 thicknesses of 1-inch plates. Her armament is six 15-inch guns, two in each turret. Of the Monitors, which are all constructed of iron, two now building are to be seagoing and very fast, and are to act as rams, like several of the other vessels described. One of these, the Puritan, is 340 feet long, 52 feet wide, and 22 feet deep, and will draw 20 feet. The armor of her hull, 10-1/2 inches thick, composed mostly of 1-inch plates and 3 feet of oak backing, projects beyond her sides by the amount of its thickness, and overhangs, forming a solid ram 16 feet long at the bow. The whole upper structure also overhangs the stern, and protects the screw and rudder. This vessel will carry two turrets, 28 feet in diameter inside, 9 feet high, and 2 feet thick, composed of 1-inch plates. Each turret contains two 15-inch guns. The other vessel, the Dictator, is similarly constructed, except that it has one turret, two guns, and 320 feet length. The upper (shot-proof) deck of these vessels is 2 feet out of water. The 18 smaller Ericsson vessels, several of which are ready for service, are 18 inches out of water, of light draught, and about 200 by 45 feet. Their side-armor, laminated, is 5 inches thick, upon 3 feet of oak. They have one turret, like those of the Roanoke, and carry one 15-inch gun and one 11-inch smooth-bore, or a 200-pounder rifle. The original Monitor is 174 by 44-1/2 feet, with 5-inch side-armor, and a turret 8 inches thick, 20 feet in diameter inside, and armed with two 11-inch guns. These vessels of Ericsson's design are each in fact two vessels: a lower iron hull containing boilers and machinery, and an upper scow overhanging the ends and sides, forming the platform for the turret, and carrying the armor. The Onondaga, now constructing, is an iron vessel of 222 feet length, 48 feet beam, and 13 feet depth, with 4-1/2-inch solid armor having no backing, and without the overhanging top-works of the Monitors. She has two turrets, like those of the Roanoke, and four 15-inch guns. Nearly all the vessels of Class IV. are without spars, and have a pilothouse about 6 feet in diameter and 6 feet high on the top of one of the turrets.



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The English Royal Sovereign, 3,765 tons and 330 feet length, and the Prince Albert, 2,529 tons and the same length, are razeed wooden vessels. The former carries 5, and the latter 6 of Captain Coles's turrets with inclined sides, each turret designed for two 110-pounder breech-loading Armstrong guns. The class of iron vessels constructing to carry two of Coles's turrets are 175 feet long, having 42 feet beam, 24 feet depth, 17 feet draught, and 990 tons displacement. All these English vessels are much higher out of water than Ericsson's.

Besides these classes, there is the variety of iron-clad vessels called turtles, from their shape,—among them, the Keokuk (Whitney Battery) 159-1/2 feet long, with two stationary 11-inch gun turrets,—and a class of Western river vessels of very light draught and some peculiarities of construction. The latter resemble the Stevens Battery in the shape and position of their armor, but carry their guns within their casemates.

The Stevens Battery, the Onondaga, and the Keokuk have independent screw-propellers, which will enable them to turn on their own centres and to manoeuvre much more rapidly and effectively in action than vessels which, having but one propeller, cannot change their direction without changing their position, and are obliged to make a long circuit to change it at all. This subject is beginning to receive in Europe the attention which it merits.

CONCLUSIONS.

The direction of immediate improvement In ordnance for iron-clad warfare appears to be the abandonment of cast-iron, except as a barrel to be strengthened by steel; binding an inner tube with low-steel hoops having a successively increasing initial tension; and the use of spherical shot at excessive velocities by means of high charges of powder in bores of moderate diameters. The rifling of some guns is important, not so much to secure range or accuracy, as to fire elongated shells through armor.

The direction of improvement in ironclad vessels appears to be the concentration of armor at a few points and the protection of the remainder of the vessel from the entrance of *water* by a streak of armor at the water-line and numerous bulkheads, *etc.*, in distinction from necessarily thin and inefficient plating over all; high speed without great increase of weight of the driving parts, by means of improved engines and boilers and high pressure; the production of tenacious iron in large, thick, homogeneous masses; and the rapid manoeuvring of heavy ordnance by machinery.

In justice to himself, the writer deems it proper to state, that within the limits of a magazine-article it has been impossible to enter into the details, or even to give an outline, of all the facts which have led him to the foregoing conclusions. In a more extended work about to be published by Van Nostrand, of New York, he has endeavored, by presenting a detailed account of English and American experiments, a

description and numerous illustrations, derived mostly from personal observation, of all classes of ordnance and armor and their fabrication, and of iron-clad vessels and their machinery, and a *resume* of the best professional opinions, to add something at least usefully suggestive to the general knowledge on this subject.



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ANDREW RYKMAN'S PRAYER.

Andrew Rykman's dead and gone:
You can see his leaning slate
In the graveyard, and thereon
Read his name and date.

"Trust is truer than our fears,"
Runs the legend through the moss,
"Cain is not in added years,
Nor in death is loss."

Still the feet that thither trod,
All the friendly eyes are dim;
Only Nature, now, and God
Have a care for him.

There the dews of quiet fall,
Singing birds and soft winds stray:
Shall the tender Heart of All
Be less kind than they?

What he was and what he is
They who ask may haply find,
If they read this prayer of his
Which he left behind.

* * * * *

Pardon, Lord, the lips that dare
Shape in words a mortal's prayer!
Prayer, that, when my day is done,
And I see its setting sun,
Shorn and beamless, cold and dim,
Sink beneath the horizon's rim,—
When this ball of rock and clay
Crumbles from my feet away,
And the solid shores of sense
Melt into the vague immense,
Father! I may come to Thee
Even with the beggar's plea,
As the poorest of Thy poor,
With my needs, and nothing more.



Not as one who seeks his home
With a step assured I come;
Still behind the tread I hear
Of my life-companion, Fear;
Still a shadow deep and vast
From my westering feet is cast,
Wavering, doubtful, undefined,
Never shapen nor outlined.

From myself the fear has grown,
And the shadow is my own.
Well I know that all things move
To the spheral rhythm of love,—
That to Thee, O Lord of all!
Nothing can of chance befall:
Child and seraph, mote and star,
Well Thou knowest what we are;
Through Thy vast creative plan
Looking, from the worm to man,
There is pity in Thine eyes,
But no hatred nor surprise.
Not in blind caprice of will,
Not in cunning sleight of skill,
Not for show of power, was wrought
Nature's marvel in Thy thought.
Never careless hand and vain
Smites these chords of joy and pain;
No immortal selfishness
Plays the game of curse and bless:
Heaven and earth are witnesses
That Thy glory goodness is.
Not for sport of mind and force
Hast Thou made Thy universe,
But as atmosphere and zone
Of Thy loving heart alone.
Man, who walketh in a show,
Sees before him, to and fro,
Shadow and illusion go;
All things flow and fluctuate,
Now contract and now dilate.
In the welter of this sea,
Nothing stable is but Thee;
In this whirl of swooning trance,
Thou alone art permanence;
All without Thee only seems,
All beside is choice of dreams.



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Never yet in darkest mood
Doubted I that Thou wast good,
Nor mistook my will for fate,
Pain of sin for heavenly hate,—
Never dreamed the gates of pearl
Rise from out the burning marl,
Or that good can only live
Of the bad conservative,
And through counterpoise of hell
Heaven alone be possible.

For myself alone I doubt;
All is well, I know, without;
I alone the beauty mar,
I alone the music jar.

Yet, with hands by evil stained,
And an ear by discord pained,
I am groping for the keys
Of the heavenly harmonies;
Still within my heart I bear
Love for all things good and fair.
Hand of want or soul in pain
Has not sought my door in vain
I have kept my fealty good
To the human brotherhood;
Scarcely have I asked in prayer
That which others might not share.
I, who hear with secret shame
Praise that paineth more than blame,
Rich alone in favors lent,
Virtuous by accident,
Doubtful where I fain would rest,
Frailest where I seem the best,
Only strong for lack of test,—
What am I, that I should press
Special pleas of selfishness,
Coolly mounting into heaven
On my neighbor unforgiven?
Ne'er to me, howe'er disguised,



Comes a saint unrecognized;
Never fails my heart to greet
Noble deed with warmer beat;
Halt and maimed, I own not less
All the grace of holiness;
Nor, through shame or self-distrust,
Less I love the pure and just.
Thou, O Elder Brother! who
In Thy flesh our trial knew,
Thou, who hast been touched by these
Our most sad infirmities,
Thou alone the gulf canst span,
In the dual heart of man,
And between the soul and sense
Reconcile all difference,
Change the dream of me and mine
For the truth of Thee and Thine,
And, through chaos, doubt, and strife,
Interfuse Thy calm of life.
Haply, thus by Thee renewed,
In Thy borrowed goodness good,
Some sweet morning yet in God's
Dim, aeonian periods,
Joyful I shall wake to see
Those I love who rest in Thee,
And to them in Thee allied
Shall my soul be satisfied.

Scarcely Hope hath shaped for me
What the future life may be.
Other lips may well be bold;
Like the publican of old,
I can only urge the plea,
"Lord, be merciful to me!"
Nothing of desert I claim,
Unto me belongeth shame.
Not for me the crowns of gold,
Palms, and harpings manifold;
Not for erring eye and feet
Jasper wall and golden street.
What Thou wilt, O Father, give!
All is gain that I receive.
If my voice I may not raise
In the elders' song of praise,
If I may not, sin-defiled,
Claim my birthright as a child,
Suffer it that I to Thee



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As an hired servant be;
Let the lowliest task be mine,
Grateful, so the work be Thine;
Let me find the humblest place
In the shadow of Thy grace:
Blest to me were any spot
Where temptation whispers not.
If there be some weaker one,
Give me strength to help him on;
If a blinder soul there be,
Grant that I his guide may be.
Make my mortal dreams come true
With the work I fain would do;
Clothe with life the weak intent,
Let me be the thing I meant;
Let me find in Thy employ
Peace that dearer is than joy;
Out of self to love be led
And to heaven acclimated,
Until all things sweet and good
Seem my natural habitude.

* * * * *

So we read the prayer of him
Who, with John of Labadie,
Trod, of old, the oozy rim
Of the Zuyder Zee.

Thus did Andrew Rykman pray.
Are we wiser, better grown,
That we may not, in our day,
Make his prayer our own?

THE STRATHSAYS.

Mrs. Strathsay sat in her broad bower-window, looking down the harbor. A brave great window it was, and I mind me how many a dark summer's night, we two leaned over its edge and watched the soft flow of the River of the Cross, where its shadowy tide came up and lapped the stone foundations of that old house by the water-side,—I and Angus.



Under us the rowers slipped the wherries and the yawls; in the channel the rafts floated down a slow freight from the sweet and savage pine-forests, and the fire they carried on their breasts, and the flames of their pitch-knots, threw out strange shadows of the steering raftsmen, and a wild bandrol of smoke flaring and streaming on the night behind them;—and yet away far up on the yonder side, beneath the hanging alders and the cedar-trees, the gundalows dropped down, great laden barges; and perhaps a lantern, hung high in the stern of some huge East-Indiaman at the wharves of the other town quite across the stream, showed us all its tracery and spires, dim webs of shadow stretched and woven against the solemn ground of the starlit sky, and taught us the limit of the shores. Ah, all things were sweet to us then! we were little but children,—Angus and I. And it's not children we are now, small's the pity! The joys of childhood are good, I trow; but who would exchange for them the proud, glad pulse of full womanhood?—not I. I mind me, too, that in those days the great world of which I used to hear them speak always seemed to me lying across the river, and over the fields and the hills, and away down and out by the skirts of the mystical sea; and on the morning when I set sail for Edinboro', I felt to be forever drawing nigher its skurry and bustle, its sins and pleasures and commotions.



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We had no father,—Margray, or Effie, or Mary Strathsay, or I. He had brought his wife out from their home in Scotland to St. Anne's in the Provinces, and had died or ever I was born,—and I was the last of the weans. A high, keen spirit was his wife; she did not bend or break; a stroke that would have beggared another took no crumb from her cloth; she let the right in warehouses and wharves lie by, and lie by, and each year it paid her sterling income. None ever saw tear in those proud eyes of hers, when they brought in her husband dead, or when they carried him out; but every day at noon she went up into her own room, and whether she slept or whether she waked the two hours in that darkened place, there was not so much as a fly that sang in the pane to tell.

She was a fair, stately woman, taller than any of her girls, and with half the mind to hate them all because they were none of them a son. More or less the three were like her, lofty brows and shining hair and skin like morning light, the lave of them,—but as for me, I was my father's child. There's a portrait of him now, hangs on the chimney-pier: a slight man, and not tall,—the dark hair waves away on either side the low, clear brow,—the eyes deep-set, and large and dark and starry,—a carmine just flushing beneath the olive of the cheek,—the fine firm mouth just breaking into smiles; and I remember that that morning when I set sail for Edinboro', as I turned away from gazing on that face, and saw myself glinting like a painted ghost in the long dim mirror beside me, I said it indeed, and proudly, that I was my father's own child.

So she kissed us, Effie and me. Perhaps mine lingered the longer, for the color in my cheek was deeper tinct than Scotch, it was the wild bit of Southern blood that had run in her love's veins; when she looked at me, I gave her back hot phases of her passionate youth again,—so perhaps mine was the kiss that left the deeper dint.

Margray, and Mary Strathsay, had been back three years from school, and the one was just married,—and if she left her heart out of the bargain, what was that to me?—and the other was to reign at home awhile ere the fated Prince should come, and Effie and myself were to go over seas and take their old desks in the famous school at Edinboro'. The mother knew that she must marry her girls well, and we two younglings were sadly in Queen Mary Strathsay's way. Yes, Mrs. Strathsay lived for nought but the making of great matches for her girls; the grandees of the Provinces to-day sat down at her board and to-morrow were to pay her tribute, scot and lot; four great weddings she meant should one by one light up her hearth and leave it lonely with the ashes there. But of them all she counted on the last, the best, the noblest for Alice,—that was I.

Old Johnny Graeme was the partner in what had been my father's house, and for fifteen years it had gone prospering as never house did yet, and making Mrs. Strathsay bitterer; and Johnny Graeme, a little wizened warlock, had never once stopped work long enough to play at play and reckon his untold gold.



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Just for that summer, too, some ships of the royal fleet anchored there off Campobello, and the Honorable Charles Seavern, third son of an Earl, and professional at his cups, swung them at his will, and made holiday meanwhile among the gay and willing folk of all the little towns around.

There was another yet, a youth growing up to fine estates away off beyond Halifax. His father sat in the Queen's own Parliament for the Colonies, had bent to the knightly accolade, and a change of ministry or of residence might any day create Sir Brenton peer; his mother had been Mrs. Strathsay's dearest friend:—this child who off and on for half his life had made her house his home and Alice his companion, while in the hearts of both children Mrs. Strathsay had cautiously planted and nursed the seed,—a winning boy, a noble lad, a lordly man.

If Margray had not married old Johnny Graeme, it would have broken Mrs. Strathsay's will; the will was strong; she did, she married him. If Mary, with her white moonsheen of beauty, did not bewitch the senses of Captain Seavern, it would break Mrs. Strathsay's pride; and few things were stronger than Mrs. Strathsay's pride,—unless 't were Mary's own. If Effie—but that's nothing to the purpose. If Alice did not become the bride of Angus Ingestre, it would break Mrs. Strathsay's heart. God forgive me! but I bethought me once that her heart was the weakest member in all her body.

So she kissed us, as I say, and we slid down the ten miles of river, and went sailing past the busy islands and over the broad deeps and out of the day and into the night, and then two little orphans cried themselves to sleep with their arms about each other's necks. After all, it was not much like my picture of the great world, this lonely sea, this plunging up from billow on to billow, this burrowing down in the heart of green-gloomed hollows, this rocking and creaking and straining, this buoyant bounding over the crests,—yet the freedom, the monotony, the wild career of the winds fired me; it set my blood a-tingle; I liked it. And then I thought of Angus, rocked to sleep each night, as he was now, in his ocean-cradle. But once at school, and the world was round me; it hummed up from the streets, it boomed down from the spires. I became a part of it, and so forgot it. To Effie there were ever stealing rumors of yet a world beyond, of courts and coronets, of satin shimmer and glitter of gems, but they glanced off from me,—and other than thus I have never yet found that great world that used to lie over the river.

We had been at school a happy while, and but for constant letters, and for the brief visit of Mrs. Strathsay, who had journeyed over the Atlantic for one last look at sweet home-things, and to see how all went with us, and then had flitted back again,—but for that, home would have seemed the veriest dream that ever buzzed in an idle brain: would so have seemed to other maidens, not to us, for the fibres



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of the Strathsay heart were threads that never wore thin or parted. Two twelvemonths more, and we should cross the sea ourselves at last; and wearying now of school a bit, all our visions centred in St. Anne's, and the merry doings, the goings and comings, that we heard of there; and it seemed to me as if home were to be the beginning of life, as erst it had seemed that in school we should find the world.

It was the vacation of the long summer term; there was packing and padlocking to go each on her way, and the long dormitories rang with shrill clamor. They all had a nest to seek. Effie was already gone away with her chief crony, whose lady-mother, a distant kinswoman of our own, fancied the girl's fair countenance. I was to join them in a week or two,—not yet, because I had wished to send home the screens painted on white velvet, and they wanted yet a sennight's work, and I knew Mrs. Strathsay would be proud of them before the crackle of the autumn fires. The maids ran hither and yon, and the bells pealed, and the knocker clashed, and the coaches rolled away over the stone pave of the court-yard, and there was embracing and jesting and crying, when suddenly all the pleasant hubbub stood still, for Miss Dunreddin was in the hall, and her page behind her, and she beckoned me from my post aloft on a foot-board, summoning the deserters before me and awarding them future expiations, amidst all manner of jeering and jinking and laughter.

A gentleman from the Provinces to see me in the little parlor: he had brought us letters from home, and after Miss Dunreddin had broken the seals she judged we might have them, and I was at liberty for an hour, and meantime Angus Ingestre awaited me. Angus! I sprang down the stairs, my cheeks aglow, my heart on my lips, and only paused, finger on lock, wondering and hesitating and fearing, till the door was flung open, and I drawn in with two hands shut fast on my own, and two eyes—great blue Ingestre eyes—looking down on me from the face so far above: for he towered like a Philistine.

"And is it Angus?" I cried. For how was I to know the boy I had left in a midshipman's jacket, in this mainmast of a man, undress-uniform and all?

"I've no need to ask, Is it Alice?" he answered. "The same little peach of a chin!"

"Nay, but, Angus,—'t will never do,—and I all but grown up!"

"Not my little maid any longer, then?"

But so trembling and glad was I to see him, that I dared no more words, for I saw the tears glistening in my eyelashes and blinding me with their dazzling flashes.



So he took me to a seat, and sat beside me, and waited a minute; and after that waiting it was harder to speak than it had been before, and every thought went clean out of my head, and every word, and I stared at my hands till I seemed to see clear through them the pattern of my dress, and at the last I looked up, and there he had been bending forward and scanning me all the while; and then Angus laughed, and caught up my hand and pretended to search it narrowly.



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“Ah, yes, indeed,” said he, “she is reading the future in her palm, reading it backward, and finding out what this Angus Ingestre has to do with her fate!”

“Nay, but,”——said I, and then held fast again.

“Here’s a young woman that’s keen to hear of her home, of her sisters, of Queen Mary Strathsay, and of Margray’s little Graeme!”

“What do I care for Johnny Graeme? the little old man!”

“What, indeed? And you’ll not be home a day and night before you’ll be tossing and hushing him, and the moon’ll not be too good for him to have, should he cry for it!”

“Johnny Graeme?”

“No. Angus Graeme!”

“Oh!—Margray has a son? Why didn’t you tell me before?”

“When you were so eager to know!”

“It’s all in my letters, I suppose. But Margray has a son, and she’s named it for you, and her husband let her?”

“Deed, he wasn’t asked.”

“Why not?”

“Come, child, read your letters.”

“Nay, I’ve but a half-hour more with you; that was the second quarter struck; I’ll read them when you’re gone.—*Why not?*”

“Johnny Graeme is dead.”

That sobered me a thought.

“And Margray?” I asked.

“Poor Margray,—she feels very badly.”

“You don’t mean to say”——

“That she cared for him? But I do.”



“Now, Angus Ingestre, I *heard* Margray tell her mother she’d liefer work on the roads with a chain and ball than marry him! It’s all you men know of women. Love Johnny Graeme! Oh, poor man, rest his soul! I’m sore sorry for him. He’s gone where there’s no gold to make, unless they smelt it there; and I’m not sure but they do,—sinsyne one can see all the evil it’s the root of, and all the woe it works,—and he bought Margray, you know he did, Angus!”

“It’s little Alice talking so of her dead brother!”

“He’s no brother of mine; I never took him, if Margray did. Brother indeed! there’s none such,—unless it’s you, Angus!” And there all the blood flew into my cheeks, and they burned like two fires, and I was fain to clap my palms upon them.

“No,” said Angus. “I’m not your brother, Ailie darling, and never wish to be,—but”——

“And Margray?” I questioned, quickly,—the good Lord alone knew why. “Poor Margray! tell me of her. Perhaps she misses him; he was not, after all, so curst as Willy Scott. Belike he spoke her kindly.”

“Always,” said Angus, gnawing in his lip a moment ere the word. “And the child changed him, Mary Strathsay says. But perhaps you’re right; Margray makes little moan.”

“She was aye a quiet lass. Poor Johnny!—I’m getting curst myself. Well, it’s all in my letters. But you, Angus dear, how came you here?”

“I? My father came to London; and being off on leave from my three years’ cruise, I please myself in passing my holiday, and spend the last month of it in Edinboro’, before rejoining the ship.”



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All my moors and heather passed like a glamour. The green-wood shaws would be there another year,—Angus was here to-day. I cast about me, and knew that Miss Dunreddin would speed away to take her pleasure, and there'd be none left but the governess and the painting-mistress, with a boarder or two like myself,—and as for the twain, I could wind them round my thumb.

“Oh, Angus,” I said, breathlessly, “there’s Arthur’s Seat, and the palaces, and the galleries and gardens,—it’ll be quite as good as the moors; there’ll be no Miss Dunreddin, and you can stay here all the leelang simmer’s day!”

He smiled, as he answered,—

“And I suppose those scarlet signals at the fore signify”——

“Nothing!”

“Fast colors, I see.”

“It’s my father’s own color, and I’m proud of it,—barring the telltale trouble.”

“You’re proud,” said he, absently, standing up to go, “that you are the only one of them all that heirs him?”

“Not quite. It’s the olive in my father’s cheek that darkened his wife’s yellow curls into Mary Strathsay’s chestnut ones. And she’s like me in more than that, gin she doesn’t sell hersel’ for siller and gowd.”

“I’ll tell you what. Mrs. Strathsay is over-particular in speech. She’ll have none of the broad Highland tongue about her. It’s a daily struggle that she has, not to strike Nurse Nannie dumb, since she has infected you all with her dialect. A word in time. Now I must go. To-morrow night I’ll come and take you to the play, Miss Dunreddin or no Miss Dunreddin. But sing to me first. It’s a weary while since I used to hear that voice crooning itself to sleep across the hall with little songs.”

So I sang the song he chose, “My love, she’s but a lassie yet”; and he took the bunch of bluebells from my braids, and was gone.

The next night Angus was as good as his word. Miss Dunreddin was already off on her pleasuring, he took the gray little governess for duenna, and a blither three never sat out a tragedy, or laughed over wine and oysters in the midst of a garden with its flowers and fountains afterwards. ’T was a long day since the poor little woman had known such merrymaking; and as for me, this playhouse, this mimicry of life, was a new sphere. We went again and again,—sometimes the painting-mistress, too; then she and the governess fell behind, and Angus and I walked at our will. Other times we wandered through the gay streets, or we went up on the hill and sat out the sunsets,

and we strolled through the two towns, high and low. The days sped, the long shine of the summer days, and, oh, my soul was growing in them like a weed in the sun!



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It never entered my happy little thoughts all this time that what was my delight might yet be Angus's dole; for, surely, a school-girl is so interesting to no one else as herself, while she continually comes upon all the fresh problems in her nature. So, when a day passed that I heard no step in the hall, no cheery voice rousing the sleepy echoes with my name, I was restless enough. Monday, Tuesday,—no Angus. I ought to have thought whether or no he had found some of his fine friends, and if they had no right to a fragment of his time; yet I was but a child. The third day dawned and passed, and at length, sitting there among the evening shadows in the long class-room, a little glumly, the doors clanged as of old, a loud, laughing sentence was tossed up to the little gray governess at the stair-head, then, three steps at a time, he had mounted, and was within,—and what with my heart in my throat and its bewildered beating, I could not utter a word. I but sprang to the window and made as if I had been amusing myself there: I would have no Angus Ingestre be thinking that he was all the world to me, and I nought to him.

“A little ruffled,” said he, at the saucy shake of my head. “Well, I sha'n't tell you where I've been. I've the right to go into the country for a day, have I not? What is it to Alice Strathsay how often I go to Loch Rea? There's something Effie begged me to get you!” And he set down a big box on the table.

So, then, he had been to see Effie. It was fair enough, and yet I couldn't help the jealous pang. I wouldn't turn my head, though I did wonder what was in the big box, but, holding out my hand backward, I said,—

“Well, it's no odds where you've been, so long's you're here now. Come and lean out of the window by me,—it's old times,—and see the grand ladies roll by in their coaches, some to the opera, some to the balls.”

“Why should I watch the grand ladies roll by, when there's one so very much grander beside me,” he said, laughing, but coming. And so we stood together there and gazed down on the pretty sight, the beautiful women borne along below in the light of the lamps, with their velvets, their plumes, and their jewels, and we made little histories for them all, as they passed.

“They are only the ugly sisters,” said Angus, at length. “But here is the true Cinderella waiting for her godmother. Throw your cape over your hair, Ailie dear; the dew falls, and you'll be taking cold. There, it's the godmother herself, and you'll confess it, on seeing what miracles can be worked with this little magic-lantern of yours. Come!” and he proceeded to open the box.

But I waited a minute still; it was seldom the sumptuous coaches rolled through this by-way which they had taken to-night in their gay procession, since the pavers had left the broad street beyond blocked up for the nonce, and I liked to glimpse this little opening into a life just beyond my sphere.



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"You are shivering in your thin frock at the window, Miss Strathsay," said the little gray governess.

"Come here, Ailie, and hold the candle," said Angus. "Effie has great schemes of terror with this in the dormitories, o' nights. There!" and he whirled the lighted match out of the window.

Just then I turned, the little flame fell on my muslin sleeve,—a cloud of smoke, a flash, a flare, the cape round my face soared in blaze, it seemed that I was wrapt in fire!

Angus caught me on the instant, crushed the burning things with his fingers, had his coat round me, had all drenched in the water that the governess had raced after, and then I knew no more.

So the women put me to bed, while Angus brought the surgeon; then they forbade him the room, and attended to my wants; but all night long he paced the halls and heard my moans, and by daybreak I was stupefied. He waited a week, but they would not suffer him to see me, and then his leave of absence had expired.

One night I woke; I felt that the room was darkly rich with the star-lighted gloom, but I could see nothing, for all the soft, cool linen folds; and lying there half-conscious for a time, I seemed to feel some presence in the door-way there.

"Angus, is that you?" I asked.

"Oh, Ailie darling!" he cried, and came forward and fell on his knees by my side, and covered my hands with his tears.

"Poor Angus!" I said, in my muffled way, and I tried half to rise, and I was drawing away a hand that I might dash the tears off his face.

Then of a sudden it came over me in one great torrid flush, and I fell back without a word.

But at the moment, the little gray governess came in again from her errand, and he went. 'T was no use his waiting, though he lingered still a day or two in hopes to see me; but my head was still on my pillow. His time was more than up, he must to the ship, so he left me store of messages and flowers and glass-bred grapes, and was off.

Time wore away, I got about again, and all was as before, long ere the girls came back, or Miss Dunreddin. I went near no moors, I looked no more out of my window, I only sat on the stool by my bedside and kept my face hid in the valances; and the little gray governess would sit beside me and cheer me, and tell me it was not so bad when all was said, and beauty was but little worth, and years would efface much, that my hair was still as dark and soft, my eyes as shining, my——But all to what use? Where had



flown the old Strathsay red from my cheek, where that smooth polish of brow, where
—I, who had aye been the flower of the race, the pride of the name, could not now
bide to brook my own glance in the glass.



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But the worst of it all would be, I thought,—not recking the worse to come,—when the girls flocked back. How I dreaded it, how I sought to escape their mock and go home, poor fool! but the little gray governess saw them all first, I must believe, for there was not a quip or a look askance, and they treated me as bairns treat a lamb that has tint its mother. And so seeing I had lost my fair skin, I put myself to gain other things in its place, and worked hard at my stents, at my music, my books. I grew accustomed to things, and would forget there had been a change, and, being young, failed to miss the being bonny; and if I did not miss it, who should? and they all were so kind, that the last year of school was the happiest of the whole. Thus the time drew near my eighteenth summer, and Miss Dunreddin had heard of a ship bound our way from Glasgow, and we were to leave the town with all its rare old histories, and speed through nights and days of seafaring to St. Anne's by the water-side, to the old stone house with its windows overhanging the River of the Cross.

So the old brig slid lazily up the river, beneath the high and beauteous banks, and as between the puffs of wind we lay there in the mid-channel, the mate,—a dark, hawk-eyed man, at whom Effie liked well to toss a merry mock, and with whom, sometimes stealing up, she would pace the deck in hours of fair weather,—a man whose face was like a rock that once was smitten with sunshine, never since,—a sad man, with a wrathful lip even when he spoke us fair,—the mate handed me his glass and bade me look, while he went to the side and bent over there with Effie, gazing down into the sun-brown, idle current. And I pointed it,—and surely that was the old stone gable in its woodbines,—and surely, as we crept nearer, the broad bower-window opened before me,—and surely a lady sat there, a haughty woman with the clustered curls on her temple, her needle poised above the lace-work in the frame, and she gazing dreamily out, out at the water, the woods, the one ship wafting slowly up,—shrouds that had been filled with the airs of half a hemisphere, hull that had ere now been soaked in spicy suns and summers,—and all the glad tears gushed over my eyes and darkened me from seeing. So, as I said, Mrs. Strathsay sat in her broad bower-window looking down the harbor, and a ship was coming up, and Effie and I stood on its deck, our hearts full of yearning. Mine was, at least, I know. And I could but snatch the glass up, every breathing, as we went, and look, and drop it, for it seemed as if I must fly to what it brought so near, must fly to fling my arms about the fair neck bending there, to feel the caressing finger, to have that kiss imprint my cheek once more,—so seldom her lips touched us!



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They lowered us down in boats at last, the captain going ashore with us, the porters following with our luggage. The great hall-door below stood open, and the familiar servants were there to give us greeting, and we stayed but for a hand's-shake, except that my old nurse, where she caught it, wet my shawl with her sudden weeping, so that Effie had run up the stairs before me, and was in the drawing-room and was folded in the tender grasp, and had first received the welcome. A moment after, and I was among them. Mrs. Strathsay stood there under the chandelier in the sunshine, with all its showering rainbow-drops,—so straight and stately she, so superb and splendid,—her arms held out,—and I ran forward, and paused, for my veil had blown over my face, to throw it back and away,—and, with the breath, her shining blue eyes opened and filled with fire, her proud lips twisted themselves in pain, she struck her two hands together, crying out, “My God! how horrible!” and fainted.

Mrs. Strathsay was my mother. I might have fallen, too,—I might have died, it seems to me, with the sudden snap my heart gave,—but all in a word I felt Mary Strathsay's soft curls brushing about my face, and she drew it upon her white bosom, and covered the poor thing with, her kisses. Margray was bending over my mother, with the hartshorn in her hands, and I think—the Lord forgive her!—she allowed her the whole benefit of its battery, for in a minute or two Mrs. Strathsay rose, a little feeble, wavered an instant, then warned us all away and walked slowly and heavily from the place, up the stairs, and the door of her own room banged behind her and hasped like the bolt of a dungeon.

I drank the glass of wine Mary brought me, and tried hard not to sadden them, and to be a woman.

“Poor thing!” said Margray, when she'd taken off my bonnet and looked at the fashion of my frock, “but you're sorely altered. Never fret,—it's worth no tear; she counted much on your likely looks, though,—you never told us the accident took them.”

“I thought you'd know, Margray.”

“Oh, for sure, there's many escapes.—And this is grenadine? I'd rather have the old mohair.—Well, well, give a man luck and throw him into the sea; happen you'll do better than us all. If my mother cannot marry you as she'd choose, you'll come to less grief, I doubt.” And Margray heaved a little sigh, and ran to tumble up her two-year-old from his rose-lined basket.

I went home with Margray that night; I couldn't bear to sleep in the little white bed that was mine when a happy child, and with every star that rose I felt a year the older; and on the morrow, when I came home, my mother was still in the same taking, so I went back again and whiled the day off as I could; and it was not so hard, for Mary Strathsay came over, and Effie, and there was so much to tell, and so much to ask, and Effie had all along been so full of some grand company she had met that last year in Edinboro',



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that the dinner-bells rang ere we thought of lunch; but still a weight lay on me like a crime on conscience. But by the next dawning I judged 't was best that I should gather courage and settle things as they were to be. Margray's grounds joined our own, and I snatched up the babe, a great white Scotch bairn, and went along with him in my arms under the dripping orchard-boughs, where still the soft glooms lingered in the early morn. And just ere I reached the wicket, a heavy step on the garden-walk beyond made my heart plunge, and I came face to face with my mother. My tongue clove to the roof of my mouth, I did not dare glance up, yet I felt her eyes upon me as if she searched some spot fit for her fine lips, and presently her hand was on my head, and the kiss had fallen on my hair, and then she gathered me into her arms, and her tears rained down and anointed my face like chrisem. And I just let the wondering wean slip to the grass, and I threw my arms about her and cried, "Oh, mother, mother, forgive me, and love me just a little!" It was but a breathing; then I remembered the child at my feet, and raised him, and smiled back on Mrs. Strathsay, and went on with a lighter heart to set my chests and drawers straight.

The days slipped into weeks, and they were busy, one and all, ordering Effie's wardrobe; for, however much I took the lead, she was the elder and was to be brought out. My mother never meant to bring *me* out, I think,—she could not endure the making of parade, and the hearing the Thomsons and Lindsays laugh at it all, when 't was but for such a flecked face,—she meant I should slip into life as I could. We had had the seamstresses, and when they were gone sometimes Mrs. Strathsay came and sat among us with her work;—she never pricked finger with fell or hem, but the heaviest task she took was the weaving of the white leaf-wreaths in and out the lace-web before her there,—and as we stitched, we talked, and she lent a word how best an old breadth could be turned, another gown refitted,—for we had to consider such things, with all our outside show of establishment.

Margray came running through the garden that afternoon, and up where we sat, and over her arm was fluttering no end of gay skirts and ribbons.

"I saved this pink muslin—it's real Indian, lascar lawn, fine as cobweb—for you, Alice," she said. "It's not right to leave it to the moths,—but you'll never need it now. It shall be Effie's, and she'll look like a rose-bud in it,—with her yellow locks floating."

"Yes," said I.

"You'll not be wanting such bright things now, child; you'll best wear grays, and white, and black."

"Indeed, then, I sha'n't," I said. "If I'm no longer lovely myself, I'll be decked out in braw clothes, that I may please the eye one way or another."



“No use, child,” sighed my mother ’twixt her teeth, and not meaning for me to hear.

“So would I, Ailie,” said Mary Strathsay, quickly. “There’s much in fine fibres and soft shades that gives one the womanly idea. You’re the best shape among us all, my light lissomeness, and your gowns shall fit it rarely. Nay, Margray, let Alice have the pink.”



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“Be still, Mary Strathsay!” said my mother. “Alice will wear white this summer; ’tis most suitable. She has white slips and to spare.”

“But in the winter?” urged the other. “’Twill be sad for the child, and we all so bright. There’s my pearl silk,—I’m fairly tired of it,—and with a cherry waist-piece”——

“You lose breath,” said my mother, coldly and half vexed.

So Mary Strathsay bit her lip and kept the peace.

“Whisht now, child, your turn will come,” said Margray, unfolding a little bodice of purple velvet, with its droop of snowy Mechlin. “One must cut the coat according to the cloth. That’s for Effie,—gayly my heart’s beat under you,” laying it down and patting it on one side, lovingly. “There, if white’s the order of the day, white let it be,—and let Mrs. Strathsay say her most, she cannot make other color of this, and she shall not say me nay. That’s for Alice.” And she flung all the silvery silk and blonde lace about me.

“Child, you’ll sparkle!” whispered Mary Strathsay in my ear, hastening to get the glittering apparel aside, lest my mother should gainsay us.

But Mrs. Strathsay did not throw us a glance.

“You’re ill-pleased, Effie,” said Margray; for our little beauty, finding herself so suddenly the pet, had learned to toss her head in pretty saucy ways.

“Not a speck!” Effie answered up. “’Twas high time,—I was thinking.”

Margray laughed, and took her chin ’twixt thumb and finger, and tried to look under the wilful lids that drooped above the blue light in her eyes.

“You’re aye a faithful pet, and I like you clannish. Stand by them that stands by you, my poor man used to say. You shall put on as fine a gown, and finer, of my providing, the day you’re wedded.”

“I’ll gie ye veil o’ siller lace,
And troth ye wi’ a ring;
Sae bid the blushes to your face,
My ain wee thing!”

sang Mary.

“I want none of your silver lace,” said Effie, laughing lightly, and we little dreamed of the girl’s thought. “I’ll have that web my mother has wrought with myrtle-leaf and blossom.”

“And ’twas begun for me,” said Mary, arching her brows, and before she thought.



“You,—graceless girl!” said my mother. “It’s no bridal veil will ever cross your curls!”

“Surely, mother, we’ve said too much,—you’ll overlook old scores.”

“T is hard forgetting, when a perverse child puts the hand to her own hurt.”

“No hurt to me. You would not have had me take a man at his word when he recked not what he said.”

“Tsh! Tsh! Charles Seavern would have married you. And with the two brothers gone, he’s an earl now,—and you flung him off. Tsh!”

“I never saw the time, mother, solemnly as I’ve told you, when his right hand knew what his left hand did,—what with his champagne-suppers, your Burgundy, and Johnny Graeme’s Jamaica. He’d have been sorely shocked to wake up sober in his earldom some fine morning and find a countess beside him ready-made to his hand.”



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“You spared him!” said my mother. And in a minute she added, softly, “Ay, were that all!”

“Ah,” said Mary, “but I’ll take the next one that asks me, if it’s only to save myself the taunts at home! You thought you were winning to a soft nest, children, where there were nought but larks and thrushes and maybe nightingales,—and we’re all cuckoos.

“Cuckoo! cuckoo! sweet voice of Spring,
Without you sad the year had been,
The vocal heavens your welcome ring,
The hedge-rows ope and take you in,
Cuckoo! cuckoo!”

“Cuckoo! cuckoo! O viewless sprite,
Your song enchants the sighing South,
It woos the wild-flower to the light,
And curls the smile round my love’s mouth,
Cuckoo! cuckoo!”

“Have done your claver, Mary!” cried Margray. “One cannot hear herself think, for the din of your twittering!—I’ll cut the sleeve over crosswise, I think,”—and, heedless, she herself commenced humming, in an undertone, “Cuckoo! cuckoo!”—There! you’ve driven mother out!”

Mary laughed.

“When I’m married, Ailie,” she whispered, “I’ll sing from morn till night, and you shall sit and hear me, without Margray’s glowering at us, or my mother so much as saying, ‘Why do you so?’”

For all the time the song had been purling from her smiling lips, Mrs. Strathsay’s eyes were laid, a weight like lead, on me, and then she had risen as if it hurt her, and walked to the door.

“Or when you’ve a house of your own,” added Mary, “we will sing together there.”

“Oh, Mary!” said I, like the child I was, forgetting the rest, “when I’m married, you will come and live with me?”

“You!” said my mother, stepping through the door and throwing the words over her shoulder as she went, not exactly for my ears, but as if the bubbling in her heart must have some vent. “And who is it would take such a fright?”



“My mother’s fair daft,” said Margray, looking after her with a perplexed gaze, and dropping her scissors. “Surely, Mary, you shouldn’t tease her as you do. She’s worn more in these four weeks than in as many years. You’re a fickle changeling!”

But Mary rose and sped after my mother, with her tripping foot; and in a minute she came back laughing and breathless.

“You put my heart in my mouth, Mistress Graeme,” she said. “And all for nothing. My mother’s just ordering the cream to be whipped. Well, little one, what now?”

“It’s just this dress of Margray’s,—mother’s right,—’t will never do for me; I’ll wear shadows. But ’t will not need the altering of a hair for you, Mary, and you shall take it.”

“I think I see myself,” said Mary Strathsay, “wearing the dress Margray married Graeme in!” For Margray had gone out to my mother in her turn.

“Then it’s yours, Effie. I’ll none of it!”

“I’m finely fitted out, then, with the robe here and the veil there! bridal or burial, toss up a copper and which shall it be?” said Effie, looking upward, and playing with her spools like a juggler’s oranges. And here Margray came back.



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She sat in silence a minute or two, turning her work this way and that, and then burst forth,—

“I’d not stand in your shoes for much, Alice Strathsay!” she cried, “that’s certain. My mother’s in a rare passion, and here’s Sir Angus home!”

“Sir Who?” said Effie puzzled; “it was just Mr. Ingestre two years ago.”

“Well, it’s been Sir Angus a twelvemonth now and more,—ever since old Sir Brenton went, and he went with a stroke.”

“Yes,” said Mary, “it was when Angus arrived in London from Edinboro’, the day before joining his ship.”

“And why didn’t we ever hear of it?”

“I don’t just remember, Effie dear,” replied Margray, meditatively, “unless ’t were—it must have been—that those were the letters lost when the Atlantis went down.”

“Poor gentleman!” said Mary. “It was one night when there was a division in the House, and it divided his soul from his body,—for they found him sitting mute as marble, and looking at their follies and strifes with eyes whose vision reached over and saw God.”

“For shame, Mary Strathsay, to speak lightly of what gave Angus such grief!”

“Is that lightly?” she said, smoothing my hair with her pretty pink palms till it caught in the ring she wore. “Never mind what *I* say, girlie; it’s as like to be one word as the other. But I grieved for him. He’s deep and quiet; a sorrow sinks and underlies all that’s over, in the lad.”

“Hear her!” said Margray; “one would fancy the six feet of the Ingestre stature were but a pocket-piece! The lad! Well, he’ll put no pieces in our pockets, I doubt,” (Margray had ever an eye to the main chance,) “and it’s that angers my mother.”

“Hush, Margray!” I heard Mary say, for I had risen and stolen forth. “Thou’lt make the child hate us all. Were we savages, we had said less. You know, girl, that our mother loved our father’s face in her, and counted the days ere seeing it once more; and having lost it, she is like one bewildered. ’T will all come right. Let the poor body alone,—and do not hurt the child’s heart so. We’re right careless.”

I had hung on tiptoe, accounting it no meanness, and I saw Margray stare.

“Well,” she murmured, “something may be done yet. ’T will go hard, if by hook or crook Mrs. Strathsay do not have that title stick among us”; and then, to make an end of



words, she began chattering anent biases and gores, the lace on Mary Campbell's frill, the feather on Mary Dalhousie's bonnet,—and I left them.

I ran over to Margray's, and finding the boy awake, I dismissed his nurses the place, and stayed and played with him and took the charge till long past the dinner-hour, and Margray came home at length, and then, when I had sung the child asleep again, for the night, and Margray had shown me all the contents of her presses, the bells were ringing nine from across the river, and I ran back as I came, and up and into my little bed, and my heart was fit to break, and I cried till the sound of the sobs checked me into silence. Suddenly I felt a hand fumbling down the coverlid, and 't was Nannie, my old nurse, and her arm was laid heavily across me.



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“Dinna greet,” she whispered, “dinna greet and dull your een that are brighter noo than a’ the jauds can show,—the bonny blink o’ them! They sha’ na flout and fleer, the feckless queans, the hissies wha’ll threep to stan’ i’ your auld shoon ae day! Dinna greet, lass, dinna!”

But I rose on my arm, and stared about me in all the white moonlight of the vacant place, and hearkened to the voices and laughter rippling up the great staircase,—for there were gallants in belike,—and made as if I had been crying out in my sleep.

“Oh, Nurse Nannie, is it you?” I said.

“Ay, me, Miss Ailie darling!”

“Sure I dream so deeply. I’m all as oppressed with nightmare.”

But with that she brushed my hair, and tenderly bathed my face in the bay-water, and fastened on my cap, and, sighing, tucked the coverlid round my shoulder, and away down without a word.

The next day was my mother’s dinner-party. She was in a quandary about me, I saw, and to save words I offered to go over again and stay with the little Graeme. So it came to pass, one time being precedent of another, that in all the merrymakings I had small share, and spent the greater part of those bright days in Margray’s nursery with, the boy, or out-doors in the lone hay-fields or among the shrubberies; for he waxed large and glad, and clung to me as my own. And to all kind Mary Strathsay’s pleas and words I but begged off as favors done to me, and I was liker to grow sullen than smiling with all the stour.

“Why, I wonder, do the servants of a house know so much better than the house itself the nearest concerns of shadowy futures? One night the nurse paused above my bed and guarded the light with her hand.

“Let your heart lap,” she said. “Sir Angus rides this way the morrow.”

Ah, what was that to me? I just doubled the pillow over eyes and ears to shut out sight and hearing. And so on the morrow I kept well out of the way, till all at once Mrs. Strathsay stumbled over me and bade me, as there would be dancing in the evening, to don my ruffled frock and be ready to play the measures. I mind me how, when I stood before the glass and secured the knot in my sash, and saw by the faint light my loosened hair falling in a shadow round me and the quillings of the jaconet, that I thought to myself how it was like a white moss-rose, till of a sudden Nannie held the candle higher and let my face on me,—and I bade her bind up my hair again in the close plaits best befitting me. And I crept down and sat in the shade of the window-curtains, whiles looking out at the soft moony night, whiles in at the flowery lighted



room. I'd heard Angus's coming, early in the afternoon, and had heard him, too, or e'er half the cordial compliments were said, demand little Alice; and they told him I was over and away at Margray's, and in a thought the hall-doors clashed behind him and his heels were ringing up the street, and directly he hastened home again,



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through the gardens this time, and saw no sign of me;—but now my heart beat so thickly, when I thought of him passing me in the dance, that, could I sit there still, I feared 'twould of itself betray me, and that warned me to question if the hour were not ready for the dances, and I rose and stole to the piano and sat awaiting my mother's word. But scarcely was I there when one came quietly behind me, and a head bent and almost swept my shoulder; then he stood with folded arms.

“And how long shall I wait for your greeting? Have you no welcome for me, Ailie?”

“Yes, indeed, Sir Angus,” I replied; but I did not turn my head, for as yet he saw only the back of me, fair and graceful perchance, as when he liked it.

He checked himself in some word.

“Well, then,” he said, “give it me, tell it me, look it me!”

I rose from my seat and shifted the piece of music before me,—turned and gazed into his eyes one long breathing-space, then I let the lids fall,—waited a minute so,—and turned back ere my lip should be all in a quiver,—but not till his head bent once more, and a kiss had fallen on those lids and lain there cool and soft as a pearl,—a pearl that seemed to sink and penetrate and melt inwardly and dissolve and fill my brain with a white blinding light of joy. 'Twas but a brief bit of the great eternities;—and then I found my fingers playing I knew not how, and heard the dancers' feet falling to the tune of I knew not what.

While I played there, Margray sat beside me, for the merriment was without now, on the polished oak-floor of the hall, and they being few but familiars who had the freedom of the house, (and among whom I had had no need but to slip with a nod and smile ere gaining my seat,) she took out her needle and set a stitch or two, more, perhaps, to cover her being there at all than for any need of industry; for Margray loved company, and her year of widowhood being not yet doubled, and my mother unwilling that she should entertain or go out, she made the most of that at our house; for Mrs. Strathsay had due regard of decency,—forbye she deemed it but a bad lookout for her girls, if the one of them danced on her good-man's grave.

“I doubt will Sir Angus bide here,” said Margray at length; for though all his boyhood she had called him by every diminutive his name could bear, the title was a sweet morsel in her unaccustomed mouth, and she kept rolling it now under her tongue. “Mrs. Strathsay besought him, but his traps and his man were at the inn. Sir Angus is not the lad he was,—a young man wants his freedom, my mother should remember.”



And as her murmur continued, my thoughts came about me. They were like birds in the hall; and all their voices and laughter rising above the jingle of the keys, I doubted was he so sorry for me, after all. Then the dancing broke, I found, though I still played on, and it was some frolicsome game of forfeits, and Angus was chasing Effie, and with her light step and her flying laugh it was like the wind following a rose-flake. Anon he ceased, and stood silent and statelier than Mrs. Strathsay's self, looking on.



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“See Sir Angus now,” said Margray, bending forward at the pictures shifting through the door-way. “He’d do for the Colossus at what-you-may-call-it; and there’s our Effie, she minds me of a yellow-bird, hanging on his arm and talking: I wonder if that’s what my mother means,—I wonder will my mother compass it. See Mary Strathsay there! She’s white and fine, I’ll warrant; see her move like a swan on the waters! Ay, she’s a lovesome lass,—and Helmar thought so, too.”

“What are you saying of Mary Strathsay? Who *don’t* think she’s a lovesome lass?”

“Helmar don’t *now*,—I’ll dare be sworn.”

“Helmar?”

“Hush, now! don’t get that maggot agait again. My mother’d ban us both, should her ears side this way.”

“What is it you mean, Margray dear?”

“Sure you’ve heard of Helmar, child?”

Yes, indeed, had I. The descendant of a bold Spanish buccaneer who came northwardly with his godless spoil, when all his raids upon West-Indian seas were done, and whose name had perhaps suffered a corruption at our Provincial lips. A man—this Helmar of to-day—about whom more strange tales were told than of the bloody buccaneer himself. That the walls of his house were ceiled with jewels, shedding their accumulated lustre of years so that never candle need shine in the place, was well known. That the spellbound souls of all those on his red-handed ancestor’s roll were fain to keep watch and ward over their once treasures, by night and noon, white-sheeted and faint in the glare of the sun, wan in the moon, blacker shadows in the starless dark, found belief. And there were those who had seen his seraglio;—but few, indeed, had seen him,—a lonely man, in fact, who lived aloof and apart, shunned and shunning, tainted by the curse of his birth.

“Oh, yes,” I said, “of Helmar away down the bay; but the mate of our brig was named Helmar, too.”

Margray’s ivory stiletto punched a red eyelet in her finger.

“Oh, belike it was the same!” she cried, so loud that I had half to drown it in the pedal. “He’s taken to following the sea, they say.”

“What had Helmar to do with our Mary, Margray?”

“What had he to do with her?” answered Margray in under-voice. “He fell in love with her!”



“That’s not so strange.”

“Then I’ll tell you what’s stranger, and open your eyes a wee. She fell in love with him.”

“Our Mary? Then why didn’t she marry him?”

“Marry Helmar?”

“Yes. If my mother wants gold, there it is for her.”

“He’s the child of pirates; there’s blood on his gold; he poured it out before my mother, and she told him so. He’s the making of a pirate himself. Oh, you’ve never heard, I see. Well, since I’m in for it,—but you’ll never breathe it?—and it’s not worth while darkening Effie with it, let alone she’s so giddy my mother’d know I’d been giving it mouth,—perhaps I oughtn’t,—but



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there!—poor Mary! He used to hang about the place, having seen her once when she came round from Windsor in a schooner, and it was a storm,—may-happen he saved her life in it. And Mary after, Mary'd meet him at church, and in the garden, and on the river; 't was by pure chance on her part, and he was forever in the way. Then my mother, innocent of it all, went to Edinboro', as you know, and I was married and out of the reach, and Mary kept the house those two months with Mrs. March of the Hill for dowager,—her husband was in the States that summer,—and Mrs. March is no more nor less than cracked,—and no wonder he should make bold to visit the house. My mother'd been home but a day and night, 's you may say, when in walks my gentleman,—who but he?—fine as a noble of the Court, and Mary presents him to Mrs. Strathsay as Mr. Helmar of the Bay. Oh, but Mrs. Strathsay was in a stound. And he began by requesting her daughter's hand. And that brake the bonds,—and she dashed out sconners of wrath. Helmar's eyes flashed only once, then he kept them on the ground, and he heard her through. 'T was the second summer Seavern's fleet was at the harbor's mouth there, and a ship of war lay anchored a mile downriver,—many's the dance we had on it's deck!—and Captain Seavern of late was in the house night and morn,—for when he found Mary offish, he fairly lay siege to her, and my mother behind him,—and there was Helmar sleeping out the nights in his dew-drenched boat at the garden's foot, or lying wakeful and rising and falling with the tide under her window, and my mother forever hearing the boat-chains clank and stir. She's had the staple wrenched out of the wall now,—'t was just below the big bower-window, you remember. And when Mary utterly refused Seavern, Seavern swore he'd wheel his ship round and raze the house to its foundations: he was—drunk—you see. And Mary laughed in his face. And my mother beset her,—I think she went on her knees to her,—she led her a dreadful life," said Margray, shivering; "and the end of it all was, that Mary promised to give up Helmar, would my mother drop the suit of Seavern. And at that, Helmar burst in: he was like one wild, and he conjured Mary,—but she sat there stone-still, looking through him with the eyes in her white, deadly face, as though she'd never seen him, and answering no word, as if she were deaf to sound of his voice henceforth; and he rose and glared down on my mother, who stood there with her white throat up, proud and defiant as a stag at bay,—and he vowed he'd darken her day, for she had taken the light out of his life. And Angus was by: he'd sided with Helmar till then; but at the threat, he took the other by the shoulder and led him to the door, with a blue blaze in those Ingestre eyes, and Helmar never resisted, but fell down on his face on the stones and shuddered with sobs, and we heard them into the night, but with morning he was gone."

"Oh! And Mary?"



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“Deed, I don’t think she cares. She’s never mentioned his name. D’you mind that ring of rubies she wears, like drops of blood all round the hoop? ’Twas his. She shifted it to the left hand, I saw. It was broken once,—and what do you think she did? She put a blow-pipe at the candle-flame, and, holding it up in tiny pincers, soldered the two ends together without taking it off her finger,—and it burning into the bone! Strathsay grit. It’s on her white wedding-finger. The scar’s there, too.—St! Where’s your music? You’ve not played a note these five minutes. Whisht! here comes my mother!”

How was Helmar to darken my mother’s day, I couldn’t but think, as I began to toss off the tune again. And poor Mary,—there were more scars than I carried, in the house. But while I turned the thoughts over, Angus came for me to dance, and Margray, he said, should play, and my mother signed consent, and so I went.

But ’twas a heavy heart I carried to and fro, as I remembered what I’d heard, and perhaps it colored everything else with gloom. Why was Angus holding my hand as we glided? why was I by his side as we stood? and as he spoke, why was I so dazzled with delight at the sound that I could not gather the sense? Oh, why, but that I loved him, and that his noble compassion would make him the same to me at first as ever,—slowly, slowly, slowly lowering, while he turned to Effie or some other fair-faced lass? Ah, it seemed to me then in a rebellious heart that my lot was bitter. And fearful that my sorrow would abroad, I broke into a desperation of gayety till my mother’s hand was on my arm. But all the while, Angus had been by, perplexed shadows creeping over his brow;—and in fresh terror lest my hidden woe should rise and look him in the face, all my mother’s pride itself shivered through me, and I turned my shoulder on him with a haughty, pettish chill.

So after that first evening the days and nights went by, went by on leaden wings; for I wanted the thing over, it seemed I couldn’t wait, I desired my destiny to be accomplished and done with. Angus was ever there when occasion granted,—for there were drives and sails and rambles to lead him off; and though he’d urge, I would not join them, not even at my mother’s bidding,—she had taught me to have a strange shrinking from all careless eyes;—and then, moreover, there were dinners and balls, and them he must needs attend, seeing they were given for him,—and I fancy here that my mother half repented her decree concerning the time when I should enter society, or, rather, should *not*,—yet she never knew how to take step in recedure.

But what made it hardest of all was a word of Margray’s one day as I sat over at her house hushing the little Graeme, who was sore vexed with the rash, and his mother was busy plaiting ribbons and muslins for Effie,—Effie, who seemed all at once to be blossoming out of her slight girlhood into the perfect rose of the woman that Mary Strathsay was already, and about her nothing lingering rathe or raw, but everywhere a sweet and ripe maturity. And Margray said,—



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“Now, Alice, tell me, why are you so curt with Angus? Did he start when he saw you first?”

“Nay, I scarcely think so, Margray; he knew about it, you know. *‘Sleep, baby, sleep, in slumber deep, and smite across thy dreaming’*—”

“Deed, he didn’t! He told me so himself. He said he’d been ever fancying you fresh and fair as the day he left you,—and his heart cracked when you turned upon him.”

“Poor Angus, then,—he never showed it. *‘Hush, baby, hush’*—”

“He said he’d have died first!”

“Then perhaps he never meant for you to tell me, Margray.”

“Oh, what odds? He said,—I’ll tell you what else he said,—you’re a kind, patient heart, and there’s no need for you to fret,—he said, as he’d done you such injury, were there even no other consideration, he should deem it his duty to repair it, so far as possible, both by the offer of his hand, and, should it be accepted, by tender faithfulness for life.”

“Oh, Margray! did Angus say that? Oh, how chanced he to? Oh, how dared he?”

“They’re not his very words, belike; but that’s the way I sensed them. How came he? Why,—you see,—I’m not content with my mother’s slow way of things,—that’s just the truth!—it’s like the season’s adding grain on grain of sunshine or of rain in ripening her fruit,—it’s oftenest the quick blow strikes home; and so I just went picking out what I wanted to know for myself.”

“Oh, Margray,—I suppose,—what *did* he think?”

“Think? He didn’t stop to think; he was mighty glad to meet somebody to speak to. You may just thank your stars that you have such a lover, child!”

“I’ve got no lover!” I wailed, breaking out in crying above the babe. “Oh, why was I born? I’m like to die! I wish I were under the sods this day!”

“Oh, goodness me!” exclaimed Margray, in a terror. “What’s possessed the girl? And I thinking to please her so! Whisht now, Ailie girl,—there, dear, be still,—there, now, wipe away the tears; you’re weak and nervous, I believe,—you’d best take a blue-pill to-night. There’s the boy awake, and none but you can hush him off. It’s odd, though, what a liking he’s taken to his Aunt Ailie!”

And so she kept on, diverting me, for Margray had some vague idea that my crying would bring my mother; and she’d not have her know of her talk with Angus, for the



world;—marriage after marriage would not lighten the rod of iron that Mrs. Strathsay held over her girls' lives, I ween.

And now, having no need to be gay, I indulged my fancy and was sad; and the more Angus made as if he would draw near, the more I turned him off, as scale-armor turns a glancing blade. Yet there had been times when, seeming as if he would let things go my own gate, he had come and sat beside me in the house, or joined his horse's bridle to mine in the woods, and syllables slipped into sentences, and the



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hours flew winged as we talked; and warmed into forgetfulness, all the sweet side of me—if such there be—came out and sunned itself. And then I would remember me and needs must wear the ice again, as some dancing, glancing, limpid brook should sheathe itself in impenetrable crystals. And all those hours—for seldom were the moments when, against my will I was compelled to gladness—I became more and more alone; for Effie being the soul of the festivities,—since Mary Strathsay oftenest stood cold and proudly by, wax-white and like a statue on the wall,—and all the world looking on at what they deemed to be no less than Angus's courtship, I saw little of her except I rose on my arm to watch her smiling sleep deep in the night. And she was heartsome as the lark's song up the blue lift, and of late was never to be found in those two hours when my mother kept her room at mid-day, and was over-fond of long afternoon strolls down the river-bank or away in the woods by herself. Once I fancied to see another walking with her there out in the hay-fields beyond, walking with her in the sunshine, bending above her, perhaps an arm about her, but the leafy shadows trembled between us and darkened them out of sight. And something possessed me to think that the dear girl cared for my Angus. Had I been ever so ready to believe my own heart's desire, how could I but stifle it at that? It seemed as if the iron spikes of trouble were thrust from solid bars of fate woven this way and that across me, till with the last and newest complication I grew to knowing no more where to turn than the toad beneath the harrow.

So the weeks went by. Angus had gone home on his affairs,—for he had long left the navy,—but was presently to return to us. It was the sweet September weather: mild the mellow sunshine,—but dour the days to me!

There was company in the house that evening, and I went down another way; for the sound of their liting and laughing was but din in my ears. I passed Mary Strathsay, as I left my room; she had escaped a moment from below, had set the casement wide in the upper hall, and was walking feverishly to and fro, her arms folded, her dress blowing about her: she'll often do the same in her white wrapper now, at dead of dark in any stormy night: she could not find sufficient air to breathe, and something set her heart on fire, some influence oppressed her with unrest and longing, some instinct, some unconscious prescience, made her all astir. I passed her and went down, and I hid myself in the arbor, quite overgrown with wild, rank vines of late summer, and listened to a little night-bird pouring out his complaining heart.

While I sat, I heard the muffled sound of horses' feet prancing in the flagged court-yard,—for the house fronted on the street, one end overhanging the river, the back and the north side lost in the gardens that stretched up to Margray's grounds one way and down to the water's brink the other, so the stroke of their impatient hoofs reached me but faintly; yet I knew 'twas Angus and Mr. March of the Hill, whom Angus had written us he was to visit. And then the voices within shook into a chorus of happy welcome, the



strain of one who sang came fuller on the breeze, the lights seemed to burn clearer, the very flowers of the garden blew a sweeter breath about me.



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'Twas nought but my own perversity that hindered me from joining the glee, that severed me from all the happiness; but I chose rather to be miserable in my solitude, and I turned my back upon it, and went along and climbed the steps and sat on the broad garden-wall, and looked down into the clear, dark water ever slipping by, and took the fragrance of the night, and heard the chime of the chordant sailors as they heaved the anchor of some ship a furlong down the stream,—voices breathing out of the dusky distance, rich and deep. And looking at the little boat tethered there beneath, I mind that I bethought me then how likely 'twould be for one in too great haste to unlock the water-gate of the garden, climbing these very steps, and letting herself down by the branch of this old dipping willow here, how likely 'twould be for one, should the boat but slip from under, how likely 'twould be for one to sink in the two fathom of tide,—dress or scarf but tangling in the roots of the great tree reaching out hungrily through the dark, transparent depth below,—how likely to drown or e'er a hand could raise her! And I mind, when thinking of the cool, embracing flow, the drawing, desiring, tender current, the swift, soft, rushing death, I placed my own hand on the willow-branch, and drew back, stung as if by conscience that I trifled thus with a gift so sacred as life.

Then I went stealing up the alleys again, beginning to be half afraid, for they seemed to me full of something strange, unusual sound, rustling motion,—whether it were a waving bough, a dropping o'er-ripe pear, a footstep on adjacent walks. Nay, indeed, I saw now! I leaned against the beach-bole there, all wrapt in shade, and looked at them where they inadvertently stood in the full gleam of the lighted windows: 'twas Angus, and 'twas Effie. He spoke,—a low, earnest pleading,—I could not hear a word, or I had fled,—then he stooped, and his lips had touched her brow. Oh, had he but struck me! less had been the blow, less the smart!—the blow, though all along I had awaited it. Ah, I remembered another kiss, one that had sunk into my brain as a pearl would sink in the sea, that when my heart had been saddest I had but just to shut my eyes and feel again falling soft and warm on my lids, lingering, loving, interpenetrating my soul with its glow;—and this, oh, 't was like a blade cleaving that same brain with swift, sharp flash! I flew into the house, but Effie was almost there before me,—and on my way, falling, gliffed in the gloom, against something, I snatched me back with a dim feeling that 't was Angus, and yet Angus had followed Effie in. I slipped among the folk and sat down somewhere at length like as if stunned.



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It was question of passing the time, that went round; for, though all their words fell dead on my ear at the moment, it was in character that afterward I could recall, reilluminate, and read; and one was for games, and one for charades, and one for another thing;—and I sat silent and dazed through it all. Finally they fell to travesty scenes from history, each assuming a name and supporting it by his own wits, but it all passed before my dulled senses like the phantasmagoria of a troubled dream; and that tiring, there was a kind of dissolving views managed by artful ebb and flow of light, pictures at whose ending the Rose of May was lost in Francesca, who, waxing and waning in her turn, faded into Astarte, and went out in a shudder of darkness,—and the three were Effie. But ere the views were done, ere those three visions, when Effie ran away to dress her part, I after her and up into our room, vaguely, but as if needs must.

“I’ve good news for you,” said she, without looking, and twisting her long, bright hair. “I was with Angus but now in the garden. He can bear it no longer, and he touched my brow with his lips that I promised to urge his cause; for he loves you, he loves you, Alice! Am I not kind to think of it now? Ah, if you knew all!”

She had already donned the gown of silvery silk and blonde, and was winding round her head the long web of lace loosened from my mother’s broidery-frame. She turned and took me by the two shoulders, and looked into my face with eyes of azure flame.

“I am wild with gladness!” she said. “Kiss me, girl, quick! there’s no time to spare. Kiss me on the cheek,—not the lip, not the lip,—*he* kissed me there! Kiss me the cheek,—one, and the other! So, brow, cheeks, mouth, and your kisses all have signed me with the sign of the cross. Oh, girl, I am wild with joy!”

She spoke swift and high, held me by the two shoulders with a clasp like steel, suddenly shook me loose, and was down and away.

I followed her again, as by habit,—but more slowly: I was trying to distil her words. I stood then in the door of a little ante-room opening into the drawing-room and looking on the courtyard, and gazed thence at those three pictures, as if it were all a delirament, till out of them Effie stepped in person, and danced, trilling to herself, through the groups, flashing, sparkling, flickering, and disappeared. Oh, but Mrs. Strathsay’s eyes gleamed in a proud pleasure after her!

Hoofs were clattering again below in the yard, for Angus was to ride back with Mr. March. Some one came my way,—I shrank through the door-way, shivering from top to toe,—it was Angus searching for his cap; and it was so long since I had suffered him to exchange a word with me! I know not what change was wrought in my bewildered lineaments, what light was in my glance; but, seeing me, all that sedate sadness that weighed upon his manner fell aside, he hastily strode toward me, took my hands as he was wont, and drew me in, gazing the while down my dazzled, happy eyes till they fell.



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“Ay, lass,” said he then, laughing gleefully as any boy, and catching both of my hands again that I had drawn away. “I’ve a puzzle of my own to show thee,—a charade of two syllables,—a tiny thing, and yet it holds my world! See, the first!”

He had led me to the mirror and stationed me there alone. I liked not to look, but I did.

“Why, Angus,” I said, “it’s I.”

“Well done! and go to the head. It’s you indeed. But what else, Ailie darling? Nay, I’ll tell you, then. The first syllable—just to suit my fancy—shall be bride, shall it not?”

“Bride,” I murmured.

“And there behold the last syllable!” taking a step aside to the window, and throwing wide the blind.

I looked down the dark, but there was nought except the servant in the light of the hanging lamp, holding the curbs of the two horses that leaped and reared with nervous limbs and fiery eyes behind him.

“Is it horses?—steeds?—oh, bridles!”

“But thou’rt a very dunce! The last syllable is groom.”

“Oh!”

“Now you shall see the embodiment of the whole word”; and with the step he was before the glass again. “Look!” he said; “look from under my arm,—you are just as high as my heart!”

“Why, that’s you, Angus,”—and a gleam was dawning on me.

“Of course it is, little stupid! No less. And it’s bridegroom too, and never bridegroom but with this bride!” And he had turned upon me and was taking me into his arms.

“Oh, Angus!” I cried,—“can you love me with no place on my face to kiss?”

But he found a place.

“Can I help loving you?” he said,—“Oh, Ailie, I do! I do—when all my years you have been my dream, my hope, my delight, when my life is yours, when you are my very self!”

And I clung to him for answer, hiding all my troubled joy in his breast.



Then, while he still held me so, silent and tender, close-folding,—there rose a great murmur through the rooms, and all the people surged up to one end, and Margray burst in upon us, calling him. He drew me forth among them all, his arm around my waist, and they opened a lane for us to the window giving into the garden, and every eye was bent there on a ghastly forehead, a grim white face, a terrible face, pressed against the glass, and glaring in with awful eyes!

“By Heaven, it is Helmar!” cried Angus, fire leaping up his brow;—but Mary Strathsay touched him to stone with a fling of her white finger, and went like a ghost herself and opened the casement, as the other signed for her to do. He never gave her glance or word, but stepped past her straight to my mother, and laid the white, shining, dripping bundle that he bore—the trilling hushed, the sparkle quenched, so flaccid, so limp, so awfully still—at her feet.

“I never loved the girl,” he said, hoarsely. “Yet to-night she would have fled with me. It was my revenge, Mrs. Strathsay! She found her own death from a careless foot, the eager haste of an arm, the breaking branch of your willow-tree. Woman! woman!” he cried, shaking his long white hand before her face, “you took the light out of my life, and I swore to darken your days!”



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Mrs. Strathsay fell forward on the body with a long, low moan. He faced about and slid through us all, ere Angus could lay hand on him,—his eye on Mary Strathsay. There was no love on her face, no expectancy, no passion, but she flung herself between the two,—between Angus following and Helmar going, for he distained to fly,—then shut and clasped the window, guarded it beneath one hand, and held Angus with her eye, white, silent, deathly, no joy, no woe, only a kind of bitter triumph in achieving that escape. And it was as if Satan had stalked among us there.

'Twas no use pursuit;—the ship that I had heard weighing anchor was reached ere then and winging down the river. And from that hour to this we have never set eyes on Helmar.

Well, at midsummer of the next year Angus married me. We were very quiet, and I wore the white slip in which he showed me myself in the glass as a a bride,—for we would not cast aside our crapes so soon, and Mary wears hers to this day. From morn till night my poor mother used only to sit and moan, and all her yellow hair was white as driving snow. I could not leave her, so Angus rented his estates and came and lived with us. 'Tis different now;—Mrs. Strathsay goes about as of old, and sees there be no speck on the buttery-shelves, that the sirup of her lucent plums be clear as the light strained through carbuncles, her honeycombs unbroken, her bread like manna, and no followers about her maids. And Mrs. Strathsay has her wish at length;—there's a son in the house, a son of her own choosing, (for she had ever small regard for the poor little Graeme,)—none knew how she had wished it, save by the warmth with which she hailed it,—and she is bringing him up in the way he should go. She's aye softer than she was, she does not lay her moulding finger on him too heavily;—if she did, I doubt but we should have to win away to our home. Dear body! all her sunshine has come out! He has my father's name, and when sleep's white finger has veiled his bonnie eyes, and she sits by him, grand and stately still, but humming low ditties that I never heard her sing before, I verily believe that she fancies him to be my father's child.

And still in the nights of clear dark we lean from the broad bower-window and watch the river flowing by, the rafts swimming down with breath of wood-scents and wild life, the small boats rocking on the tide, revivifying our childhood with the strength of our richer years, heart so locked in heart that we have no need of words,—Angus and I. And often, as we lean so, over the beautiful silence of lapping ripple and dipping oar there floats a voice rising and falling in slow throbs of tune;—it is Mary Strathsay singing some old sanctified chant, and her soul seems to soar with her voice, and both would be lost in heaven but for the tender human sympathies that draw her back to our side again. For we have grown to be a glad and peaceful family at length;



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'tis only on rare seasons that the old wound rankles. We none of us speak of Effie, lest it involve the mention of Helmar; we none of us speak of Helmar, lest, with the word, a shining, desolate, woful phantom flit like the wraith of Effie before us. But I think that Mary Strathsay lives now in the dream of hereafter, in the dream that some day, perchance when all her white beauty is gone and her hair folded in silver, a dark, sad man will come off the seas, worn with the weather and with weight of sorrow and pain, and lay himself down at her feet to die. And shrived by sorrow and pain, and by prayer, he shall be lifted in her arms, shall rest on her bosom, and her soul shall forth with his into the great unknown.

LYRICS OF THE STREET.

IV.

THE FINE LADY.

Her heart is set on folly,
An amber gathering straws;
She courts each poor occurrence,
Heeds not the heavenly laws.
Pity her!

She has a little beauty,
And she flaunts it in the day,
While the selfish wrinkles, spreading,
Steal all its charm away.
Pity her!

She has a little money,
And she flings it everywhere;
'T is a gewgaw on her bosom,
'T is a tinsel in her hair.
Pity her!

She has a little feeling,
She spreads a foolish net
That snares her own weak footsteps,
Not his for whom 't is set.
Pity her!



Ye harmless household drudges,
Y our draggled daily wear
And horny palms of labor
A softer heart may bear.
Pity her!

Ye steadfast ones, whose burthens
Weigh valorous shoulders down,
With hands that cannot idle,
And brows that will not frown,
Pity her!

Ye saints, whose thoughts are folded
As graciously to rest
As a dove's stainless pinions
Upon her guileless breast,
Pity her!

But most, ye helpful angels
That send distress and work,
Hot task and sweating forehead,
To heal man's idle irk,
Pity her!

A REPLY

TO "THE AFFECTIONATE AND CHRISTIAN ADDRESS OF MANY THOUSANDS OF WOMEN OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND TO THEIR SISTERS THE WOMEN OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA."

Signed by

ANNA MARIA BEDFORD (*Duchess of Bedford*).

OLIVIA CECILIA COWLEY (*Countess Cowley*).

CONSTANCE GROSVENOR (*Countess Grosvenor*).

HARRIET SUTHERLAND (*Duchess of Sutherland*).

ELIZABETH ARGYLL (*Duchess of Argyll*).

ELIZABETH FORTESCUE (*Countess Fortescue*).

EMILY SHAFTESBURY (*Countess of Shaftesbury*).

MARY RUTHVEN (*Baroness Ruthven*).



M.A. MILMAN (*Wife of Dean of St. Paul's*).

R. BUXTON (*Daughter of Sir Thomas Powell Buxton*).



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CAROLINE AMELIA OWEN (*Wife of Professor Owen*).

MRS. CHARLES WINDHAM.

C.A. HATHERTON (*Baroness Hatherton*).

ELIZABETH DUCIE (*Countess Dowager of Ducie*).

CECILIA PARKE (*Wife of Baron Parke*).

MARY ANN CHALLIS (*Wife of the Lord Mayor of London*).

E. GORDON (*Duchess Dowager of Gordon*).

ANNA M.L. MELVILLE (*Daughter of Earl of Leven and Melville*).

GEORGIANA EBRINGTON (*Lady Ebrington*).

A. HILL (*Viscountess Hill*).

MRS. GOBAT (*Wife of Bishop Gobat of Jerusalem*).

E. PALMERSTON (*Viscountess Palmerston*).

and others.

Sisters,—More than eight years ago you sent to us in America a document with the above heading. It is as follows:—

“A common origin, a common faith, and, we sincerely believe, a common cause, urge us, at the present moment, to address you on the subject of that system of negro slavery which still prevails so extensively, and, even under kindly disposed masters, with such frightful results, in many of the vast regions of the Western world.

“We will not dwell on the ordinary topics,—on the progress of civilization, on the advance of freedom everywhere, on the rights and requirements of the nineteenth century; but we appeal to you very seriously to reflect and to ask counsel of God how far such a state of things is in accordance with His Holy Word, the inalienable rights of immortal souls, and the pure and merciful spirit of the Christian religion. We do not shut our eyes to the difficulties, nay, the dangers, that might beset the immediate abolition of that long-established system. We see and admit the necessity of preparation for so great an event; but, in speaking of indispensable preliminaries, we cannot be silent on those laws of your country which, in direct contravention of God’s own law, ‘instituted in the time of man’s innocency,’ deny in effect to the slave the sanctity of marriage, with all its joys, rights, and obligations; which separate, at the will of the master, the wife from



the husband and the children from the parents. Nor can we be silent on that awful system which either by statute or by custom interdicts to any race of man or any portion of the human family education in the truths of the gospel and the ordinances of Christianity. A remedy applied to these two evils alone would commence the amelioration of their sad condition. We appeal to you, then, as sisters, as wives, and as mothers, to raise your voices to your fellow-citizens and your prayers to God for the removal of this affliction and disgrace from the Christian world.

“We do not say these things in a spirit of self-complacency, as though our nation were free from the guilt it perceives in others.

“We acknowledge with grief and shame our heavy share in this great sin. We acknowledge that our forefathers introduced, nay, compelled the adoption of slavery in those mighty colonies. We humbly confess it before Almighty God; and it is because we so deeply feel and so unfeignedly avow our own complicity, that we now venture to implore your aid to wipe away our common crime and our common dishonor.”

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This address, splendidly illuminated on vellum, was sent to our shores at the head of twenty-six folio volumes, containing considerably more than half a million of signatures of British women. It was forwarded to me with a letter from a British nobleman now occupying one of the highest official positions in England, with a request on behalf of these ladies that it should be in any possible way presented to the attention of my countrywomen.

This memorial, as it now stands in its solid oaken case, with its heavy folios, each bearing on its back the imprint of the American eagle, forms a most unique library, a singular monument of an international expression of a moral idea.

No right-thinking person can find aught to be objected against the substance or the form of this memorial. It is temperate, just, and kindly, and on the high ground of Christian equality, where it places itself, may be regarded as a perfectly proper expression of sentiment, as between blood-relations and equals in two different nations.

The signatures to this appeal are not the least remarkable part of it; for, beginning at the very steps of the throne, they go down to the names of women in the very humblest conditions in life, and represent all that Great Britain possesses, not only of highest and wisest, but of plain, homely common sense and good feeling. Names of wives of cabinet-ministers appear on the same page with the names of wives of humble laborers, —names of duchesses and countesses, of wives of generals, ambassadors, savans, and men of letters, mingled with names traced in trembling characters by hands evidently unused to hold the pen and stiffened by lowly toil. Nay, so deep and expansive was the feeling, that British subjects in foreign lands had their representation. Among the signatures are those of foreign residents from Paris to Jerusalem. Autographs so diverse, and collected from sources so various, have seldom been found in juxtaposition. They remain at this day a silent witness of a most singular tide of feeling which at that time swept over the British community, and *made* for itself an expression, even at the risk of offending the sensibilities of an equal and powerful nation.

No reply to that address, in any such tangible and monumental form, has ever been possible. It was impossible to canvass our vast territories with the zealous and indefatigable industry with which England was canvassed for signatures. In America, those possessed of the spirit which led to this efficient action had no leisure for it. All their time and energies were already absorbed in direct efforts to remove the great evil concerning which the minds of their English sisters had been newly aroused, and their only answer was the silent continuance of these efforts.

From the Slaveholding States, however, as was to be expected, came a flood of indignant recrimination and rebuke. No one act, perhaps, ever produced more frantic irritation or called out more unsparing abuse. It came with the whole united weight of the British aristocracy and commonalty on the most diseased and sensitive part of our

national life; and it stimulated that fierce excitement which was working before and has worked since till it has broken out into open war.



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The time has come, however, when such an astonishing page has been turned in the anti-slavery history of America, that the women of our country, feeling that the great anti-slavery work to which their English sisters exhorted them is almost done, may properly and naturally feel moved to reply to their appeal, and lay before them the history of what has occurred since the receipt of their affectionate and Christian address.

Your address reached us just as a great moral conflict was coming to its intensest point.

The agitation kept up by the anti-slavery portion of America, by England, and by the general sentiment of humanity in Europe, had made the situation of the slaveholding aristocracy intolerable. As one of them at the time expressed it, they felt themselves under the ban of the civilized world. Two courses only were open to them: to abandon slave institutions, the sources of their wealth and political power, or to assert them with such an overwhelming national force as to compel the respect and assent of mankind. They chose the latter.

To this end they determined to seize on and control all the resources of the Federal Government, and to spread their institutions through new States and Territories until the balance of power should fall into their hands and they should be able to force slavery into all the Free States.

A leading Southern senator boasted that he would yet call the roll of his slaves on Bunker Hill; and, for a while, the political successes of the Slave Power were such as to suggest to New England that this was no impossible event.

They repealed the Missouri Compromise, which had hitherto stood, like the Chinese wall, between our Northwestern Territories and the irruptions of slaveholding barbarians.

Then came the struggle between Freedom and Slavery in the new Territory,—the battle for Kansas and Nebraska, fought with fire and sword and blood, where a race of men, of whom John Brown was the immortal type, acted over again the courage, the perseverance, and the military religious ardor of the old Covenanters of Scotland, and, like them, redeemed the Ark of Liberty at the price of their own blood and blood dearer than their own.

The time of the Presidential canvass which elected Mr. Lincoln was the crisis of this great battle. The conflict had become narrowed down to the one point of the extension of slave-territory. If the slaveholders could get States enough, they could control and rule; if they were outnumbered by Free States, their institutions, by the very law of their nature, would die of suffocation. Therefore, Fugitive-Slave Law, District of Columbia, Inter-State Slave-Trade, and what not, were all thrown out of sight for a grand rally on this vital point. A President was elected pledged to opposition to this one thing alone,—a man known to be in favor of the Fugitive-Slave Law and other so-called compromises of the Constitution, but honest and faithful in his determination on this one subject. That

this was indeed the vital point was shown by the result. The moment Lincoln's election was ascertained, the slaveholders resolved to destroy the Union they could no longer control.



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They met and organized a Confederacy which they openly declared to be the first republic founded on the right and determination of the white man to enslave the black man, and, spreading their banners, declared themselves to the Christian world of the nineteenth century as a nation organized with the full purpose and intent of perpetuating slavery.

But in the course of the struggle that followed, it became important for the new Confederation to secure the assistance of foreign powers, and infinite pains were then taken to blind and bewilder the mind of England as to the real issues of the conflict in America.

It has been often and earnestly asserted that slavery had nothing to do with this conflict; that it was a mere struggle for power; that the only object was to restore the Union as it was, with all its abuses. It is to be admitted that expressions have proceeded from the National Administration which naturally gave rise to misapprehension, and therefore we beg to speak to you on this subject more fully.

And, first, the declaration of the Confederate States themselves is proof enough, that, whatever may be declared on the other side, the maintenance of slavery is regarded by them as the vital object of their movement.

We ask your attention under this head to the declaration of their Vice-President, Stephens, in that remarkable speech delivered on the 21st of March, 1861, at Savannah, Georgia, wherein he declares the object and purposes of the new Confederacy. It is one of the most extraordinary papers which our century has produced. I quote from the *verbatim* report in the Savannah "Republican" of the address as it was delivered in the Athenaeum of that city, on which occasion, says the newspaper from which I copy, "Mr. Stephens took his seat amid a burst of enthusiasm and applause, such as the Athenaeum has never had displayed within its walls, within 'the recollection of the oldest inhabitant.'"

"Last, not least, the new Constitution has put at rest *forever* all the agitating questions relating to our peculiar institution,—African Slavery as it exists among us, the proper *status* of the negro in our form of civilization. *This was the immediate cause of the late rupture and present revolution.* Jefferson, in his forecast, had anticipated this, as the 'rock upon which the old Union would split.' He was right. What was conjecture with him is now a realized fact. But whether he fully comprehended the great truth upon which that rock *stood* and *stands* may be doubted. *The prevailing ideas entertained by him and most of the leading statesmen at the time of the formation of the old Constitution were that the enslavement of the African was in violation of the laws of Nature, that it was wrong in principle, socially, morally, and politically.* It was an evil they knew not well how to deal with; but the general opinion of the men of that day was, that,



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somehow or other, in the order of Providence, the institution would be evanescent, and pass away. This idea, though not incorporated in the Constitution, was the prevailing idea at the time. The Constitution, it is true, secured every essential guaranty to the institution, while it should last; and hence no argument can be justly used against the Constitutional guaranties thus secured, because of the common sentiment of the day. *Those ideas, however, were fundamentally wrong. They rested upon the assumption of the equality of races. This was an error.* It was a sandy foundation; and the idea of a government built upon it—when ‘the storm came and the wind blew, it fell.’

“Our new government is founded upon on exactly the opposite ideas: its foundations are laid, its corner-stone rests, upon the great truth that the negro is not equal to the white man; that slavery, subordination to the superior race, is his natural and moral condition. (Applause.) This our new government is the first, in the history of the world, based upon this great physical, philosophical, and moral truth.

“This truth has been slow in the process of its development, like all other truths in the various departments of science. It is so even amongst us. Many who hear me, perhaps, can recollect well that this truth was not generally admitted, even within their day. The errors of the past generation still clung to many as late as twenty years ago. Those at the North who still cling to these errors with a zeal above knowledge we justly denominate fanatics. All fanaticism springs from an aberration of the mind, from a defect in reasoning. It is a species of insanity. One of the most striking characteristics of insanity, in many instances, is forming correct conclusions from fancied or erroneous premises. So with the *anti-slavery* fanatics: their conclusions are right, if their premises are. They assume that the negro is equal, and hence conclude that he is entitled to equal privileges and rights with the white man. If their premises were correct, their conclusions would be logical and just; but their premises being wrong, their whole argument fails.

* * * * *

“In the conflict thus far, success has been on our side complete, throughout the length and breadth of the Confederate States. It is upon this, as I have stated, our social fabric is firmly planted; and I cannot permit myself to doubt the ultimate success of a full recognition of this principle throughout the civilized and enlightened world.

“As I have stated, the truth of this principle may be slow in development, as all truths are, and ever have been, in the various branches of science. It was so with the principles announced by Galileo; it was so with Adam Smith and his principles of political economy; It was so with Harvey in his theory of the circulation of the blood. It is said that not a single one of the medical profession, at the time



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of the announcement of the truths made by him, admitted them; now they are universally acknowledged. May we not, therefore, look with confidence to the ultimate universal acknowledgment of the truths upon which our system rests? It is the first government ever instituted upon principles in strict conformity to Nature and the ordination of Providence in furnishing the material of human society. Many governments have been founded upon the principles of certain classes; but the classes thus enslaved were of the same race and in violation of the laws of Nature. Our system commits no such violation of Nature's laws. The negro, by Nature, or by the curse against Canaan, is fitted for that condition which he occupies in our system. The architect, in the construction of buildings, lays the foundation with the proper material, —the granite; then comes the brick or marble. The substratum of our society is made of the material fitted by Nature for it; and by experience we know that it is best not only for the superior, but the inferior race, that it should be so. It is indeed in conformity with the Creator. It is not safe for us to inquire into the wisdom of His ordinances, or to question them. For His own purposes He has made one race to differ from another, as one star differeth from another in glory. The great objects of humanity are best attained, when conformed to His laws and decrees in the formation of government as well as in all things else. Our Confederacy is founded on a strict conformity with those laws. *This stone, which was rejected by the first builders, has become the chief stone of the corner in our new edifice!"*

Thus far the declarations of the slave-holding Confederacy.

On the other hand, the declarations of the President and the Republican party, as to their intention to restore "the Union as it was," require an explanation. It is the doctrine of the Republican party, that Freedom is national and Slavery sectional; that the Constitution of the United States was designed for the promotion of liberty, and not of slavery; that its framers contemplated the gradual abolition of slavery; and that in the hands of an anti-slavery majority it could be so wielded as peaceably to extinguish this great evil.

They reasoned thus. Slavery ruins land, and requires fresh territory for profitable working. Slavery increases a dangerous population, and requires an expansion of this population for safety. Slavery, then, being hemmed in by impassable limits, emancipation in each State becomes a necessity.

By restoring the Union as it was the Republican party meant the Union in the sense contemplated by the original framers of it, who, as has been admitted by Stephens, in his speech just quoted, were from principle opposed to slavery. It was, then, restoring a *status* in which, by the inevitable operation of natural laws, peaceful emancipation would become a certainty.



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In the mean while, during the past year, the Republican Administration, with all the unwonted care of organizing an army and navy, and conducting military operations on an immense scale, have proceeded to demonstrate the feasibility of overthrowing slavery by purely Constitutional measures. To this end they have instituted a series of movements which have made this year more fruitful in anti-slavery triumphs than any other since the emancipation of the British West Indies.

The District of Columbia, as belonging strictly to the National Government, and to no separate State, has furnished a fruitful subject of remonstrance from British Christians with America. We have abolished slavery there, and thus wiped out the only blot of territorial responsibility on our escutcheon.

By another act, equally grand principle, and far more important in its results, slavery is forever excluded from the Territories of the United States.

By another act, America has consummated the long-delayed treaty with Great Britain for the suppression of the slave-trade. In ports whence slave-vessels formerly sailed with the connivance of the port-officers, the Administration has placed men who stand up to their duty, and for the first time in our history the slave-trader, is convicted and hung as a pirate. This abominable secret traffic has been wholly demolished by the energy of the Federal Government.

Lastly, and more significant still, the United States Government has in its highest official capacity taken distinct anti-slavery ground, and presented to the country a plan of peaceable emancipation with suitable compensation. This noble-spirited and generous offer has been urged on the Slaveholding States by the Chief Executive with an earnestness and sincerity of which history in after-times will make honorable account in recording the events of Mr. Lincoln's administration.

Now, when a President and Administration who have done all these things declare their intention of restoring "*the Union as it was*," ought not the world fairly to interpret their words by their actions and their avowed principles? Is it not *necessary* to infer that they mean by it the Union as it was in the intent of its anti-slavery framers, under which, by the exercise of normal Constitutional powers, slavery should be peaceably abolished?

We are aware that this theory of the Constitution has been disputed by certain Abolitionists; but it is conceded, you have seen, by the Secessionists. Whether it be a just theory or not is, however, nothing to our purpose at present. We only assert that such is the professed belief of the present Administration of the United States, and such are the acts by which they have illustrated their belief.

But this is but half the story of the anti-slavery triumphs of this year. We have shown you what has been done for freedom by the simple use of the ordinary Constitutional

forces of the Union. We are now to show you what has been done to the same end by the Constitutional war-power of the nation.



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By this power it has been this year decreed that every slave of a Rebel who reaches the lines of our army becomes a free man; that all slaves found deserted by their masters become free men; that every slave employed in any service for the United States thereby obtains his liberty; and that every slave employed against the United States in any capacity obtains his liberty: and lest the army should contain officers disposed to remand slaves to their masters, the power of judging and delivering up slaves is denied to army-officers, and all such acts are made penal.

By this act, the Fugitive-Slave Law is for all present purposes practically repealed. With this understanding and provision, wherever our armies march, they carry liberty with them. For be it remembered that our army is almost entirely a volunteer one, and that the most zealous and ardent volunteers are those who have been for years fighting with tongue and pen the Abolition battle. So marked is the character of our soldiers in this respect, that they are now familiarly designated in the official military despatches of the Confederate States as "The Abolitionists." Conceive the results, when an army, so empowered by national law, marches through a slave-territory. One regiment alone has to our certain knowledge liberated two thousand slaves during the past year, and this regiment it but one out of hundreds. We beg to lay before you some details given by an eye-witness of what has recently been done in this respect in the Department of the South.

"On Board Steamer from Fortress Monroe to Baltimore, Nov. 14, 1862.

"Events of no ordinary interest have just occurred in the Department of the South. The negro troops have been tested, and, to their great joy, though not contrary to their own expectations, they have triumphed, not only over enemies armed with muskets and swords, but over what the black man dreads most, sharp and cruel prejudices.

"General Saxton, on the 28th of October, sent the captured steamer Darlington, Captain Crandell, down the coast of Georgia, and to Fernandina, Florida, to obtain recruits for the First Regiment South-Carolina Volunteers. Lieutenant-Colonel O.T. Beard, of the Forty-Eighth New-York Volunteers, was given the command of the expedition. In addition to obtaining recruits, the condition and wants of the recent refugees from slavery along the coast were to be looked into, and, if occasion should offer, it was permitted to 'feel the enemy.' At St. Simond's, Georgia, Captain Trowbridge, with thirty-five men of the 'Hunter Regiment of First South-Carolina Volunteers,' who had been stationed there for three months, together with twenty-seven more men, were received on board. With this company of sixty-two men the Darlington proceeded to Fernandina.



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“On arriving, a meeting of the colored men was called to obtain enlistments. The large church was crowded. After addresses had been made by the writer and Colonel Beard, one hundred men volunteered at once, and the number soon reached about one hundred and twenty-five. Such, however, were the demands of Fort Clinch and the Quartermaster’s Department for laborers, that Colonel Rich, commanding the fort, consented to only twenty-five men leaving. This was a sad disappointment, and one which some determined not to bear. The twenty-five men were carefully selected from among those not employed either on the fort or in the Quartermaster’s Department, and put on board. Amid the farewells and benedictions of hundreds of their friends on shore they took their departure, to prove the truth or falsity of the charge, ‘The black man can never fight.’ On calling the roll, a few miles from port, it was found our twenty-five men had increased to fifty-four. Determined not to be foiled in their purpose of being soldiers, it was found that thirty men had quietly found their way on board just at break of day, and had concealed themselves in the hold of the ship. When asked why they did so, their reply was,—

“‘Oh, we want to fight for our liberty, and for de liberty of our wives and children.’

“‘But would you dare to face your old masters?’

“‘Oh, yes, yes! why, we would fight to de death to get our families,’ was the quick response.

“No one doubted their sincerity. Muskets were soon in their hands, and no time was lost in drilling them. Our steamer, a very frail one, had been barricaded around the bow and stern, and also provided with two twelve-pounder Parrott guns. These guns had to be worked by black men, under the direction of the captain of the steamer. Our fighting men numbered only about one hundred and ten, and fifty of them were raw recruits. The expedition was not a very formidable one, still all seemed to have an unusual degree of confidence as to its success.

* * * * *

“*November 6.* The women and children (about fifty) taken from St. Simond’s on the day previous were now landed for safety in St. Catharine’s, as a more hazardous work was to be undertaken. Much of the night was spent in getting wood for the steamer, killing beeves, and cooking meats, rice, and corn, for our women and children on shore, and for the troops. The men needed no ‘driver’s lash’ to incite them to labor. Sleep and rest were almost unwelcome, for they were preparing to go up Sapelo River, along whose banks, on the beautiful plantations, were their fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, wives, and children. Weeks and months before, some of the men had left those loved ones, with a promise to return, ‘if de good Lord jis open de way.’



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“At five o'clock on Friday morning, November 7, we were under way. Captain Budd, of the gun-boat Potomska, had kindly promised the evening before to accompany us past the most dangerous places. On reaching his station in Sapelo Sound, we found him in readiness. Our little fleet, led by the Potomska, and followed by the Darlington, sailed proudly up the winding Sapelo, now through marshes, and then past large and beautiful plantations. It was very affecting to see our soldiers watching intensely the colored forms on land, one saying, in the agony of deepest anxiety, ‘Oh, Mas'r, my wife and chillen lib dere,’ and another singing out, ‘Dere, dere my brodder,’ or ‘my sister.’ The earnest longings of their poor, anguish-riven hearts for landings, and then the sad, inexpressible regrets as the steamer passed, must be imagined,—they cannot be described.

“The first landing was made at a picket-station on Charles Hopkins's plantation. The enemy was driven back; a few guns and a sword only captured. The Potomska came to anchorage, for lack of sufficient water, a few miles above, at Reuben King's plantation. Here we witnessed a rich scene. Some fifty negroes appeared on the banks, about thirty rods distant from their master's house, and some distance from the Darlington. They gazed upon us with intense feelings, alternately turning their eyes toward their master, who was watching them from his piazza, and toward our steamer, which, as yet, had given them no assurances of landing. The moment she headed to the shore, their doubts were dispersed, and they gave us such a welcome as angels would be satisfied with. Some few women were so filled with joy, that they ran, leaped, clapped their hands, and cried, ‘Glory to God! Glory to God!’

* * * * *

“After relieving the old planter of twenty thousand dollars' worth of humanity, that is, fifty-two slaves, and the leather of his tannery, we reembarked. Our boats were sent once and again, however, to the shore for men, who, having heard the steam-whistle, came in greatest haste from distant plantations.

“As the Potomska could go no farther, Captain Budd kindly offered to accompany us with one gun's crew. We were glad to have his company and the services of the crew, as we had only one gun's crew of colored men. Above us was a bend in the river, and a high bluff covered with thick woods. There we apprehended danger, for the Rebels had had ample time to collect their forces. The men were carefully posted, fully instructed as to their duties and dangers by Colonel Beard. Our Parrotts were manned, and everything was in readiness. No sooner were we within rifle-shot than the enemy opened upon us a heavy fire from behind the bank and trees, and also from the tops of the trees. Our speed being slow and the river's bend quite large, we were within range of the enemy's guns for some time. How well our troops bore themselves will be seen by Captain Budd's testimony.



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“Our next landing was made at Daniel McDonald's plantation. His extensive and valuable salt-works were demolished, and he himself taken prisoner. By documents captured, it was ascertained that he was a Rebel of the worst kind. We took only a few of his slaves, as he drove back into the woods about ninety of them just before our arrival. One fine-looking man came hobbling down on a crutch. McDonald had shot off one of his legs some eighteen months before. The next plantation had some five hundred slaves on it; several of our troops had come from it, and also had relatives there, but the lateness of the hour and the dangerous points to be passed on our return admonished us to retreat.

“Our next attack was expected at the bluff. The enemy had improved the time since we parted from them in gathering reinforcements. Colonel Beard prepared the men for a warm fire. While everything was in readiness, and the steamer dropping down hard upon the enemy, the writer passed around among the men, who were waiting coolly for the moment of attack, and asked them if they found their courage failing. 'Oh, no, Mas'r, our trust be in de Lord. We only want fair chance at 'em,' was the unanimous cry.

* * * * *

“Most people have doubted the courage of negroes, and their ability to stand a warm fire of the enemy. The engagements of this day were not an open-field fight, to be sure, but the circumstances were peculiar. They were taken by surprise, the enemy concealed, his force not known, and some of the troops had been enlisted only two days. Captain Budd, a brave and experienced officer, and eye-witness of both engagements, has kindly given his opinion, which we are sure will vindicate the policy, as well as justness, of arming the colored man for his own freedom at least.

“United States Steamer Potomska,

“Sapelo River, Ga., Nov. 7, 1862.

“Sir,—It gives me pleasure to testify to the admirable conduct of the negro troops (First S.C. Volunteers) under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Beard, Forty-Eighth New-York Volunteers, during this day's operations. They behaved splendidly under the warm and galling fire we were exposed to in the two skirmishes with the enemy. I did not see a man flinch, contrary to my expectations.

“One of them, particularly, came under my notice, who, although, badly wounded in the face, continued to load and fire, in the coolest manner imaginable.

“Every one of them acted like veterans.

“Very respectfully,

“WILLIAM BUDD,

“Acting-Lieutenant Commanding Potomska.

“*To the Rev. M. French, Chaplain, U.S.A.*’



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“On reaching his ship, Captain Budd led our retreat. It had been agreed, after full consultation on the subject, that, in our descent down the river, it was best to burn the buildings of Captain Hopkins and Colonel Brailsford. Both of these places were strong picket-stations, particularly the latter. Brailsford had been down with a small force a few days before our arrival at St. Catharine’s, and shot one of our contrabands, wounded mortally, as was supposed, another, and carried off four women and three men. He had also whipped to death, three weeks before, a slave for attempting to make his escape. We had on board Sam Miller, a former slave, who had received over three hundred lashes for refusing to inform on a few of his fellows who had escaped.

* * * * *

“On passing among the men, as we were leaving the scenes of action, I inquired if they had grown any to-day. Many simultaneously exclaimed,—“Oh, yes, Massa, we have grown three inches!’ Sam said,—‘I feel a heap more of a man!’

“With the lurid flames still lighting up all the region behind, and the bright rays of the smiling moon before them, they formed a circle on the lower deck, and around the hatchway leading to the hold, where were the women and children captured during the day, and on bended knees they offered up sincere and heartfelt thanksgivings to Almighty God for the mercies of the day. Such fervent prayers for the President, for the hearing of his Proclamation by all in bonds, and for the ending of the war and slavery, were seldom, if ever, heard before. About one hour was spent in singing and prayer. Those waters surely never echoed with such sounds before.

* * * * *

“Our steamer left Beaufort without a soldier, and returned, after an absence of twelve days, with one hundred and fifty-six fighting colored men, some of whom dropped the hoe, took a musket, and were at once soldiers, ready to fight for the freedom of others.”

It is conceded on all sides, that, wherever our armies have had occupancy, there slavery has been practically abolished. The fact was recognized by President Lincoln in his last appeal to the loyal Slave States to consummate emancipation.

Another noticeable act of our Government in behalf of Liberty is the official provision it makes for the wants of the thousands of helpless human beings thus thrown upon our care. Taxed with the burden of an immense war, with the care of thousands of sick and wounded, the United States Government has cheerfully voted rations for helpless slaves, no less than wages to the helpful ones. The United States Government pays teachers to instruct them, and overseers to guide their industrial efforts. A free-labor experiment is already in successful operation among the beautiful sea-islands in the neighborhood of Beaufort, which, even under most disadvantageous circumstances, is fast demonstrating how much more efficiently men will work from hope and liberty than

from fear and constraint. Thus, even amid the roar of cannon and the confusion of war, cotton-planting, as a free-labor institution, is beginning its infant life, to grow hereafter to a glorious manhood.

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Lastly, the great, decisive measure of the war has appeared,—*The President's Proclamation of Emancipation*.

This also has been much misunderstood and misrepresented in England. It has been said to mean virtually this:—Be loyal, and you shall keep your slaves; rebel, and they shall be free.

But let us remember what we have just seen of the purpose and meaning of the Union to which the rebellious States are invited back. It is to a Union which has abolished slavery in the District of Columbia, and interdicted slavery in the Territories,—which vigorously represses the slave-trade, and hangs the convicted slaver as a pirate,—which necessitates emancipation by denying expansion to slavery, and facilitates it by the offer of compensation. Any Slaveholding States which should return to such a Union might fairly be supposed to return with the purpose of peaceable emancipation. The President's Proclamation simply means this:—Come in, and emancipate peaceably with compensation; stay out, and I emancipate, nor will I protect you from the consequences.

That continuance in the Union is thus understood is already made manifest by the votes of Missouri and Delaware in the recent elections. Both of these States have given strong majorities for emancipation, Missouri, long tending towards emancipation, has already planted herself firmly on the great rock of Freedom, and thrown out her bold and eloquent appeal to the Free States of the North for aid in overcoming the difficulties of her position. Other States will soon follow; nor is it too much to hope that before a new year has gone far in its course the sacred fire of freedom will have flashed along the whole line of the Border States responsive to the generous proposition of the President and Congress, and that universal emancipation will have become a fixed fact in the American Union.

Will our sisters in England feel no heart-beat at that event? Is it not one of the predicted voices of the latter day, saying under the whole heavens, "It is done: the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ"?

And now, Sisters of England, in this solemn, expectant hour, let us speak to you of one thing which fills our hearts with pain and solicitude.

It is an unaccountable fact, and one which we entreat you seriously to ponder, that the party which has brought the cause of Freedom thus far on its way, during the past eventful year, has found little or no support in England. Sadder than this, the party which makes Slavery the chief corner-stone of its edifice finds in England its strongest defenders.

The voices that have spoken for us who contend for Liberty have been few and scattering. God forbid that we should forget those few noble voices, so sadly



exceptional in the general outcry against us! They are, alas, too few to be easily forgotten. False statements have blinded the minds of your community, and turned the most generous sentiments of the British heart against us. The North are fighting for supremacy and the South for independence, has been the voice. Independence? for what? to do what? To prove the doctrine that all men are *not* equal. To establish the doctrine that the white may enslave the negro.

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It is natural to sympathize with people who are fighting for their rights; but if these prove to be the right of selling children by the pound and trading in husbands and wives as merchantable articles, should not Englishmen think twice before giving their sympathy? A pirate-ship on the high seas is fighting for *independence*! Let us be consistent.

It has been said that we have been over-sensitive, thin-skinned. It is one inconvenient attendant of love and respect, that they do induce sensitiveness. A brother or father turning against one in the hour of trouble, a friend sleeping in the Gethsemane of our mortal anguish, does not always find us armed with divine patience. We loved England; we respected, revered her; we were bound to her by ties of blood and race. Alas! must all these declarations be written in the past tense?

But that we may not be thought to have over-estimated the popular tide against us, we shall express our sense of it in the words of an English writer, one of the noble few who have spoken the truth on our side. Referring to England's position on this question, he says:—

“What is the meaning of this? Why does the English nation, which has made itself memorable to all time as the destroyer of negro slavery, which has shrunk from no sacrifices to free its own character from that odious stain, and to close all the countries of the world against the slave-merchant,—why is it that the nation which is at the head of Abolitionism, not only feels no sympathy with those who are fighting against the slaveholding conspiracy, but actually desires its success? Why is the general voice of our press, the general sentiment of our people bitterly reproachful to the North, while for the South, the aggressors in the war, we have either mild apologies or direct and downright encouragement,—and this not only from the Tory and anti-Democratic camp, but from Liberals, or *soi-disant* such?”

“This strange perversion of feeling prevails nowhere else. The public of France, and of the Continent generally, at all events the Liberal part of it, saw at once on which side were justice and moral principle, and gave its sympathies consistently and steadily to the North. Why is England an exception?”

In the beginning of our struggle, the voices that reached us across the water said, “If we were only sure you were fighting for the abolition of slavery, we should not dare to say whither our sympathies for your cause might not carry us.”

Such, as we heard, were the words of the honored and religious nobleman who draughted this very letter which you signed and sent us, and to which we are now replying.



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When these words reached us, we said, "We can wait; our friends in England will soon see whither this conflict is tending." A year and a half have passed; step after step has been taken for Liberty; chain after chain has fallen, till the march of our enemies is choked and clogged by the glad flocking of emancipated slaves; the day of final emancipation is set; the Border States begin to move in voluntary consent; universal freedom for all dawns like the sun in the distant horizon: and still no voice from England. No voice? Yes, we have heard on the high seas the voice of a war-steamer, built for a man-stealing Confederacy with English gold in an English dockyard, going out of an English harbor, manned by English sailors, with the full knowledge of English Government-officers, in defiance of the Queen's proclamation of neutrality. So far has English sympathy overflowed. We have heard of other steamers, iron-clad, designed to furnish to a Slavery-defending Confederacy their only lack,—a navy for the high seas. We have heard that the British Evangelical Alliance refuses to express sympathy with the liberating party, when requested to do so by the French Evangelical Alliance. We find in English religious newspapers all those sad degrees in the downward sliding scale of defending and apologizing for slaveholders and slaveholding with which we have so many years contended in our own country. We find the President's Proclamation of Emancipation spoken of in those papers only as an incitement to servile insurrection. Nay, more,—we find in your papers, from thoughtful men, the admission of the rapid decline of anti-slavery sentiments in England. Witness the following:—

"The Rev. Mr. Maurice, Principal of the Working-Men's College, Great Ormond Street, delivered the first general lecture of the term on Saturday evening, and took for his subject the state of English feeling on the Slavery question. He said, a few days ago, in a conversation on the American war, that some gentlemen connected with the College had confessed to a change in their sympathies in the matter. On the outbreak of the war, they had been strong sympathizers with the Government and the Northern States, but gradually they had drifted until they found themselves desiring the success of the seceded States, and all but free from their anti-slavery feelings and tendencies. These confessions elicited strong expressions of indignation from a gentleman present, who had lectured in the College on the war in Kansas. He (Mr. Maurice) felt inclined to share in the indignation expressed; but since, he could not help feeling that this change was very general in England."

Alas, then, England! is it so? In this day of great deeds and great heroisms, this solemn hour when the Mighty Redeemer is coming to break every yoke, do we hear such voices from England?



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This very day the writer of this has been present at a solemn religious festival in the national capital, given at the home of a portion of those fugitive slaves who have fled to our lines for protection,—who, under the shadow of our flag, find sympathy and succor. The national day of thanksgiving was there kept by over a thousand redeemed slaves, and for whom Christian charity had spread an ample repast. Our Sisters, we wish *you* could have witnessed the scene. We wish you could have heard the prayer of a blind old negro, called among his fellows John the Baptist, when in touching broken English he poured forth his thanksgivings. We wish you could have heard the sound of that strange rhythmical chant which is now forbidden to be sung on Southern plantations,—the psalm of this modern exodus,—which combines the barbaric fire of the Marseillaise with the religious fervor of the old Hebrew prophet.

“Oh, go down, Moses,
'Way down into Egypt's land!
Tell King Pharaoh
To let my people go!
Stand away dere,
Stand away dere,
And let my people go!

“Oh, Pharaoh said he would go 'cross!
Let my people go!
Oh, Pharaoh and his hosts were lost!
Let my people go!
You may hinder me here,
But ye can't up dere!
Let my people go!

“Oh, Moses, stretch your hand across!
Let my people go!
And don't get lost in de wilderness!
Let my people go!
He sits in de heavens
And answers prayers.
Let my people go!”

As we were leaving, an aged woman came and lifted up her hands in blessing. “Bressed be de Lord dat brought me to see dis first happy day of my life! Bressed be de Lord!” In all England is there no Amen?

We have been shocked and saddened by the question asked in an association of Congregational ministers in England, the very blood-relations of the liberty-loving Puritans,—“Why does not the North let the South go?”



What! give up the point of emancipation for these four million slaves? Turn our backs on them, and leave them to their fate? What! leave our white brothers to run a career of oppression and robbery, that, as sure as there is a God that ruleth in the armies of heaven, will bring down a day of wrath and doom?

Is it any advantage to people to be educated in man-stealing as a principle, to be taught systematically to rob the laborer of his wages, and to tread on the necks of weaker races? Who among you would wish your sons to become slave-planters, slave-merchants, slave-dealers? And shall we leave our brethren to this fate? Better a generation should die on the battle-field, that their children may grow up in liberty and justice. Yes, our sons must die, their sons must die. We give ours freely; they die to redeem the very brothers that slay them; they give their blood in expiation of this great sin, begun by you in England, perpetuated by us in America, and for which God in this great day of judgment is making inquisition in blood.



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In a recent battle fell a Secession colonel, the last remaining son of his mother, and she a widow. That mother had sold eleven children of an old slave-mother, her servant. That servant went to her and said,—“Missis, we even now. You sold all my children. God took all yourn. Not one to bury either of us. *Now*, I forgive you.”

In another battle fell the only son of another widow. Young, beautiful, heroic, brought up by his mother in the sacred doctrines of human liberty, he gave his life an offering as to a holy cause. He died. No slave-woman came to tell *his* mother of God’s justice, for many slaves have reason to call her blessed.

Now we ask you, Would you change places with that Southern mother? Would you not think it a great misfortune for a son or daughter to be brought into such a system?—a worse one to become so perverted as to defend it? Remember, then, that wishing success to this slavery-establishing effort is only wishing to the sons and daughters of the South all the curses that God has written against oppression. *Mark our words!* If we succeed, the children of these very men who are now fighting us will rise up to call us blessed. Just as surely as there is a God who governs in the world, so surely all the laws of national prosperity follow in the train of equity; and if we succeed, we shall have delivered the children’s children of our misguided brethren from the wages of sin, which is always and everywhere death.

And now, Sisters of England, think it not strange, if we bring back the words of your letter, not in bitterness, but in deepest sadness, and lay them down at your door. We say to you,—Sisters, you have spoken well; we have heard you; we have heeded; we have striven in the cause, even unto death. We have sealed our devotion by desolate hearth and darkened homestead,—by the blood of sons, husbands, and brothers. In many of our dwellings the very light of our lives has gone out; and yet we accept the life-long darkness as our own part in this great and awful expiation, by which the bonds of wickedness shall be loosed, and abiding peace established on the foundation of righteousness. Sisters, what have *you* done, and what do you mean to do?

In view of the decline of the noble anti-slavery fire in England, in view of all the facts and admissions recited from your own papers, we beg leave in solemn sadness to return to you your own words:—

“A common origin, a common faith, and, we sincerely believe, a common cause, urge us, at the present moment, to address you on the subject” of that fearful encouragement and support which is being afforded by England to a slave-holding Confederacy.

“We will not dwell on the ordinary topics,—on the progress of civilization, on the advance of freedom everywhere, on the rights and requirements of the nineteenth century; but we appeal to you very seriously to reflect and to ask counsel of God how far such a state of things is in accordance with His Holy Word, the inalienable rights of immortal souls, and the pure and merciful spirit of the Christian religion.



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"We appeal to you, as sisters, as wives, and as mothers, to raise your voices to your fellow-citizens, and your prayers to God for the removal of this affliction and disgrace from the Christian world."

In behalf of many thousands of American women,

HARRIET BEECHER STOWE.

WASHINGTON, *November 27, 1862.*

THE SOLDIERS' RALLY.

Oh, rally round the banner, boys, now Freedom's chosen sign!
See where amid the clouds of war its new-born glories shine!
The despot's doom, the slave's dear hope, we bear it on the foe!
God's voice rings down the brightening path! Say, brothers, will ye go?

"My father fought at Donelson; he hailed at dawn of day
That flag full-blown upon the walls, and proudly passed away."
"My brother fell on Newbern's shore; he bared his radiant head,
And shouted, 'Oh! the day is won!' leaped forward, and was dead."
"My chosen friend of all the world hears not the bugle-call;
A bullet pierced his loyal heart by Richmond's fatal wall."
But seize the hallowed swords they dropped, with blood yet moist and red!
Fill up the thinned, immortal ranks, and follow where they led!
For right is might, and truth is God, and He upholds our cause,
The grand old cause our fathers loved,—Freedom and Equal Laws!

"My mother's hair is thin and white; she looked me in the face,
She clasped me to her heart, and said, 'Go, take thy brother's place!'"
"My sister kissed her sweet farewell; her maiden cheeks were wet;
Around my neck her arms she threw; I feel the pressure yet."
"My wife sits by the cradle's side and keeps our little home,
Or asks the baby on her knee, 'When will thy father come?'"
Oh, woman's faith and man's stout arm shall right the ancient wrong!
So farewell, mother, sister, wife! God keep you brave and strong!
The whizzing shell may burst in fire, the shrieking bullet fly,
The heavens and earth may mingle grief, the gallant soldier die;
But while a haughty Rebel stands, no peace! for peace is war.
The land that is not worth our death is not worth living for!

Then rally round the banner, boys! Its triumph draweth nigh!
See where above the clouds of war its seamless glories fly!



Peace, hovering o'er the bristling van, waves palm and laurel fair,
And Victory binds the rescued stars in Freedom's golden hair!

* * * * *

OVERTURES FROM RICHMOND.

A NEW LILLIBURLERO.

"Well, Uncle Sam," says Jefferson D.,
Lilliburlero, old Uncle Sam,
"You'll have to join my Confed'racy,"
Lilliburlero, old Uncle Sam.

"Lero, lero, that don't appear O, that don't appear," says old Uncle Sam,
"Lero, lero, filibustero, that don't appear," says old Uncle Sam.



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"So, Uncle Sam, just lay down your arms,"

Lilliburlero, *etc.*,

"Then you shall hear my reas'nable terms,"

Lilliburlero, *etc.*

"Lero, lero, I'd like to hear O, I'd like to hear," says old Uncle Sam,

"Lero, lero, filibustero, I'd like to hear," says old Uncle Sam.

"First, you must own I've beat you in fight,"

Lilliburlero, *etc.*,

"Then, that I always have been in the right,"

Lilliburlero, *etc.*

"Lero, lero, rather severe O, rather severe," says old Uncle Sam,

"Lero, lero, filibustero, rather severe," says old Uncle Sam.

"Then, you must pay my national debts,"

Lilliburlero, *etc.*,

"No questions asked about my assets,"

Lilliburlero, *etc.*

"Lero, lero, that's very dear O, that's very dear," says old Uncle Sam,

"Lero, lero, filibustero, that's very dear," says old Uncle Sam.

"Also, some few I.O.U.s and bets,"

Lilliburlero, *etc.*,

"Mine, and Bob Toombs', and Slidell's, and Rhett's,"

Lilliburlero, *etc.*

"Lero, lero, that leaves me zero, that leaves me zero," says Uncle Sam,

"Lero, lero, filibustero, that leaves me zero," says Uncle Sam.

"And, by the way, one little thing more,"

Lilliburlero, *etc.*,

"You're to refund the costs of the war,"

Lilliburlero, *etc.*

"Lero, lero, just what I fear O, just what I fear," says old Uncle Sam,

"Lero, lero, filibustero, just what I fear," says old Uncle Sam.

"Next, you must own our Cavalier blood!"

Lilliburlero, *etc.*,

"And that your Puritans sprang from the mud!"

Lilliburlero, *etc.*

"Lero, lero, that mud is clear O, that mud is clear," says old Uncle Sam,

"Lero, lero, filibustero, that mud is clear," says old Uncle Sam.

"Slavery's, of course, the chief corner-stone,"

Lilliburlero, *etc.*,



“Of our NEW CIV-IL-I-ZA-TI-ON!”

Lilliburlero, *etc.*

“Lero, lero, that’s quite sincere O, that’s quite sincere,” says old Uncle Sam,

“Lero, lero, filibustero, that’s quite sincere,” says old Uncle Sam.

“You’ll understand, my recreant tool,”

Lilliburlero, *etc.*,

“You’re to submit, and we are to rule,”

Lilliburlero, *etc.*

“Lero, lore, aren’t you a hero! aren’t you a hero!” says Uncle Sam,

“Lero, lero, filibustero, aren’t you a hero!” says Uncle Sam.

“If to these terms you fully consent,”

Lilliburlero, *etc.*,

“I’ll be Perpetual King-President,”

Lilliburlero, *etc.*

“Lero, lero, take your sombrero, off to your swamps!” says old Uncle Sam,

“Lero, lero, filibustero, cut, double-quick!” says old Uncle Sam.

* * * * *

REVIEWS AND LITERARY NOTICES.

Titan: A Romance. From the German of Jean Paul Friedrich Richter. Translated by CHARLES T. BROOKS. In Two Volumes. Boston: Ticknor and Fields.



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Jean Paul first became one of the notabilities of German literature after he had published "Hesperus," a novel which contains the originals of the characters that reappear under different names in "Titan." His previous popularity did not penetrate far within the circle of scholars and thinkers, and never knocked at the charmed threshold of the Weimar set, whose taste was controlled by Goethe and Schiller. But "Hesperus" made a great noise, and these warders of the German Valhalla were obliged to open the door just a crack, in order to reconnoitre the pretentious arrival. Goethe first called the attention of Schiller to the book, sending him a copy while he was at Jena, in 1795. Schiller recognized at once its power and geniality, but was disposed to regard it as a literary oddity, whose grotesque build and want of finish rather depreciated the rich cargo,—at least, did not bring it handsomely into port. The first book of "Wilhelm Meister" had appeared the year before, and that was more acceptable to Schiller, who had cooled off after writing his "Robbers," and was looking out for the true theory of poetry and art. He and Goethe concluded that "Hesperus" was worth liking, though it was a great pity the author had not better taste; he ought to come up and live with them, in an aesthetic atmosphere, where he could find and admire his superiors, and have his great crude gems ground down to brilliant facets. Schiller said it was the book of a lonely and isolated man. It was, indeed.

But it was a book which represented, far more profoundly and healthily than Schiller's "Robbers," that revolt of men of genius against every species of finical prescription, in literature and society, which ushered in the new age of Germany. And it expresses with uncalculating sincerity all the natural emotions which a century of pedantry and Gallic affectation had been crowding out of books and men. It was a charge at the point of the pen upon the dapper flunkeys who were keeping the door of the German future; the brawny breast, breathing deep with the struggle, and pouring out great volumes of feeling, burst through the restraints of the time. He cleared a place, and called all men to stand close to his beating heart, and almost furiously pressed them there, that they might feel what a thing friendship was and the ideal life of the soul. And as he held them, his face grew broad and deep with humor; men looked into it and saw themselves, all the real good and the absurdly conventional which they had, and there was a great jubilation at the genial sight. And it was as if a lot of porters followed him, overloaded with quaint and curious knowledge gathered from books of travel, of medicine, of history, metaphysics, and biography, which they dumped without much concert, but just as it happened, in the very middle of a fine emotion, and all through his jovial speech. What an irruption it was!—as if by a tilt of the planet the climate had changed suddenly, and palm-trees, oranges, the sugarcane, the grotesque dragon-tree, and all the woods of rich and curious grain, stood in the temperate and meagre soil.



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Schiller met Jean Paul in the spring of 1796. In writing to Goethe about their interviews, he says,—“I have told you nothing yet about Hesperus. I found him on the whole such as I expected, just as odd as if he had fallen from the moon, full of good-will, and very eager to see things that are outside of him, but he lacks the organ by which one sees”; and in a letter of a later date he doubts whether Richter will ever sympathize with their way of handling the great subjects of Man and Nature.

The reader can find the first interviews which Richter had with Goethe and Schiller in Lewes’s “Life of Goethe,” Vol. II. p. 269. Of Goethe, Richter said, “By heaven! we shall love each other!” and of Schiller, “He is full of acumen, but without love.” The German public, which loves Richter, has reversed his first impression. And indeed Richter himself, though he could not get along with Schiller, learned that Goethe’s loving capacity, which he thought he saw break out with fire while Goethe read a poem to him, was only the passion of an artistic nature which impregnates its own products.

Richter’s love was very different. It was a sympathy with men and women of all conditions, fed secretly the while that his shaggy genius was struggling with poverty and apparently unfavorable circumstances. He was always a child, yearning to feel the arms of some affection around him, very susceptible to the moods of other people, yet testing them by a humorous sincerity. All the books which he devoured in his desultory rage for knowledge turned into nourishment for an imagination that was destined chiefly to interpret a very lofty moral sense and a very democratic feeling. And whenever his humor caught an edge in the easterly moments of his mind, it was never sharpened against humanity, and made nothing tender bleed. Now and then we know he has a caustic thing or two to say about women; but it is lunar-caustic for a wart.

Goethe did not like this indiscriminate and democratic temper. The sly remarks of Richter upon the Transparencies and Well-born and Excellencies of his time, with their faded taste and dreary mandarin-life varied by loose morals and contempt for the invisible, could not have suited the man whose best friend was a real Duke, as it happened, one of Nature’s noblemen, one whose wife, the Duchess Sophia, afterwards held Bonaparte so tranquilly at bay upon her palace-steps. Goethe had, too, a bureaucratic vein in him; he spoke well of dignities, and carefully stepped through the cumbrous minuet of court-life without impinging upon a single Serene or Well-born bunyon. Mirabeau himself would have elbowed his way through furbelows and court-rapiers more forbearingly than Richter. It was not possible to make this genius plastic, in the aesthetic sense which legislated at Weimar. Besides, Goethe could not look at Nature as Richter did. To such a grand observer Richter must have appeared like a sunset-smitten girl.



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An American ought to value Richter's books for the causes which made them repulsive to all social and literary cliques. The exquisite art, and the wise, clear mind of Goethe need not come into contrast, to disable us from giving Richter the reception which alone he would value or command. Nor is it necessary to deny that the frequent intercalations and suspensions of his narrative, racy and suggestive as they are, and overflowing with feeling, will fret a modern reader who is always "on time," like an express-man, and is quite as regardless of what may be expressed.

"Titan" is not a novel in the way that Charles Reade's, or Eugene Sue's, or Victor Hugo's books are novels. The nearest English model, in the matter of style and quaint presuming on the reader's patience, is Sterne. But if one wishes to see how Richter is *not* sentimental, in spite of his incessant and un-American emotion, let him read Sterne, and hasten then to be embraced by Richter's unsophisticated feeling, which is none the less refreshing because it is so exuberant and has such a habit of pursuing all his characters. And where else, in any language, is Nature so worshipped, and so rapturously chased with glowing words, as some young Daphne by some fiery boy?

Neither are there any characters in this novel, in the sense of marked idiosyncrasies, or of the subtle development of an individual. Sometimes Richter's men and women are only the lay-figures upon which he piles and adjusts his gorgeous cloth-of-gold and figured damask. But Siebenkaes and his wife, in "Flower-, Fruit-, and Thorn-Pieces," are characters, quite as much as any of Balzac's nice *genre* men and women, and on a higher plane. Richter uses his persons of both sexes principally to express the conditions of his feeling; they are cockles, alternately dry and sparkling, underneath his mighty ebb and flow.

On one point we doubt if the American mind will understand Richter. He believed in a love that one man might have for another man, which as little corresponds to the average idea of friendship as the anti-slavery sentiment of the "People's party" corresponds to Mr. Garrison's. In this respect Richter creates an ideal and interfuses it with all his natural ardor, which a German can understand better than the men of any other nation, for in him is the tendency that Richter seeks to set forth by his passionate imagination. Orestes and Pylades, David and Jonathan, and the other famous loves of men, are suspected by the calculating breeds of people. Brother Jonathan seldom finds his David, and he doubtless thinks the Canon ought to have transferred that Scriptural friendship into the Apocrypha. We shall sniff at the highly colored intercourse of Richter's men, for it is often more than we can do to really love a woman. We shall pronounce the relation affected, and the expression of it turgid, even nauseous. But there is a genuine noble pulse in the German heart, which beats to the rhythm of two men's heroic attachment, and can expand till all the blood that flows through Richter's style is welcomed and propelled by it. Still, we think that the unexpressed friendship may also stand justified before the ideal.



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The reader must be content to meet this stout and fervent man as he is, not expecting that his genius will consult our tastes or prejudices, or that his head will stoop at all for the sake of our company. Then beneath his dense paragraphs and through his rambling pages his humility will greet us, and fraternal regards draw us irresistibly to him. He is a man for a people's reading, notwithstanding all the involutions of style and thought which might suggest a different judgment. He certainly does not write like Cobbett or Franklin, nor has he the thin, clear polish of the popular historian. Yet his shrewdness and tenderness will touch all simple-minded men; and twenty Cobbetts, or people's writers, sharply rubbed together, could never light the flame of his imperial imagination, for it is a kind of sunshine, sometimes hot enough, but broad, impartial, and quickening, wherever there is something that waits to grow.

And scarcely one man in a century appears so highly gifted with that wonderful quality for which we have no better name than Humor. His humor is the conciliation that takes place between love and knowledge. The two tendencies create the bold and graceful orbit on which his well-balanced books revolve. With one alone, his impetuosity would hasten to quench itself in the molten centre; and with the other alone, he would fly cynically beyond the reach of heat. This reconciling humor sometimes shakes his book with Olympic laughter; as if the postprandial nectar circulated in pools of cups, into which all incompatibilities fall and are drowned. You drink this recasting of the planet's joys and sorrows, contempt and contradictions, while it is yet fluent and bubbling to the lip. There are all the selfish men, and petulant, intriguing women in it, all their weaknesses, and the ill-humor of their times. But the draught lights up the brain with an anticipation of some future solution of these discords, or perhaps we may say, intoxicates us with the serene tolerance which the Creative Mind must have for all His little ones. Is not humor a finite mood of that Impartiality whose sun rises upon the evil and the good, whose smile becomes the laughter of these denser skies?

It is plain from what we have said that the task of translating this novel must be full of difficulties. There are strange words, allusions drawn from foreign books that are now a hundred years old or more and never seen in libraries; the figurative style makes half the sentences in a page seem strange at first, they invite consideration, and do not feebly surrender to a smooth consecutive English. Just as you think you are at the bottom of a paragraph and are on the point of stepping on the floor, he stops you with another stair, or lets you through: in other words, you are never safe from a whimsical allusion or a twist in the thought. The narrative extends no thread which you may take in one hand as you poke along: it frequently disappears altogether, and it seems as if you had another book with its vocabulary and style.



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It is not too high praise to say that Mr. Brooks has overcome all these difficulties without the sacrifice of a single characteristic of Richter's genius. We have the sense and passion unimpaired. The translation is accurate, and also bold. By the comparison of a few test-passages with the original, Mr. Brooks's adroit and patient labor appears clearly. We desire to pay him the meed of our respect and gratitude. Few readers of "Titan" will appreciate the toil which has secured them this new sensation of becoming intimate with "Jean Paul the Only." It is new, because, notwithstanding several books of Jean Paul have been already translated, "Titan" is the most vigorous and exhaustive book he wrote. He poured his whole fiery and romantic soul into it. It may be said that all the fine and humane elements of the revolutionary period in which he lived appear in this book,—the religious feeling, the horror of sensuality, the hatred of every kind of cant, the struggle for definite knowledge out of a confusing whirl of man's generous sentiments all broken loose, the tendency to worship duty and justice, and the Titanic extravagance of a "lustiness," both of youth and emotion, which threatens, in Alexander's temper, to appropriate the world. All this is admirably expressed in the Promethean title of the book. We do not think that it can be profitably read, or with an intelligent respect for its great author, unless we recall the period, the state of politics, religion, domestic life, the new German age of thought which was rising, with ferment, amid uncouth gambolling shapes of jovial horn-blowing fellows, from the waves. He is the divinity who owns a whole herd of them. As we sit to read, let the same light fall on the page in which it was composed, and there will appear upon it the genius which is confined to no age or clime, and addresses every heart.

The Works of Rufus Choate, with a Memoir of his Life. By SAMUEL GILMAN BROWN, Professor in Dartmouth College. In Two Volumes. Boston: Little, Brown, & Co.

In estimating the claims of any biographical work we must bear in mind the difficulties of the subject, the advantages which the writer enjoys, and the disadvantages under which he labors. The life, genius, and character of Mr. Choate present a stimulating, but not an easy task to him who essays to delineate them. We have read of a man who had taught his dog to bite out of a piece of bread a profile likeness of Voltaire; it was not more difficult to draw a caricature of Mr. Choate, but to paint him as he was requires a nice pencil and a discriminating touch. The salient traits were easily recognized by all. The general public saw in him a man who flung himself into his cases with the fervor and passion of a mountain-torrent, whose eloquence was exuberant and sometimes extravagant, who said quaint and brilliant things with a very grave countenance, and whose handwriting was picturesquely illegible. We verily believe that Mr. Choate's



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peculiar handwriting was as well known to his townsmen and neighbors, was as frequent a topic of observation and comment, as any of the traits of his mind and character. We need hardly add that this popular image which was called Mr. Choate resembled the real man about as much as a sign-post daub of General Washington resembles the head by Stuart. The skill of the true artist is shown in catching and transferring to the canvas the delicate distinctions which make a difference between faces which have a general similarity. No man had more need of this fine discrimination in order to have justice done him than Mr. Choate; for there was no man who would have been more imperfectly known, had he been known only by those prominent and obvious characteristics which all the world could see. He was a great and successful lawyer, but his original taste was for literature rather than law. Few men were more before the public than he, and yet he loved privacy more than publicity. He had acquaintances numberless, and facile and gracious manners, but his heart was open to very few. His eloquence was luxuriant and efflorescent, but he was also a close and compact reasoner. He had a vein of playful exaggeration in his common speech, but his temperament was earnest, impassioned, almost melancholy. The more nearly one knew Mr. Choate, the more cause had he to correct superficial impressions.

Professor Brown has many qualifications for the task which was devolved upon him. He knew, loved, and admired Mr. Choate. A graduate and professor of Dartmouth College, the son of a former president, he caught a larger portion of the light thrown, back upon the college by the genius and fame of her brilliant son. A good scholar himself, he is competent to appreciate the ripe scholarship of Mr. Choate, and his love of letters. His style is clear, simple, and manly. He has, too, the moral qualities needed in a man who undertakes to write the biography of an eminent man recently deceased, who has left children, relatives, friends, acquaintances, and rivals,—the tact, the instinct, the judgment which teaches what to say and what to leave unsaid, and refuses to admit the public into those inner chambers of the mind and heart where the public has no right to go. But he has one disqualification: he is not a lawyer, and no one but a lawyer can take the full gauge and dimensions of what Mr. Choate was and did. For Mr. Choate, various as were his intellectual tastes, wide as was the range of his intellectual curiosity, made all things else secondary and subservient to legal studies and professional aspirations. To the law he gave his mind and life, and all that he did outside of the law was done in those breathing-spaces and intermissions of professional labor in which most lawyers in large practice are content to do nothing.



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But Professor Brown's biography is satisfactory in all respects, even in the delineations of the professional character of Mr. Choate, where, if anywhere, we should have looked for imperfect comprehension. The members of the bar may rest assured that justice has been done to the legal claims and merits of one of whom they were so justly proud; and the public may be assured that the traits of Mr. Choate's character, the qualities of his mind,—his great and conspicuous powers, as well as his lighter graces and finer gifts,—have been set down with taste, feeling, judgment, and discrimination. This seems but measured language, and yet we mean it for generous praise; bearing always in mind the difficulties of the subject, and, as Professor Brown has happily said in his preface, that "the traits of Mr. Choate's character were so peculiar, its lights and shades so delicate, various, and evanescent." We confess that we sat down to read the biography not without a little uneasiness, not without a flutter of apprehension. But all feeling of this kind was soon dissipated as we went on, and there came in its place a grateful sense of the grace, skill, and taste which Professor Brown had shown in his delineation, and the faithful portrait he had produced. And one secret of this success is to be found in the fact that he had no other object or purpose than to do justice to his subject. He is entirely free from self-reference. There is not in the remotest corner of his mind a wish to magnify his office and draw attention from the theme of the biography to the biographer himself. He permits himself no digressions, he obtrudes no needless reflections, enters into no profitless discussions: he is content to unfold the panorama of Mr. Choate's life, and do little more than point out the scenes and passages as they pass before the spectator's eye.

It was not an eventful life; it was, indeed, the reverse. It was a life passed in the constant and assiduous practice of the law. We do not forget his brief term of service in the House of Representatives, and his longer period in the Senate; but these were but episodes. They were trusts reluctantly assumed and gladly laid aside; for he was one of those exceptional Americans who have no love of political distinction or public office. A lawyer's life leaves little to be recorded; the triumphs of the bar are proverbially ephemeral, and lawyers themselves are willing to forget the cases they have tried and the verdicts they have won. Had Mr. Choate been merely and exclusively a lawyer, the story of his life could have been told in half a dozen pages; but though he was a great lawyer and advocate, he was something more: he was an orator, a scholar, and a patriot. He had no taste for public life, as we have just said; but he had the deepest interest in public subjects, loved his country with a fervid love, had read much and thought much upon questions of politics and government. Busy as he always was in his profession, his mind,



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discursive, sleepless, always thirsting for knowledge, was never content to walk along the beaten highway of the law, but was ever wandering into the flowery fields of poetry and philosophy on the right hand and the left. These volumes show how untiring was his industry, how various were his attainments, how accurate was his knowledge, how healthy and catholic were his intellectual tastes. The only thing for which he had no taste was repose; the only thing which he could not do was to rest. When we see what his manner of life was, how for so many years the nightly vigil succeeded the daily toil, how the bow was always strung, how much he studied and wrote outside of his profession, even while bearing the burden and anxiety of an immense practice, we can only wonder that he lived so long.

The whole of the second volume and a full half of the first are occupied with Mr. Choate's own productions, mainly speeches and lectures. Many of these have been published before, but some of them appear in print for the first time. Mr. Choate's peculiar characteristics of style and manner—his exuberance of language, his full flow of thought, his redundancy of epithet, his long-drawn sentences, stretching on through clause after clause before the orbit of his thought had begun to turn and enter upon itself—are well known. We cannot say that the contents of these volumes will add to the high reputation which Mr. Choate already enjoys as a brilliant writer, an eloquent speaker, a patriotic statesman; but we can and do say that the glimpses we herein get of his purely human qualities—of that inner life which belongs to every man simply as man—all add to the interest which already clings to his name, by showing him in a light and in relations of which the public who hung with delight upon his lips knew little or nothing. He had long been one of the celebrities of the city; his face and form were familiar to his towns-people, and all strangers were anxious to see and hear him: but, though he moved and acted in public, he dwelt apart. His orbit embraced the three points of the court-room, his office, and his home,—and no more. He had no need of society, of amusement, of sympathy, of companionship. We are free to say that we think it was a defect in his nature, at least a mistake in his life, that he did not cultivate his friendships more. Few men of his eminence have ever lived so long and written so few letters. But his diaries and journals, now for the first time given to the light, show us the inner man and the inner life. Here he communed with himself. Here he intrusted his thoughts, his hopes, his dreams, his aspirations to the safe confidence of his notebook. No portions of the two volumes are to us of more interest than these diaries and journals. They bear the stamp of perfect sincerity. They show us how high his standard was, how little he was satisfied with anything he had done, how deep and strong were his love of knowledge



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and his love of beauty, how every step of progress was made a starting-point for a new advance. And from these, and other indications which these volumes contain, we can learn how modest he was, how gentle and courteous, how full of playfulness and graceful wit, how unprejudiced, how imbued with reverence for things high and sacred, how penetrated with delicate tact and sensitive propriety. He nursed no displeasures; he cultivated no antipathies; he was free from dark suspicions, sullen resentments, and smouldering hates; he put no venom upon his blade.

The life and labors of a man like Mr. Choate present many points on which it would be easy to dwell with more or less of fulness, but we can only touch upon one or two. We have always thought him especially remarkable for the felicity with which the elements in him were so mingled that the bright gift was not accompanied by the usually attendant shadow. All would admit, for instance, that his temperament was the temperament of genius. The strings of an Aeolian harp are not more responsive to the caressing wind than were the fibres of his frame sensitive to the influence of beauty. His organization was delicate, nervous, and impassioned. The grandeur and loveliness of Nature, fine poetry, stirring eloquence, music under certain forms and conditions, affected him to an extent to which men are rarely susceptible. And yet with all these "robes and singing garlands" of genius about him, he was entirely free from the irritability which usually accompanies genius. His temper was as sweet as his organization was sensitive. The life of a lawyer in great practice is very trying to the spirit, but no one ever saw Mr. Choate discomposed or ruffled, and the sharp contentions of the most protracted and hotly contested trial never extorted from him a testy remark, a peevish exclamation, a wounding reflection. He never wasted any of his nervous energy in scolding, fretting, or worrying. Such invincible and inevitable sweetness of temper would have made the most commonplace man attractive: we need not say what a charm it gave to such powers and accomplishments as those of Mr. Choate.

So, too, there is the old, traditionary commonplace about genius being one thing and application another, and their being in necessary antagonism to each other. But Mr. Choate was a man of genius, at least in its popular and generally received sense. The glance of his mind was as rapid as the lightning; he learned almost by intuition; his fancy was brilliant, discursive, and untiring; his perceptions were both quick and correct: if there ever were a man who could have dispensed with the painful acquisitions of labor, and been content with the spontaneous growth of an uncultivated soil, that man was Mr. Choate. And yet who ever worked harder than he? what plodding chronicler, what prosaic Dryasdust ever went through a greater amount of drudgery than he? His very industry had the intense and impassioned character

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which belonged to his whole temperament and organization. He toiled with a fiery earnestness and a concentration of purpose which burned into the very heart of the subject he was investigating. The audience that hung with delight upon one of his addresses to the jury, at the close of a long and exciting trial, in which the wit and eloquence and poetry seemed to be the inspiration of the moment,—electric sparks which the mind's own rapid motion generated,—thought as little of the patient industry with which all had been elaborated as they who admire an exquisite ball-dress, that seems a part of the lovely form which it adorns, think of the pale weaver's loom and the poor seamstress's needle. We have known brilliant men; we have known laborious men; but we have never known any man in whom the two elements were met in such combination as Mr. Choate.

But we must pause. We are insensibly going beyond our limits. We are forgetting the biography and recalling Mr. Choate himself, a theme too fruitful for a literary notice. We conclude, then, with an expression of thanks to Professor Brown for the entirely satisfactory manner in which he has performed a task of no common difficulty. The friends of Mr. Choate will find in these volumes not only ample, but new matter, to justify the admiration which he awakened; and to those who did not know him they will show how just was his title to their admiration.

The Story of the Guard, a Chronicle of the War. By JESSIE BENTON FREMONT. 16mo. Boston: Ticknor and Fields.

The subject, the authorship, and the style of this book combine to secure for it the immediate attention of American readers. In our own case, this attention has deepened into hearty interest and sympathy; and we are so confident that such will be the result in every mind, that we the more cheerfully resign ourselves to the necessity which renders a full and fair review of this little book an impossible thing for us. Let us briefly call to notice some of its peculiar excellences, and indicate the line of thought which we think its sympathetic critic will follow.

Certainly no worthier subject could be chosen than the deeds of that brave young Guard, which was at first the target for so many slanders, and at last the centre of heartiest love and pride to all the North. Its short and brilliant career lacks nothing which chivalry find romance could lend, to render it the brightest passage in the history of the war. It is but a few days since Fremont's Virginia Body-Guard—now that of General Sigel—made a bold dash into Fredericksburg, rivalling the glory of their predecessors; but, though every one of Fremont's campaigns should boast a Body-Guard, and every Guard immortalize a new Springfield, the crown of crowns will always rest on the gallant little major and his dauntless few whose high enthusiasm broke the spell of universal disaster, sounding the bugle-notes of victory through the dreary silence of national despair.



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General Fremont's practice in the West was invariably to educate his raw troops in the presence of an enemy. Whether this was of choice or of necessity we do not pretend to say; but the fact remains, that the tide of war was turned back upon our enemies by an army composed of men who had but just taken up their weapons. We once had the pleasure of hearing General Fremont explain the system which he pursued with this army; and we remember being struck with the fact that he laid great stress on *constant skirmishing*, as the means of acquiring a habit of victory. We cannot enlarge here upon this interesting topic. We design only to adduce the circumstance, that the charge at Springfield concluded a series of five fights within a single week, every one of which resulted in triumph to our arms with the exception of that at Fredericktown. They were slight affairs; but, as Fremont so well says, "Little victories form a habit of victory."

The charge of the Guard we shall not eulogize. It is beyond the praise of words. It is wonderful that Major Zagonyi should have been able in so few days to bring into such splendid discipline a body of new recruits. The Prairie Scouts (who seem to have been a band of brave men under a dashing young leader) had not the perfect training which carried the Guard through a murderous fire, to form and charge in the very camp of the enemy. They plunged into the woods, and commenced a straggling bush-fight, as they were skilled to do. Worthy of praise in themselves, (and they have earned it often and received it freely,) the Scouts on this occasion serve to heighten the effect of that grand combination of impulse and obedience which makes the perfect soldier.

We cannot but add a word or two (leaving many points of interest untouched) upon the manner in which Mrs. Fremont has treated her subject. It is novel, but not ineffective. Zagonyi tells much of the story in his own words; and we are sure that it loses nothing of vividness from his terse and vigorous, though not always strictly grammatical language. "Zagonyi's English," says some one who has heard it, "is like wood-carving."

The letters of the General himself form one of the most interesting features of the book. We would only remark, in this connection, the wide difference between the General's style and that of his wife. Mrs. Fremont is a true woman, and has written a true woman's book. The General is a true man, and his words are manly words. Her style is full, free, vivid, with plenty of dashes and postscripts,—the vehicle of much genius and many noble thoughts; but in itself no style, or a careless and imperfect one. The Pathfinder writes as good English prose as any man living. We cannot be mistaken. The hand that penned the "Story of the Guard" could not hold the pen of the Proclamation or the Farewell Address, or the narrative of the Rocky-Mountain Expedition. Nevertheless, it has done well. Let its work lie on our tables and dwell in our hearts with the "Idyls of the King,"—the Aeolian memories of a chivalry departed blending with the voices of the nobler knighthood of our time.



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Seven Little People and their Friends. New York: A.F. Randolph.

This is a charming book for the holidays. Not that it requires such a temporary occasion to give it interest, elevated as it is by its inherent excellence above that class of books which may be said almost entirely to depend upon such factitious accidents for whatever of success they may reasonably hope to obtain. It is, irrespective of time or occasion, a genuine story-book, adapted particularly to children between the ages of six and sixteen years, yet not, as is usually the case in books for children, confined to these narrow limits in either direction; since there is somewhat for any child that can be supposed to have an interest in narrative, and a great deal for every man who has genius, according to Coleridge's well-known definition of genius,—namely, that it is the power of childhood carried forward into the developments of manhood. This is saying, indeed, quite as much as could be said for the general features of the book, and more than could be said for any other child's book, excepting alone Hans Andersen's inimitable stories.

Speaking of the book as compared with the works of Hans Andersen, it is more consciously a work of art, in an intellectual sense; it is more complicated in incident, or rather, we should say, in the working-up of the incident, whether that be an advantage for it or not. In almost every instance, Hans Andersen's stories could be told apart from the book,—indeed, it is true that many of them were thus told to children, whom the Danish storyteller casually met, before they were committed to writing; and they were written, we imagine, very much as they were told. The seven stories of which this book is made up, on the other hand, could none of them be told naturally, and yet preserve every artistic feature which belongs to them, as they are written. As there is more of intellectual consciousness in their development, giving them more finish and greater multiformity as products of art, so also there is more depth of idea in their design. The writer is evidently not satisfied with simple narrative; the *movement* of his stories is more important in his eye than *incident*, and to the former there must have been considerable sacrifice of the latter,—that is, much of the incident which might have been given in a simple narrative has been left out, because it would mar the formal design.

From what has been said it will be evident that the book is not one of those designed to affect the reader mainly through a scrupulous conscience, or indeed distinctively through conscience at all. It appeals to the imagination preeminently, and through that to the will. It is the greatest merit of the book, that it is designed for the culture and development of the imagination in children,—a faculty almost entirely neglected, or, what is worse, oftentimes despotically crushed and thwarted in children.



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In "The Three Wishes" is developed for the child the mystery of work and of worship; but it is all accomplished through incidents appealing wholly to imagination, and with beautiful art. "The Little Castaways"—really a deliberate farce, "taking off," the stories of similar incident written for older folk—is yet, in itself, for the child much more than that which is thus "taken off" ever could be for the older and more romantic reader. "The Rock-Elephant" is full of humor and imaginative pathos. "A Faery Surprise-Party" is as delicate as are Jack Frost's pencillings, through which all the events of the story curiously move. "New-Year's Day in the Garden" has equal delicacy, and even greater beauty.

In all the stories there is a humanizing of all elements introduced, even the most material. We are assured that the author's efforts will meet with success. Children, certainly, and all those especially interested in children, will hail the book with delight. It is finely illustrated by F.A. Chapman, who, it is evident, has spared no pains to render it attractive. The engravings, be it said in their favor, are not too directly suggestive, as is generally the case, but, from their delicate insinuations, particularly beautiful.